

On him, their sagest councillor, bestow'd.
 Before them first a table fair she spread,
 Well polish'd, and with feet of solid bronze;
 On this a brazen canister she plac'd,
 And onions, as a relish to the wine,
 And pale clear honey, and pure barley meal: 720
 By these a splendid goblet, which from home
 Th' old man had brought, with golden studs adorn'd:
 Four were its handles, and round each two doves
 Appear'd to feed; at either end, a cup.
 Scarce might another move it from the board,
 When full; but aged Nestor rais'd with ease.
 In this, their goddess-like attendant first
 A gen'rous measure mix'd of Pramnian wine:
 Then with a brazen grater shredded o'er
 The goatsmilk cheese, and whitest barley meal, 730
 And of the draught compounded bade them drink.
 They drank, and then, reliev'd the parching thirst,
 With mutual converse entertain'd the hour.
 Before the gate divine Patroclus stood:
 The old man saw, and from his seat arose,
 And took him by the hand, and led him in,
 And bade him sit; but he, refusing, said:
 "No seat for me, thou venerable sire!
 I must not stay; for he both awe and fear
 Commands, who hither sent me to enquire 740
 What wounded man thou hast; I need not ask,
 I know Machaon well, his people's guard.
 My errand done, I must my message bear
 Back to Achilles; and thou know'st thyself,
 Thou venerable sire, how stern his mood:
 Nay sometimes blames he, where no blame is due."
 To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
 "Whence comes Achilles' pity for the Greeks
 By Trojan weapons wounded? knows he not
 What depth of suff'ring through the camp prevails? 750
 How in the ships, by arrow or by spear
 Sore wounded, all our best and bravest lie?
 The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,
 Pierc'd by a shaft; Ulysses by a spear,
 And Agamemnon's self; Eurypylus
 By a sharp arrow through the thigh transfix'd;
 And here another, whom but now I bring,

Shot by a bow, from off the battle field:
 Achilles, valiant as he is, the while
 For Grecian woes nor care nor pity feels. 760
 Waits he, until our ships beside the sea,
 In our despite, are burnt by hostile fires,
 And we be singly slain? not mine is now
 The strength I boasted once of active limbs.
 O that such youth and vigour yet were mine,
 As when about a cattle-lifting raid
 We fought th' Eleans; there Itymoneus
 I slew, the son of brave Hyperochus,
 Who dwelt in Elis; and my booty drove.
 He sought to guard the herd; but from my hand 770
 A jav'lin struck him in the foremost ranks:
 He fell, and terror seiz'd the rustic crowd.
 Abundant store of plunder from the plain
 We drove; of horned cattle fifty herds;
 As many flocks of sheep, as many droves
 Of swine, as many wide-spread herds of goats,
 And thrice so many golden-chestnut mares,
 The foals of many running with their dams.
 To Pylos, Neleus' city, these we drove
 By night; and much it gladden'd Neleus' heart, 780
 That I, though new to war, such prize had won.
 When morn appear'd, the clear-voic'd heralds call'd
 For all to whom from Elis debts were due;
 Collected thus, the Pylians' leading men
 Division made; for Elis ow'd us much;
 Such wrongs we few in Pylos had sustain'd.
 The might of Hercules in former years
 Had storm'd our town, and all our bravest slain.
 Twelve gallant sons had Neleus; I of these
 Alone was left; the others all were gone. 790
 Whence over-proud, th' Epeians treated us
 With insult, and high-handed violence.
 A herd of oxen now, and num'rous flock
 Of sheep, th' old man selected for himself,
 Three hundred, with their shepherds; for to him
 Large compensation was from Elis due.
 Train'd to the course, four horses, with their cars,
 He for the Tripod at th' Elean games
 Had sent to run; these Augeas, King of men,
 Detain'd, and bade the drivers home return, 800

Bootless, and grieving for their horses' loss.
 Th' old man his words resenting, and his acts,
 Large spoils retain'd; the rest among the crowd
 He shar'd, that none might lose his portion due.
 These we dispos'd of soon, and to the Gods
 Due off'rings made; but when the third day rose,
 Back in all haste, in numbers, horse and foot,
 Our foes return'd; with them the Molion twins,
 Yet boys, untutor'd in the arts of war.
 Far off, by Alpheus' banks, th' extremest verge 810
 Of sandy Pylos, is a lofty mound,
 The city of Thryum; which around, intent
 To raze its walls, their army was encamp'd.
 The plain already they had overspread;
 When Pallas from Olympus' heights came down
 In haste, and bade us all prepare for war.
 On no unwilling ears her message fell,
 But eager all for fight; but me, to arm
 Neleus forbade, and ev'n my horses hid,
 Deeming me yet unripe for deeds of war. 820
 Yet so, albeit on foot, by Pallas' grace
 A name I gain'd above our noblest horse.
 There is a river, Minyis by name,
 Hard by Arene, flowing to the sea,
 Where we, the Pylian horse, expecting morn,
 Encamp'd, by troops of footmen quickly join'd.
 Thence in all haste advancing, all in arms,
 We reach'd, by midday, Alpheus' sacred stream.
 There, to o'er-ruling Jove our off'rings made,
 To Alpheus and to Neptune each a bull, 830
 To Pallas, blue-ey'd Maid, a heifer fair,
 In order'd ranks we took our ev'ning meal,
 And each in arms upon the river's brink
 Lay down to rest; for close beside us lay
 Th' Epeians, on the town's destruction bent.
 Then saw they mighty deeds of war display'd;
 For we, as sunlight overspread the earth,
 To Jove and Pallas praying, battle gave.
 But when the Pylians and th' Epeians met,
 I first a warrior slew, and seiz'd his car, 840
 Bold spearman, Mulius; Augeas' son-in-law,
 His eldest daughter's husband, Agamede,
 The yellow-hair'd, who all the virtues knew

Of each medicinal herb the wide world grows.
 Him, with my brass-tipp'd spear, as on he came,
 I slew; he fell; I, rushing to his car,
 Stood 'mid the foremost ranks; th' Epeians brave
 Fled diverse, when they saw their champion fall,
 Chief of their horsemen, foremost in the fight.
 With the dark whirlwind's force, I onward rush'd, 850
 And fifty cars I took; two men in each
 Fell to my spear, and bit the bloody dust.
 Then Actor's sons, the Molions, had I slain,
 Had not th' Earth-shaking God, their mighty sire,
 Veil'd in thick cloud, withdrawn them from the field.
 Then Jove great glory to the Pylians gave;
 For o'er the wide-spread plain we held pursuit,
 Slaying, and gath'ring up the scatter'd arms,
 Nor till corn-clad Buprasium and the rock
 Olenian, and Alesium, term'd the Mound, 860
 Stay'd we our steeds; there Pallas bade us turn.
 There the last man I slew, and left; the Greeks
 Back from Buprasium drove their flying cars
 To Pylos, magnifying all the name,
 'Mid men, of Nestor, as 'mid Gods, of Jove.
 Such once was I 'mid men, while yet I was;
 Now to himself alone Achilles keeps
 His valour; yet hereafter, when the Greeks
 Have perish'd all, remorse shall touch his soul.
 Dear friend, remember now th' injunctions giv'n 870
 By old Menœtius, when from Phthian land
 He sent thee forth to Agamemnon's aid:
 I, and Laertes' godlike son, within,
 Heard all his counsel; to the well-built house
 Of Peleus we on embassy had come,
 Throughout Achaia's fertile lands to raise
 The means of war; Menœtius there we found,
 Achilles, and thyself within the house;
 While in the court-yard aged Peleus slew, 880
 And to the Lord of thunder offer'd up
 A fatten'd steer; and from a golden bowl
 O'er the burnt-off'ring pour'd the ruddy wine.
 We two, while ye were busied with the flesh,
 Stood at the gate; surpris'd, Achilles rose,
 And took us by the hand, and bade us sit,
 Dispensing all the hospitable rites.

With food and wine recruited, I began
 My speech, and urg'd ye both to join the war:
 Nor were ye loth to go; much sage advice
 Your elders gave; old Peleus bade his son 890
 To aim at highest honours, and surpass
 His comrades all; Menœtius, Actor's son,
 To thee this counsel gave: 'My son,' he said,
 'Achilles is by birth above thee far;
 Thou art in years the elder; he in strength
 Surpasses thee; do thou with prudent words
 And timely speech address him, and advise
 And guide him; he will, to his good, obey.'

"Such were the old man's words; but thou hast let
 His counsel slip thy mem'ry; yet ev'n now 900
 Speak to Achilles thus, and stir his soul,
 If haply he will hear thee; and who knows
 But by the grace of Heav'n thou mayst prevail?
 For great is oft a friend's persuasive pow'r.
 But if the fear of evil prophesied,
 Or message by his Goddess-mother brought
 From Jove, restrain him, let him send thee forth
 With all his force of warlike Myrmidons,
 That thou mayst be the saving light of Greece.
 Then let him bid thee to the battle bear 910
 His glitt'ring arms; if so the men of Troy,
 Scar'd by his likeness, may forsake the field,
 And breathing-time afford the sons of Greece,
 Toil-worn; for little pause has yet been theirs.
 Fresh and unwearied, ye with ease may drive
 To their own city, from our ships and tents,
 The Trojans, worn and battle-wearied men."

Thus he; Patroclus' spirit within him burn'd,
 And tow'rd Achilles' tent in haste he sped.
 But, running, as Ulysses' ship he pass'd, 920
 Where was the Council and the Justice-seat,
 And where were built the altars of the Gods,
 There met him, halting from the battle-field,
 Shot through the thigh, Euæmon's Heav'n-born son,
 Eurypylos; his head and shoulders dank
 With clammy sweat, while from his grievous wound
 Stream'd the dark blood; yet firm was still his soul.
 Menœtius' noble son with pity saw,
 And deeply sorrowing thus address'd the chief:

“ Woe for the chiefs and councillors of Greece! 930
 And must ye, far from friends and native home,
 Glut with your flesh the rav’ning dogs of Troy?
 Yet tell me this, Heav’n-born Eurypylus;
 Still do the Greeks ’gainst Hector’s giant force
 Make head? or fall they, vanquish’d by his spear? ”

To whom with prudent speech, Eurypylus:
 “ No source, Heav’n-born Patroclus, have the Greeks
 Of aid, but all must perish by their ships:
 For in the ships lie all our bravest late,
 By spear or arrow struck, by Trojan hands; 940
 And fiercer, hour by hour, their onset grows.
 But save me now, and lead me to the ships;
 There cut the arrow out, and from the wound
 With tepid water cleanse the clotted blood:
 Then soothing drugs apply, of healing pow’r,
 Which from Achilles, thou, ’tis said, hast learn’d,
 From Chiron, justest of the Centaurs, he.
 For Podalirius and Machaon both,
 Our leeches, one lies wounded in the tents,
 Himself requiring sore the leech’s aid; 950
 The other on the plain still dares the fight.”

To whom again Menœtius’ noble son:
 “ How may this be? say, brave Eurypylus,
 What must I do? a messenger am I,
 Sent by Gerenian Nestor, prop of Greece,
 With tidings to Achilles; yet ev’n so
 I will not leave thee in this weary plight.”

He said, and passing his supporting hand
 Beneath his breast, the wounded warrior led
 Within the tent; th’ attendant saw, and spread 960
 The ox-hide couch; then as he lay reclin’d,
 Patroclus, with his dagger, from the thigh
 Cut out the biting shaft; and from the wound
 With tepid water cleans’d the clotted blood;
 Then, pounded in his hands, a root applied
 Astringent, anodyne, which all his pain
 Allay’d; the wound was dried, and stanch’d the blood.

BOOK XII

ARGUMENT

THE Trojans assail the ramparts, and Hector forces the gates.

THUS o'er the wounded chief Eurypylus
Watch'd in his tent Mencæus' noble son;
But hand to hand the Greeks and Trojans fought;
Nor longer might the ditch th' assault repel,
Nor the broad wall above, which Greeks had built,
To guard their ships, and round it dug the ditch;
But to the Gods no hecatombs had paid,
That they the ships and all the stores within
Might safely keep; against the will of Heav'n
The work was done, and thence not long endur'd. 10
While Hector liv'd, and Peleus' son his wrath
Retain'd, and Priam's city untaken stood;
So long the Grecian wall remain'd entire:
But of the Trojans when the best had fall'n,
Of Greeks, when some were slain, some yet surviv'd;
When the tenth year had seen the fall of Troy,
And Greeks, embark'd, had ta'en their homeward way,
Then Neptune and Apollo counsel took
To sap the wall by aid of all the streams
That seaward from the heights of Ida flow; 20
Rhesus, Caresus, and Heptaporus,
Granicus, and Æsepus, Rhodius,
Scamander's stream divine, and Simoïs,
Where helms and shields lay buried in the sand,
And a whole race of warrior demigods:
These all Apollo to one channel turn'd;
Nine days against the wall the torrent beat;
And Jove sent rain continuous, that the wall
Might sooner be submerg'd; while Neptune's self,
His trident in his hand, led on the stream, 30
Washing away the deep foundations, laid,
Laborious, by the Greeks, with logs and stones,
Now by fast-flowing Hellespont dispers'd.

The wall destroy'd, o'er all the shore he spread
 A sandy drift; and bade the streams return
 To where of old their silver waters flow'd.
 Such were, in future days, to be the works
 Of Neptune and Apollo; but meanwhile
 Fierce rag'd the battle round the firm-built wall,
 And frequent clatter'd on the turrets' beams 40
 The hostile missiles: by the scourge of Jove
 Subdued, the Greeks beside their ships were hemm'd,
 By Hector scar'd, fell minister of Dread,
 Who with the whirlwind's force, as ever, fought.
 As when, by dogs and hunters circled round,
 A boar, or lion, in his pride of strength,
 Turns on his foes, while they in close array
 Stand opposite, and frequent shoot their darts;
 Nor yet his spirit quails, but firm he stands
 With suicidal courage; swift he turns, 50
 Where best to break the circling ranks; where'er
 He makes his rush, the circling ranks give way:
 So Hector, here and there, amid the crowd,
 Urg'd his companions on to cross the ditch:
 The fiery steeds shrank back, and, snorting, stood
 Upon the topmost brink; for the wide ditch
 Withheld them, easy nor to leap nor cross:
 For steep arose on either side the banks,
 And at the top with sharpen'd stakes were crown'd,
 Thick-set and strong, which there the sons of Greece 60
 Had planted, to repel th' invading foes.
 Scarce might a horse, with well-wheel'd car attach'd,
 Essay the passage; but on foot they burn'd
 To make th' attempt; and thus Polydamas,
 Approaching near, to valiant Hector spoke:
 "Hector, and all ye other chiefs of Troy,
 And brave Allies, in vain we seek to drive
 Our horses o'er the ditch; 'tis hard to cross;
 'Tis crown'd with pointed stakes, and them behind
 Is built the Grecian wall; there to descend 70
 And from our cars in narrow space to fight
 Were certain ruin. If it be indeed
 The will of Jove, high-thund'ring, to confound
 The Greeks in utter rout, and us to aid,
 I should rejoice that ev'ry Greek forthwith
 Far from his home should fill a nameless grave;

But should they turn, and we again be driv'n
 Back from the ships, and hurried down the ditch,
 Such were our loss, that scarce a messenger
 Would live to bear the tidings to the town 80
 Of our destruction by the rallied Greeks.

Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
 With our attendants here upon the bank
 To leave our horses; and ourselves on foot,
 All arm'd, press on where Hector leads; the Greeks,
 If that their doom be nigh, will make no stand."

Thus spoke Polydamas; his counsel pleas'd;
 And Hector sprang, in arms, from off his car;
 Nor long, the noble Hector when they saw,
 Delay'd the other chiefs; then gave command 90
 Each to his own attendant, by the ditch
 To keep the chariots all in due array;
 Then parting, form'd in order of attack,
 In five divisions, with their sev'ral chiefs.

Round Hector throng'd, and bold Polydamas,
 The best and bravest; they who long'd the most
 To storm the wall, and fight beside the ships.
 With them Cebriones; for Hector left,
 To guard the horses, one of lesser note.

The next division was by Paris led, 100
 Agenor, and Alcathöus; the third
 By Helenus, and brave Deiphobus,
 Two sons of Priam; Asius was the third,
 Asius, the son of Hyrtacus; who brought
 His tow'ring fiery steeds from Selles' stream,
 Hard by Arisba; stout Æneas led
 The fourth, Anchises' son, Archilochus
 With him, and Acamas, Antenor's sons;
 Both skill'd alike in ev'ry point of war.

Of the far-fam'd Allies, Sarpedon held 110
 The chief command; and for his comrades chose
 Asteropæus, and the warlike might
 Of Glaucus; these o'er all the rest he held
 Pre-eminent in valour, save himself,
 Who o'er them all superior stood confess'd.
 These, interlac'd their shields of tough bull's-hide,
 With eager step advanc'd, and deem'd the Greeks
 Would, unresisting, fall before their ships.
 The other Trojans and renown'd Allies

The words of wise Polydamas obey'd: 120
 But Asius, son of Hyrtacus, refus'd
 His horses and his charioteer to leave,
 With them advancing to assail the ships.
 Blind fool, unconscious! from before those ships,
 Escap'd from death, with horses and with car
 Triumphant, to the breezy heights of Troy
 He never shall return; ill-omen'd fate
 O'ershadowing, dooms him by the spear to fall
 Of brave Idomeneus, Deucalion's son.
 He tow'rd the left inclin'd, what way the Greeks 130
 With horse and chariot from the plain return'd.
 That way he drove his horses; and the gates
 Unguarded found by bolt or massive bar.
 Their warders held them open'd wide, to save
 Perchance some comrade, flying from the plain.
 Thither he bent his course; with clamours loud
 Follow'd his troops; nor deem'd they that the Greeks
 Would hold their ground, but fall amid their ships.
 Little they knew; before the gates they found
 Two men, two warriors of the prime, two sons 140
 Illustrious of the spear-skill'd Lapithæ:
 Stout Polypœtes one, Pirithöus' son,
 With whom Leonteus, bold as blood-stain'd Mars:
 So stood these two before the lofty gates,
 As on the mountain side two tow'ring oaks,
 Which many a day have borne the wind and storm,
 Firm rifted by their strong continuous roots:
 So in their arms and vigour confident
 Those two great Asius' charge, undaunted, met.
 On th' other side, with shouts and wild uproar, 150
 Their bull's-hide shields uplifted high, advanc'd
 Against the well-built wall, Asius the King,
 Iamenus, Orestes, Acamas
 The son of Asius, and Cœnomäus,
 And Thöon; those within to save the ships
 Calling meanwhile on all the well-greav'd Greeks;
 But when they saw the wall by Trojans scal'd,
 And heard the cry of Greeks in panic fear,
 Sprang forth those two, before the gates to fight.
 As when two boars, upon the mountain side, 160
 Await th' approaching din of men and dogs,
 Then sideways rushing, snap the wood around,

Ripp'd from the roots; loud clash their clatt'ring tusks,
 Till to the huntsman's spear they yield their lives;
 So clatter'd on those champions' brass-clad breasts
 The hostile weapons; stubbornly they fought,
 Relying on their strength, and friends above:
 For from the well-built tow'rs huge stones were hurl'd
 By those who for themselves, their tents and ships,
 Maintain'd defensive warfare; thick they fell, 170
 As wintry snow-flakes, which the boist'rous wind,
 Driving the shadowy clouds, spreads fast and close
 O'er all the surface of the fertile earth:

So thick, from Grecian and from Trojan hands,
 The weapons flew; on helm and bossy shield
 With grating sound the pond'rous masses rang.
 Then deeply groaning, as he smote his thigh
 Thus spoke dismay'd the son of Hyrtacus:
 " O Father Jove, how hast thou lov'd our hopes
 To falsify, who deem'd not that the Greeks 180
 Would stand our onset, and resistless arms!
 But they, as yellow-banded wasps, or bees,
 That by some rocky pass have built their nests,
 Abandon not their cavern'd home, but wait
 Th' attack, and boldly for their offspring fight;
 So from the gates these two, though two alone,
 Retire not, till they be or ta'en or slain."

He said: but Jove regarded not his words;
 So much on Hector's triumph he was bent.
 Like battle rag'd round th' other gates; but hard 190
 It were for me, with godlike pow'r, to paint
 Each sev'ral combat; for around the wall
 A more than human storm of stone was pour'd
 On ev'ry side; the Greeks, hard press'd, perforce
 Fought for their ships, while all the Gods look'd on
 Indignant, who the Grecian cause upheld.
 Fiercely the Lapithæ sustain'd the war:
 Stout Polypœtes first, Pirithöus' son,
 Smote, through the brass-cheek'd helmet, Damasus;
 Nor stay'd the brazen helm the spear, whose point 200
 Went crashing through the bone, that all the brain
 Was shatter'd; onward as he rush'd, he fell.
 Then Pylon next, and Ormenus he slew:
 Meantime Leonteus, scion true of Mars,
 Struck with unerring spear Hippomachus,

Son of Antimachus, below the waist;
 Then, drawing from the sheath his trenchant sword,
 Dash'd through the crowd, and hand to hand he smote
 Antiphates; he, backward, fell to earth.
 Menon, Iamenus, Orestes next, 210
 In quick succession to the ground he brought.
 From these while they their glitt'ring armour stripp'd,
 Round Hector throng'd, and bold Polydamas,
 The bravest and the best, who long'd the most
 To storm the wall, and burn with fire the ships.
 Yet on the margin of the ditch they paus'd;
 For, as they sought to cross, a sign from Heav'n
 Appear'd, to leftward of th' astonish'd crowd;
 A soaring eagle in his talons bore
 A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 220
 Alive, and breathing still, nor yet subdued;
 For twisting backward through the breast he pierc'd
 His bearer, near the neck; he, stung with pain,
 Let fall his prey, which dropp'd amid the crowd;
 Then screaming, on the blast was borne away.
 The Trojans, shudd'ring, in their midst beheld
 The spotted serpent, dire portent of Jove:
 Then to bold Hector thus Polydamas:
 "Hector, in council thou reprov'st me oft
 For good advice; it is not meet, thou say'st, 230
 That private men should talk beside the mark,
 In council or in war, but study still
 Thine honour to exalt; yet must I now
 Declare what seems to me the wisest course:
 Let us not fight the Greeks beside their ships;
 For thus I read the future, if indeed
 To us, about to cross, this sign from Heav'n
 Was sent, to leftward of th' astonish'd crowd:
 A soaring eagle, bearing in his claws
 A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 240
 Alive; yet dropp'd him ere he reach'd his home,
 Nor to his nestlings bore th' intended prey:
 So we, ev'n though our mighty strength should break
 The gates and wall, and put the Greeks to rout,
 By the same road not scatheless should return,
 But many a Trojan on the field should leave,
 Slain by the Greeks, while they their ships defend.
 So would a seer, well vers'd in augury,

Worthy of public credit, read this sign."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm 250

Replied, with stern regard: "Polydamas,

This speech of thine is alien to my soul:

Thy better judgment better counsel knows.

But if in earnest such is thine advice,

Thee of thy senses have the Gods bereft,

Who fain wouldst have us disregard the word

And promise by the nod of Jove confirm'd,

And put our faith in birds' expanded wings;

Little of these I reckon, nor care to look,

If to the right, and tow'rd the morning sun, 260

Or to the left, and shades of night, they fly.

Put we our trust in Jove's eternal will,

Of mortals and Immortals King supreme.

The best of omens is our country's cause.

Why shouldst thou tremble at the battle strife?

Though ev'ry Trojan else were doom'd to die

Beside the ships, no fear lest thou shouldst fall:

Unwarlike is thy soul, nor firm of mood:

But if thou shrink, or by thy craven words

Turn back another Trojan from the fight, 270

My spear shall take the forfeit of thy life."

This said, he led the way; with joyous shouts

They follow'd all; then Jove, the lightning's Lord,

From Ida's heights a storm of wind sent down,

Driving the dust against the Grecian ships;

Which quell'd their courage, and to Hector gave,

And to the Trojans, fresh incitement; they,

On their own strength, and heav'nly signs relying,

Their force address'd to storm the Grecian wall.

They raz'd the counterscarp, the battlements 280

Destroy'd; and the projecting buttresses,

Which, to sustain the tow'rs, the Greeks had fix'd

Deep in the soil, with levers undermin'd.

These once withdrawn, they hop'd to storm the wall;

Nor from the passage yet the Greeks withdrew,

But closely fencing with their bull's-hide shields

The broken battlements, they thence hurl'd down

A storm of weapons on the foe beneath.

Commanding from the tow'r in ev'ry place

Were seen th' Ajaces, urging to the fight, 290

Imploring these, and those in sterner tones

Rebuking, who their warlike toil relax'd.

“ Friends, Grecians all, ye who excel in war,
 And ye of mod'rate or inferior strength,
 Though all are not with equal pow'rs endued,
 Yet here is work for all! bear this in mind,
 Nor tow'rd the ships let any turn his face,
 By threats dismay'd; but forward press, and each
 Encourage each, if so the lightning's Lord,
 Olympian Jove, may grant us to repel,
 And backward to his city chase the foe.”

300

Thus they, with cheering words, sustain'd the war:
 Thick as the snow-flakes on a wintry day,
 When Jove, the Lord of counsel, down on men
 His snow-storm sends, and manifests his pow'r:
 Hush'd are the winds; the flakes continuous fall,
 That the high mountain tops, and jutting crags,
 And lotus-cover'd meads are buried deep,
 And man's productive labours of the field;
 On hoary Ocean's beach and bays they lie,
 Th' approaching waves their bound; o'er all beside
 Is spread by Jove the heavy veil of snow.
 So thickly flew the stones from either side,
 By Greeks on Trojans hurl'd, by these on Greeks;
 And clatter'd loud through all its length the wall.
 Nor yet the Trojans, though by Hector led,
 The gates had broken, and the massive bar,
 But Jove against the Greeks sent forth his son
 Sarpedon, as a lion on a herd:
 His shield's broad orb before his breast he bore,
 Well-wrought, of beaten brass, which th' arm'rer's hand
 Had beaten out, and lin'd with stout bull's-hide;
 With golden rods, continuous, all around;
 He thus equipp'd, two jav'lins brandishing,
 Strode onward, as a lion, mountain-bred,
 Whom, fasting long, his dauntless courage leads
 To assail the flock, though in well-guarded fold;
 And though the shepherds there he find, prepar'd
 With dogs and lances to protect the sheep,
 Not unattempted will he leave the fold;
 But, springing to the midst, he bears his prey
 In triumph thence; or in the onset falls,
 Wounded by jav'lins hurl'd by stalwart hands:
 So, prompted by his godlike courage, burn'd

310

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330

Sarpedon to assail the lofty wall,
 And storm the ramparts; and to Glaucus thus,
 Son of Hippolochus, his speech address'd:

“ Whence is it, Glaucus, that in Lycian land
 We two at feasts the foremost seats may claim,
 The largest portions, and the fullest cups? 34°
 Why held as Gods in honour? why endow'd
 With ample heritage, by Xanthus' banks,
 Of vineyard, and of wheat-producing land?
 Then by the Lycians should we not be seen
 The foremost to affront the raging fight?
 So may our well-arm'd Lycians make their boast;
 ' To no inglorious Kings we Lycians owe
 Allegiance; they on richest viands feed;
 Of luscious flavour drink the choicest wine;
 But still their valour brightest shows; and they, 35°
 Where Lycians war, are foremost in the fight!'
 O friend! if we, survivors of this war,
 Could live, from age and death for ever free,
 Thou shouldst not see me foremost in the fight,
 Nor would I urge thee to the glorious field:
 But since on man ten thousand forms of death
 Attend, which none may 'scape, then on, that we
 May glory on others gain, or they on us! ”

Thus he; nor Glaucus from his bidding shrank;
 And forward straight they led the Lycian pow'rs. 36°
 Menestheus, son of Petëus, with dismay
 Observ'd their movement; for on his command,
 Inspiring terror, their attack was made.
 He look'd around him to the Grecian tow'rs,
 If any chief might there be found, to save
 His comrades from destruction; there he saw,
 Of war insatiable, th' Ajaces twain;
 And Teucer, from the tent but newly come,
 Hard by; nor yet could reach them with his voice;
 Such was the din, such tumult rose to Heav'n, 37°
 From clatt'ring shields, and horsehair-crested helms,
 And batter'd gates, now all at once assail'd:
 Before them fiercely strove th' assaulting bands
 To break their way; he then Thoötes sent,
 His herald, to th' Ajaces, craving aid.

“ Haste thee, Thoötes, on th' Ajaces call,
 On both, 'twere better; so we best may hope

To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand;
 So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,
 Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight. 380

But if they too are hardly press'd, at least
 Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spar'd,
 And with him Teucer, skill'd to draw the bow."
 He said; the herald heard, and straight obey'd;
 Along the wall, where stood the brass-clad Greeks,
 He ran, and standing near th' Ajaces, said:

"Ajaces, leaders of the brass-clad Greeks,
 The son of Heav'n-born Petëus craves your aid,
 To share awhile the labours of his guard;
 Both, if it may be; so he best may hope 390
 To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand:
 So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,
 Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight.

But if ye too are hardly press'd, at least
 Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spar'd,
 And with him Teucer, skill'd to draw the bow."

He said: the mighty son of Telamon
 Consenting, thus address'd Oïleus' son:
 "Ajax, do thou and valiant Lycomedè
 Exhort the Greeks the struggle to maintain; 400
 While I go yonder, to affront the war,
 To aid their need, and back return in haste."

Thus saying, Ajax Telamon set forth,
 And with him Teucer went, his father's son,
 While by Pandion Teucer's bow was borne.
 At brave Menestheus' tow'r, within the wall,
 Arriv'd, sore press'd they found the garrison;
 For like a whirlwind on the ramparts pour'd
 The Lycians' valiant councillors and chiefs.
 They quickly join'd the fray, and loud arose 410
 The battle-cry; first Ajax Telamon

Sarpedon's comrade, brave Epicles, slew,
 Struck by a rugged stone, within the wall
 Which lay, the topmost of the parapet,
 Of size prodigious; which with both his hands
 A man in youth's full vigour scarce could raise,
 As men are now; he lifted it on high,
 And downward hurl'd; the four-peak'd helm it broke,
 Crushing the bone, and shatt'ring all the skull;
 He, like a diver, from the lofty tow'r 420

Fell headlong down, and life forsook his bones.
 Teucer, meanwhile, from off the lofty wall
 The valiant Glaucus, pressing to the fight,
 Struck with an arrow, where he saw his arm
 Unguarded; he no longer brook'd the fray;
 Back from the wall he sprang, in hopes to hide
 From Grecian eyes his wound, that none might see,
 And triumph o'er him with insulting words.
 With grief Sarpedon saw his friend withdraw,
 Yet not relax'd his efforts; Thestor's son,
 Alcmaon, with his spear he stabb'd, and back
 The weapon drew; he, following, prostrate fell,
 And loudly rang his arms of polish'd brass.
 Then at the parapet, with stalwart hand,
 Sarpedon tugg'd; and yielding to his force
 Down fell the block entire; the wall laid bare,
 To many at once the breach gave open way.
 Ajax and Teucer him at once assail'd;
 This with an arrow struck the glitt'ring belt
 Around his breast, whence hung his pond'rous shield; 440
 But Jove, who will'd not that his son should fall
 Before the ships, the weapon turn'd aside.
 Then forward Ajax sprang, and with his spear
 Thrust at the shield; the weapon pass'd not through,
 Yet check'd his bold advance; a little space
 Back he recoil'd, but not the more withdrew,
 His soul on glory intent; and rallying quick,
 Thus to the warlike Lycians shouted loud:
 "Why, Lycians, thus your wonted might relax?
 'Tis hard for one alone, how brave soe'er,
 Ev'n though he break the rampart down, to force
 A passage to the ships; but on with me!
 For work is here for many hands to do."
 He said; and by the King's rebuke abash'd,
 With fiercer zeal the Lycians press'd around
 Their King and councillor; on th' other side
 Within the wall the Greeks their squadrons mass'd;
 Then were great deeds achiev'd; nor through the breach
 Could the brave troops of Lycia to the ships
 Their passage force; nor could the warrior Greeks 460
 Repel the Lycians from the ground, where they,
 Before the wall, had made their footing good.
 As when two neighbours, in a common field,

Each line in hand, within a narrow space,
 About the limits of their land contend;
 Between them thus the rampart drew the line;
 O'er which the full-orb'd shields of tough bull's-hide,
 And lighter bucklers on the warriors' breasts
 On either side they clove; and many a wound
 The pitiless weapons dealt, on some who, turn'd, 470
 Their neck and back laid bare; on many more
 Who full in front, and through their shields were struck.
 On ev'ry side the parapet and tow'rs
 With Greek and Trojan blood were spatter'd o'er.
 Nor yet, ev'n so, the Greeks to flight were driv'n;
 But as a woman that for wages spins,
 Honest and true, with wool and weights in hand,
 In even balance holds the scales, to mete
 Her humble hire, her children's maintenance;
 So even hung the balance of the war, 480
 Till Jove with highest honour Hector crown'd,
 The son of Priam; he, the foremost, scal'd
 The wall, and loudly on the Trojans call'd:
 "On, valiant Trojans, on! the Grecian wall
 Break down, and wrap their ships in blazing fires."
 Thus he, exhorting, spoke; they heard him all,
 And to the wall rush'd numberless, and swarm'd
 Upon the ramparts, bristling thick with spears.
 Then Hector, stooping, seiz'd a pond'rous stone
 That lay before the gates; 'twas broad below, 490
 But sharp above; and scarce two lab'ring men,
 The strongest, from the ground could raise it up,
 And load upon a wain; as men are now;
 But he unaided lifted it with ease,
 So light it seem'd, by grace of Saturn's son.
 As in one hand a shepherd bears with ease
 A full-siz'd fleece, and scarcely feels the weight;
 So Hector tow'rd the portals bore the stone,
 Which clos'd the lofty double-folding gates,
 Within defended by two massive bars 500
 Laid crosswise, and with one cross bolt secur'd.
 Close to the gate he stood; and planting firm
 His foot, to give his arm its utmost pow'r,
 Full on the middle dash'd the mighty mass.
 The hinges both gave way; the pond'rous stone
 Fell inwards; widely gap'd the op'ning gates;

Nor might the bars within the blow sustain:
This way and that the sever'd portals flew
Before the crashing missile; dark as night
His low'ring brow, great Hector sprang within; 510
Bright flash'd the brazen armour on his breast,
As through the gates, two jav'lines in his hand,
He sprang; the Gods except, no pow'r might meet
That onset; blaz'd his eyes with lurid fire.
Then to the Trojans, turning to the throng,
He call'd aloud to scale the lofty wall;
They heard, and straight obey'd; some scal'd the wall;
Some through the strong-built gates continuous pour'd;
While in confusion irretrievable
Fled to their ships the panic-stricken Greeks. 520

BOOK XIII

ARGUMENT

NEPTUNE engages on the part of the Grecians. The battle proceeds. Deiphobus advances to combat, but is repulsed by Meriones, who losing his spear, repairs to his tent for another. Teucer slays Imbrius, and Hector Amphimachus. Neptune, under the similitude of Thoas, exhorts Idomeneus. Idomeneus having armed himself in his tent, and, going forth to battle, meets Meriones. After discourse held with each other, Idomeneus accommodates Meriones with a spear, and they proceed to battle. Idomeneus slays Othryoneus, and Assius. Deiphobus assails Idomeneus, but, his spear glancing over him, kills Hypsenor. Idomeneus slays Alcathoüs, son-in-law of Anchises. Deiphobus and Idomeneus respectively summon their friends to their assistance, and a contest ensues for the body of Alcathoüs.

WHEN Jove had Hector and the Trojans brought
Close to the ships, he left them there to toil
And strife continuous; turning his keen glance
To view far off th' equestrian tribes of Thrace,
The warlike Mysians, and the men who feed
On milk of mares, thence Hippemolgi term'd;
A peaceful race, the justest of mankind.
On Troy he turn'd not once his piercing glance;
Nor deem'd he any God would dare to give
To Trojans or to Greeks his active aid.

10

No careless watch the monarch Neptune kept:
Wond'ring, he view'd the battle, where he sat
Aloft on wooded Samos' topmost peak,
Samos of Thrace; whence Ida's heights he saw,
And Priam's city, and the ships of Greece.
Thither ascended from the sea, he sat;
And thence the Greeks, by Trojans overborne,
Pitying he saw, and deeply wroth with Jove.
Then down the mountain's craggy side he pass'd
With rapid step; and as he mov'd along,
Beneath th' immortal feet of Ocean's Lord
Quak'd the huge mountain and the shadowy wood.
Three strides he took; the fourth, he reach'd his goal,
Ægæ; where on the margin of the bay

20

His temple stood, all glitt'ring, all of gold,
 Imperishable; there arriv'd, he yok'd
 Beneath his car the brazen-footed steeds,
 Of swiftest flight, with manes of flowing gold,
 All clad in gold, the golden lash he grasp'd
 Of curious work, and mounting on his car, 30
 Skimm'd o'er the waves; from all the depths below
 Gamboll'd around the monsters of the deep,
 Acknowledging their King; the joyous sea
 Parted her waves; swift flew the bounding steeds,
 Nor was the brazen axle wet with spray,
 When to the ships of Greece their Lord they bore.

Down in the deep recesses of the sea
 A spacious cave there is, which lies midway
 'Twixt Tenedos and Imbros' rocky isle:
 Th' Earth-shaking Neptune there his coursers stay'd, 40
 Loos'd from the chariot, and before them plac'd
 Ambrosial provender; and round their feet
 Shackles of gold, which none might break nor loose,
 That there they might await their Lord's return;
 Then to the Grecian army took his way.

Meantime, by Hector, son of Priam, led,
 Like fire, or whirlwind, press'd the Trojans on,
 With furious zeal, and shouts and clamour hoarse;
 In hopes to take the ships, and ev'ry Greek
 To give to slaughter; but from Ocean's depths 50
 Uprose th' Earth-shaker, Circler of the Earth,
 To Calchas' likeness and deep voice conform'd,
 And rous'd the fainting Greeks; th' Ajaces first,
 Themselves with ardour fill'd, he thus address'd:
 "'Tis yours, Ajaces, fill'd with courage high,
 Discarding chilly fear, to save the Greeks:
 Elsewhere I dread not much the Trojan force,
 Though they in crowds have scal'd the lofty wall;
 The well-greav'd Greeks their onset may defy.
 Yet greatly fear I lest we suffer loss, 60
 Where that fierce, fiery madman, Hector, leads,
 Who boasts himself the son of Jove most high.
 But may some God your hearts inspire, yourselves
 Firmly to stand, and cheer your comrades on;
 So from your swiftly-sailing ships ye yet
 May drive the foe, how bold soe'er he be,
 Though by Olympian Jove himself upheld."

So spake th' Earth-shaker, Circler of the Earth,
 And with his sceptre touching both the chiefs,
 Fill'd them with strength and courage, and their limbs, 70
 Their feet and hands, with active vigour strung;
 Then like a swift-wing'd falcon sprang to flight,
 Which down the sheer face of some lofty rock
 Swoops on the plain to seize his feather'd prey:
 So swiftly Neptune left the chiefs; him first
 Departing, knew Oileus' active son,
 And thus the son of Telamon address'd:
 " Ajax, since some one of th' Olympian Gods,
 In likeness of a seer, hath hither come
 To urge us to the war (no Calchas he, 80
 Our augur Heav'n-inspir'd; for well I mark'd
 His movements, as he went; and of a God
 'Tis easy to discern the outward signs),
 I feel fresh spirit kindled in my breast,
 And new-born vigour in my feet and hands."

Whom answer'd thus the son of Telamon:
 " My hands too grasp with firmer hold the spear,
 My spirit like thine is stirr'd; I feel my feet
 Instinct with fiery life; nor should I fear
 With Hector, son of Priam, in his might 90
 Alone to meet, and grapple to the death."

Such was their mutual converse, as they joy'd
 In the fierce transport by the God inspir'd.
 Neptune, meanwhile, the other Greeks arous'd,
 Who, to the ships withdrawn, their wasted strength
 Recruited; for their limbs were faint with toil,
 And grief was in their hearts, as they beheld
 The Trojan hosts that scal'd the lofty wall;
 They saw, and from their eyes the teardrops fell,
 Of safety desp'rate; but th' Earth-shaking God 100
 Amid their ranks appearing, soon restor'd
 Their firm array; to Teucer first he came,
 To Leïtus, and valiant Peneleus,
 Thoas, Deipyrus, Meriones,
 And young Antilochus, brave warriors all,
 And to the chiefs his wingèd words address'd:

" Shame on ye, Grecian youths! to you I look'd
 As to our ships' defenders; but if ye
 Shrink from the perilous battle, then indeed
 Our day is come, to be by Troy subdu'd. 110

O Heav'n! a sad and wondrous sight is this,
 A sight I never deem'd my eyes should see,
 Our ships assail'd by Trojan troops; by those
 Who heretofore have been as tim'rous hinds
 Amid the forest depths, the helpless prey
 Of jackals, pards, and wolves; they here and there,
 Uncertain, heartless, unresisting, fly:
 Such were the Trojans once; nor dar'd abide,
 No, not an hour, the strength and arms of Greece;
 And these are they, who now beside our ships, 120
 Far from their city walls, maintain the fight,
 Embolden'd by our great commander's fault,
 And slackness of the people, who, with him
 Offended, scarce are brought to guard our ships,
 And, feebly fighting, are beside them slain.
 Ev'n though the mighty monarch, Atreus' son,
 Wide-ruling Agamemnon, be in truth
 Wholly to blame in this, that he hath wrong'd
 The son of Peleus, yet 'tis not for us
 Our courage to relax. Arouse ye then! 130
 A brave man's spirit its vigour soon regains.
 That ye, the best and bravest of the host,
 Should stand aloof thus idly, 'tis not well;
 If meaner men should from the battle shrink,
 I might not blame them; but that such as ye
 Should falter, indignation fills my soul.
 Dear friends, from this remissness must accrue
 Yet greater evils; but with gen'rous shame
 And keen remorse let each man's breast be fill'd;
 Fierce is the struggle; in his pride of strength 140
 Hector has forc'd the gates and massive bars,
 And raging, 'mid the ships maintains the war."
 Thus Neptune on the Greeks, reproving, call'd:
 Then round th' Ajaces twain were cluster'd thick
 The serried files, whose firm array nor Mars,
 Nor spirit-stirring Pallas might reprove:
 For there, the bravest all, in order due,
 Waited the Trojan charge by Hector led:
 Spear close by spear, and shield by shield o'erlaid,
 Buckler to buckler press'd, and helm to helm, 150
 And man to man; the horsehair plumes above,
 That nodded on the warriors' glitt'ring crests,
 Each other touch'd; so closely mass'd they stood.

Backward, by many a stalwart hand, were drawn
 The spears, in act to hurl; their eyes and minds
 Turn'd to the front, and eager for the fray.
 On pour'd the Trojan masses; in the van
 Hector straight forward urg'd his furious course.
 As some huge boulder, from its rocky bed
 Detach'd, and by the wintry torrent's force 160
 Hurl'd down the cliff's steep face, when constant rains
 The massive rock's firm hold have undermin'd;
 With giant bounds it flies; the crashing wood
 Resounds beneath it; still it hurries on,
 Until, arriving at the level plain,
 Its headlong impulse check'd, it rolls no more;
 So Hector, threat'ning now through ships and tents,
 Ev'n to the sea, to force his murd'rous way.
 Anon, confronted by that phalanx firm,
 Halts close before it; while the sons of Greece, 170
 With thrust of sword and double-pointed spears,
 Stave off his onset; he a little space
 Withdrew, and loudly on the Trojans call'd:
 "Trojans, and Lycians, and ye Dardans fam'd
 In close encounter, stand ye firm! not long
 The Greeks, though densely mass'd, shall bar my way,
 But soon, methinks, before my spear shall quail,
 If from the chief of Gods my mission be,
 From Jove the Thund'rer, royal Juno's Lord."
 His words fresh courage rais'd in ev'ry breast: 180
 On loftiest deeds intent, Deiphobus,
 The son of Priam, from the foremost ranks,
 His shield's broad orb before him borne, advanc'd
 With airy step, protected by the shield:
 At him Meriones with glitt'ring spear
 Took aim, nor miss'd his mark; the shield's broad orb
 Of tough bull's-hide it struck; but pass'd not through,
 For near the head the sturdy shaft was snapp'd.
 Yet from before his breast Deiphobus
 Held at arm's length his shield; for much he fear'd 190
 The weapon of Meriones; but he
 Back to his comrades' shelt'ring ranks withdrew,
 Griev'd at his baffled hopes and broken spear.
 Then tow'rd the ships he bent his steps, to seek
 Another spear, which in his tent remain'd.
 The rest, 'mid wild uproar, maintain'd the fight.

There Teucer first, the son of Telamon,
 A warrior slew, the son of Mentor, Lord
 Of num'rous horses, Imbrius, spearman skill'd.
 In former days, ere came the sons of Greece, 200
 He in Pedæus dwelt, and had to wife
 Medesicaste, Priam's bastard child:
 But when the well-trimm'd ships of Greece appear'd,
 Return'd to Troy; and there, rever'd by all,
 With Priam dwelt, who lov'd him as a son.
 Him Teucer with his lance below the ear
 Stabb'd, and drew back the weapon; down he fell,
 As by the woodman's axe, on some high peak,
 Falls a proud ash, conspicuous from afar,
 Scatt'ring its tender foliage on the ground; 210
 He fell; and loud his burnish'd armour rang.
 Forth Teucer sprang to seize the spoil; at whom,
 Advancing, Hector aim'd his glitt'ring spear;
 He saw, and, stooping, shunn'd the brazen death
 A little space; but through the breast it struck
 Amphimachus, the son of Cteatus,
 The son of Actor, hastening to the fight:
 Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.
 Then forward Hector sprang, in hopes to seize
 The brazen helm, that fitted well the brow 220
 Of brave Amphimachus; but Ajax met
 Th' advance of Hector with his glitt'ring spear;
 Himself he reach'd not, all in dazzling brass
 Encas'd; but pressing on his bossy shield
 Drove by main force beyond where lay the dead:
 Them both the Greeks withdrew; th' Athenian chiefs
 Sty chius and brave Menestheus, bore away
 Amid the ranks of Greece Amphimachus;
 While, as two lions high above the ground
 Bear through the brushwood in their jaws a goat, 230
 Snatch'd from the sharp-fang'd dogs' protecting care;
 So, fill'd with warlike rage, th' Ajaces twain
 Lifted on high, and of its armour stripp'd
 The corpse of Imbrius; and Oileus' son,
 Griev'd at Amphimachus, his comrade's death,
 Cut from the tender neck, and like a ball
 Sent whirling through the crowd the sever'd head;
 And in the dust at Hector's feet it fell.
 Then, for his grandson slain, fierce anger fill'd

The breast of Neptune; through the tents of Greece 240
 And ships he pass'd, the Greeks encouraging,
 And ill's preparing for the sons of Troy.
 Him met Idomeneus, the warrior King,
 Leaving a comrade, from the battle field,
 Wounded behind the knee, but newly brought;
 Borne by his comrades, to the leech's care
 He left him, eager to rejoin the fray;
 Whom by his tent th' Earth-shaking God address'd,
 The voice assuming of Andræmon's son,
 Who o'er th' Ætolians, as a God rever'd, 250
 In Pleuron reign'd, and lofty Calydon:

“Where now, Idomeneus, sage Cretan chief,
 Are all the vaunting threats, so freely pour'd
 Against the Trojans by the sons of Greece?”

To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus:
 “Thoas, on none, so far as I may judge,
 May blame be cast; we all our duties know;
 Nor see I one by heartless fear restrain'd,
 Nor hanging back, and flinching from the war:
 Yet by th' o'erruling will of Saturn's son 260
 It seems decreed that here the Greeks should fall,
 And far from Argos lie in nameless graves.
 But, Thoas, as thyself art ever staunch,
 Nor slow the laggards to reprove, thy work
 Remit not now; but rouse each sev'ral man.”

To whom Earth-shaking Neptune thus replied:
 “Idomeneus, may he from Troy return
 No more, but here remain to glut the dogs,
 If such there be, from this day's fight who shrinks.
 But haste thee, don thine arms; great need is now 270
 To hasten, if in aught we two may serve:
 Ev'n meaner men, united, courage gain;
 But we the bravest need not fear to meet.”

He said, and to the strife of men return'd.
 Within his well-constructed tent arriv'd,
 Straight donn'd Idomeneus his armour bright:
 Two spears he took; and, like the lightning's flash,
 Which, as a sign to men, the hand of Jove
 Hurls downwards from Olympus' glitt'ring heights;
 Whose dazzling radiance far around is thrown; 280
 Flash'd, as the warrior ran, his armour bright.
 Him met Meriones, his follower brave,

Close to the tent; to seek a spear he came;
 To whom Idomeneus: "Meriones,
 Swift-footed son of Molus, comrade dear,
 Why com'st thou here, and leav'st the battle field?
 Hast thou some wound receiv'd, whereof the pain
 Subdues thy spirit? or com'st thou, to the field
 To summon me? unsummon'd, well thou know'st
 I better love the battle than the tent." 290

Whom answer'd thus the sage Meriones:
 "Idomeneus, the brass-clad Cretans' King,
 I come to seek a spear, if haply such
 Within thy tent be found; for, in the fight,
 That which I lately bore, e'en now I broke
 Against the shield of brave Deiphobus."

To whom Idomeneus, the Cretan King:
 "Of spears, or one, or twenty, if thou list,
 Thou there mayst find against the polish'd wall,
 The spoil of Trojans slain; for with my foes 300
 'Tis not my wont to wage a distant war.
 Thence have I store of spears, and bossy shields,
 And crested helms, and breastplates polish'd bright."

Whom answer'd thus the sage Meriones:
 "Nor are my tent and dark-ribb'd ship devoid
 Of Trojan spoils; but they are far to seek;
 Nor deem I that my hand is slack in fight;
 For 'mid the foremost in the glorious strife
 I stand, whene'er is heard the battle cry.
 My deeds by others of the brass-clad Greeks 310
 May not be noted; but thou know'st them well."

To whom Idomeneus, the Cretan King:
 "What need of this? thy prowess well I know:
 For should we choose our bravest through the fleet
 To man the secret ambush, surest test
 Of warriors' courage, where is manifest
 The diff'rence 'twixt the coward and the brave;
 (The coward's colour changes, nor his soul
 Within his breast its even balance keeps,
 But changing still, from foot to foot he shifts, 320
 And in his bosom loudly beats his heart,
 Expecting death; and chatter all his teeth:
 The brave man's colour changes not; no fear
 He knows, the ambush ent'ring; all his pray'r
 Is that the hour of battle soon may come)

Ev'n there, thy courage none might call in doubt.
 Shouldst thou from spear or sword receive a wound,
 Not on thy neck behind, nor on thy back
 Would fall the blow, but on thy breast, in front,
 Still pressing onward 'mid the foremost ranks. 330
 But come, prolong we not this idle talk,
 Like babblers vain, who scorn might justly move:
 Haste to my tent, and there select thy spear."

He said: and from the tent Meriones,
 Valiant as Mars, his spear selected straight,
 And, eager for the fray, his chief rejoin'd.
 As Mars, the bane of men, goes forth to war,
 Attended by his strong, unfearing son,
 Terror, who shakes the bravest warrior's soul;
 They two, from Thrace, against the Ephyri, 340
 Or haughty Phlegyans arm; nor hear alike
 The pray'rs of both the combatants, one side
 With vict'ry crowning: so to battle went
 Those leaders twain, in dazzling arms array'd:
 Then thus Meriones his chief address'd:

"Son of Deucalion, say if on the right,
 Or on the centre of the gen'ral host,
 Our onset should be made, or on the left;
 For there, methinks, most succour need the Greeks."

To whom Idomeneus, the Cretan chief: 350
 "Others there are the centre to defend,
 Th' Ajaces both, and Teucer, of the Greeks
 Best archer, good too in the standing fight;
 These may for Hector full employment find,
 Brave as he is, and eager for the fray;
 Ev'n for his courage 'twere a task too hard,
 Their might to conquer, and resistless hands,
 And burn the ships, if Saturn's son himself
 Fire not, and 'mid the shipping throw the torch.
 Great Ajax Telamon to none would yield, 360
 Of mortal birth, by earthly food sustain'd,
 By spear or pond'rous stone assailable;
 In hand to hand encounter, scarce surpass'd
 By Peleus' son Achilles; though with him
 In speed of foot he might not hope to vie.
 Then on the left let us our onset make;
 And quickly learn if we on others' heads
 Are doom'd to win renown, or they on ours."

He said: and, brave as Mars, Meriones,
 Thither where he directed, led the way. 370
 Now when, attended thus, Idomeneus,
 Like blazing fire, in dazzling arms appear'd,
 Around him throng'd, with rallying cries, the Greeks,
 And rag'd beside the ships the balanc'd fight.
 As, when the dust lies deepest on the roads,
 Before the boist'rous winds the storm drives fast,
 And high at once the whirling clouds are toss'd;
 So was the fight confus'd; and in the throng
 Each man with keen desire of slaughter burn'd.
 Bristled the deadly strife with pond'rous spears, 380
 Wiielded with dire intent; the brazen gleam
 Dazzled the sight, by flashing helmets cast,
 And breastplates polish'd bright, and glitt'ring shields
 Commingling; stern of heart indeed were he,
 Who on that sight with joy, not pain, could gaze.

Dire evil then on mortal warriors brought
 The diverse minds of Saturn's mighty sons:
 To Hector and the Trojans Jove design'd,
 In honour of Achilles, swift of foot,
 To give the vict'ry; yet not utterly 390
 He will'd to slay before the walls of Troy
 The Grecian host; but glory to confer
 On Thetis and her noble-minded son.
 Neptune, on th' other side, the Greeks inspir'd,
 Clandestine rising from the hoary sea;
 For them before the Trojan host o'erborne
 He saw with grief, and deeply wroth with Jove.
 Equal the rank of both, their birth the same,
 But Jove in wisdom, as in years, the first.
 Nor ventur'd Neptune openly to aid 400
 The cause of Greece; but cloth'd in mortal form,
 In secret still the army's courage rous'd.
 This way and that they tugg'd of furious war
 And balanc'd strife, where many a warrior fell,
 The straining rope, which none might break or loose.
 Then, though his hair was grizzled o'er with age,
 Calling the Greeks to aid, Idomeneus,
 Inspiring terror, on the Trojans sprang,
 And slew Othryoneus, who had his home
 In far Cabesus; whence but late he came 410
 In hope to share the glory of the war.

He Priam's fairest daughter sought to wed,
 Cassandra, portionless; and mighty deeds
 He promis'd, from before the walls of Troy
 In their despite to drive the sons of Greece.
 The aged Priam listen'd to his suit;
 And he, his promise trusting, fought for Troy.
 Him, marching with proud step, Idomeneus
 Struck with his glitt'ring spear, nor aught avail'd
 His brazen breastplate; through the middle thrust, 420
 Thund'ring he fell: the victor vaunting cried:

" Othryoneus, above all mortal men
 I hold thee in respect, if thou indeed
 Wilt make thy words to aged Priam good,
 Who promis'd thee his daughter in return:
 We too would offer thee a like reward;
 And give thee here to wed, from Argos brought,
 Atrides' fairest daughter, if with us
 Thou wilt o'erthrow the well-built walls of Troy.
 Come then, on board our ocean-going ships 430
 Discuss the marriage contract; nor shall we
 Be found illib'ral of our bridal gifts."

He said, and seizing by the foot the slain,
 Dragg'd from the press; but to the rescue came
 Asius, himself on foot before his car:
 So close his charioteer the horses held,
 They breath'd upon his shoulders; eagerly
 He sought to reach Idomeneus; but he,
 Preventing, through his gullet drove the spear,
 Beneath his chin; right through the weapon pass'd; 440
 He fell; as falls an oak, or poplar tall,
 Or lofty pine, which on the mountain top,
 For some proud ship, the woodman's axe hath hewn:
 So he, before the car and horses stretch'd,
 His death-cry utt'ring, clutch'd the blood-stain'd soil;
 Bewilder'd, helpless, stood his charioteer;
 Nor dar'd, escaping from the foemen's hands,
 To turn his horses: him, Antilochus
 Beneath the waistband struck; nor aught avail'd
 His brazen breastplate; through the middle thrust, 450
 He, from the well-wrought chariot, gasping, fell.
 Antilochus, the noble Nestor's son,
 The horses seiz'd, and from the Trojan ranks
 Drove to the Grecian camp. For Asius' death

Deep griev'd, Deiphobus, approaching, hurl'd
 Against Idomeneus his glitt'ring spear:
 The coming weapon he beheld, and shunn'd:
 Beneath the ample circle of his shield,
 With hides and brazen plates encircled round,
 And by two rods sustain'd, conceal'd he stood: 460
 Beneath he crouch'd, and o'er him flew the spear:
 Yet harsh it grated, glancing from the shield;
 Nor bootless from that stalwart hand it flew,
 But through the midriff, close below the heart,
 Hypsenor, son of Hippasus, it struck,
 And straight relax'd his limbs; then shouting loud,
 In boastful tone, Deiphobus exclaim'd:

“Not unaveng'd lies Asius; he, methinks,
 As I have found him fellowship, with joy
 Through Hades' strongly-guarded gates may pass.” 470
 He said; the Greeks, indignant, heard his boast:
 Chief, of Antilochus the manly soul
 Was stirr'd within him; yet amid his grief
 His comrade not forgetting, up he ran,
 And o'er him spread the cover of his shield.
 Meanwhile, two trusty friends, Mecistheus, son
 Of Echius, and Alastor, rais'd the slain,
 And deeply groaning bore him to the ships.
 Nor did Idomeneus his noble rage
 Abate; still burning o'er some Trojan soul 480
 To draw the gloomy veil of night and death;
 Or, having sav'd the Greeks, himself to fall.
 Then high-born Æsuetes' son he slew,
 Alcathöus; he, Anchises' son-in-law,
 The eldest of his daughters had to wife,
 Hippodamia; by her parents both,
 O'er all, belov'd; in beauty, skill, and mind,
 All her compeers surpassing; wife of one,
 The noblest man through all the breadth of Troy.
 Him Neptune by Idomeneus subdued; 490
 Seal'd his quick eyes, his active limbs restrain'd,
 Without the pow'r to fly, or shun the spear;
 Fix'd as a pillar, or a lofty tree,
 He stood, while through his breast Idomeneus
 His weapon drove; the brazen mail it broke,
 Which oft had turn'd aside the stroke of death;
 Harshly it grated, sever'd by the spear:

He fell; the spear-point quiv'ring in his heart,
Which with convulsive throbbings shook the shaft.
There Mars its course arrested. Then with shouts 500
Of triumph, vaunting, thus Idomeneus:

“How now, Deiphobus? are three for one
An equal balance? where are now thy boasts?
Come forth, my friend, thyself to me oppos'd;
And learn, if here, unworthy my descent
From Jove, my great progenitor, I stand.
He Minos, guardian chief of Crete, begot;
Noble Deucalion was to Minos born,
I to Deucalion; far extends my rule
In wide-spread Crete; whom now our ships have brought,
A bane to thee, thy sire, and Trojans all.” 511

He said; and doubtful stood Deiphobus,
Or to retreat, and summon to his aid
The Trojans, or alone the venture try.
Thus as he mus'd, the wiser course appear'd
To seek Æneas; him he found apart,
Behind the crowd; for he was still at feud
With godlike Priam, who, he thought, withheld
The public honour to his valour due.
To whom Deiphobus, approaching, thus: 520

“Æneas, sagest councillor of Troy,
Behoves thee now, if rev'rence for the dead
Can move thy soul, thy sister's husband aid:
Haste we to save Alcathöus; who of old,
When thou wast little, in thy father's house,
Nurs'd thee with tender care; for him, but now,
The spear-renown'd Idomeneus hath slain.”

He said; Æneas' spirit was rous'd, and fill'd
With martial rage he sought Idomeneus.
Nor, cowardlike, did he th' encounter shun; 530
But firmly stood, as stands a mountain-boar,
Self-confident, that in some lonely spot
Awaits the clam'rous chase; bristles his back;
His eyes with fire are flashing; and his tusks
He whets, on men and dogs prepar'd to rush:
So stood the spear-renown'd Idomeneus,
The onset of Æneas, swift in fight,
Awaiting; and the friends he saw around
He summon'd to his aid; Ascalaphus,
Deipyrus, and brave Meriones, 540

Antilochus and Aphareus; to these,
Tried warriors all, he thus address'd his speech:

“Aid me, my friends! alone I stand, and dread
The onset of Æneas, swift of foot,
Mighty to slay in battle; and the bloom
Of youth is his, the crown of human strength;
If, as our spirit, our years were but the same,
Great glory now should he, or I, obtain.”
He said; and, one in heart, their bucklers slop'd
Upon their shoulders, all beside him stood. 550

On th' other side, Æneas to his aid
Summon'd his brother chiefs, Deiphobus,
And Paris, and Agenor; following whom
Came on the gen'ral crowd; as flocks of sheep
From pasture follow to their drinking-place
The lordly ram; well pleas'd the shepherd sees;
So pleas'd, Æneas saw the gath'ring crowd.

Then o'er Alcathöus hand to hand was wag'd
The war of spears; dire was the clash of brass
Upon the heroes' breasts, as 'mid the press 560
Each aim'd at other; proudly eminent
Stood forth two mighty warriors, terrible
As Mars, Æneas and Idomeneus,

Their sharp spears wielding each at other's life.
First at Idomeneus Æneas threw

His spear; he saw, and shunn'd the brazen point;
And vainly from his stalwart hand dismiss'd,
Æneas' spear stood quiv'ring in the ground.
Idomeneus in front, below the waist,

Ænomäus struck; the weighty spear broke through 570
The hollow breastplate, and th' intestines tore;
Prone in the dust he fell, and clutch'd the ground.

Forthwith Idomeneus from out the corpse
The pond'rous spear withdrew; yet could not strip
His armour off; so thickly flew the spears.

Nor did his feet retain their youthful force,
His weapon to regain, or back to spring.
Skill'd in the standing fight his life to guard,
He lack'd the active pow'r of swift retreat.

At him, retiring slow, Deiphobus, 580
Still fill'd with anger, threw his glitt'ring spear:
His aim he miss'd; but through the shoulder pierc'd
Ascalaphus, a valiant son of Mars;

Prone in the dust he fell, and clutch'd the ground.
 Nor knew the loud-voic'd, mighty God of War
 That in the stubborn fight his son had fall'n;
 On high Olympus, girt with golden clouds,
 He sat, amid th' Immortals all, restrain'd,
 By Jove's commands, from mingling in the war.
 Now hand to hand around Ascalaphus
 Rag'd the fierce conflict: first Deiphobus
 From off his head the glitt'ring helmet tore;
 But, terrible as Mars, Meriones
 Sprang forth, and pierc'd his arm; and from his hand
 With hollow sound the crested helmet fell.
 On, like a vulture, sprang Meriones,
 And from his arm the sturdy spear withdrew;
 Then backward leap'd amid his comrades' ranks;
 While round his brother's waist Polites threw
 His arms, and led him from the battle-field
 To where, with charioteer and rich-wrought car,
 Beyond the fight, his flying coursers stood.
 Him, rack'd with pain, and groaning, while the blood
 Stream'd down his wounded arm, to Troy they bore.
 The rest fought on, and loud the tumult rose.

590

600

Æneas through the throat of Aphareus,
 Caletor's son, turn'd sideways tow'rds him, drove
 His glitt'ring spear; and down on th' other side,
 His shield and helmet following, sank his head;
 And o'er his eyes were cast the shades of death.
 As Thöon turn'd, Antilochus, who watch'd
 Th' occasion, forward sprang, and with his spear
 Ripp'd all the flesh that lay along the spine
 Up to the neck; he backward fell, with hands
 Uplifted calling for his comrades' aid:
 But forward sprang Antilochus, and tore
 His armour from his breast, while round he cast
 His watchful glances; for on ev'ry side
 On his broad shield the Trojans show'r'd their blows,
 But touch'd him not; for Neptune, 'mid the throng
 Of weapons, threw his guard o'er Nestor's son.
 Yet not aloof he stood, but in their midst,
 Commingled; nor held motionless his spear;
 But ever threat'ning, turn'd from side to side,
 Prepar'd to hurl, or hand to hand engage.
 Him Adamas, the son of Asius, mark'd,

610

620

As o'er the crowd he glanc'd; and springing forth,
 Struck with his spear the centre of the shield;
 But dark-hair'd Neptune grudg'd the hero's life,
 And stay'd the brazen point; half in the shield, 630
 Like a fire-harden'd stake, remain'd infix'd,
 The other half lay broken on the ground.
 Back to his comrades' shelt'ring ranks he sprang,
 In hope of safety; but Meriones,
 Quick-following, plung'd his weapon through his groin,
 Where sharpest agony to wretched men
 Attends on death; there planted he his spear:
 Around the shaft he writh'd, and gasping groan'd,
 Like to a mountain-bull, which, bound with cords,
 The herdsmen drag along, with struggles vain, 640
 Resisting; so the wounded warrior groan'd:
 But not for long; for fierce Meriones,
 Approaching, from his body tore the spear,
 And the dark shades of death his eyes o'erspread.
 Then Helenus, a weighty Thracian sword
 Wielding aloft, across the temples smote
 Deipyrus, and all his helmet crash'd;
 Which, as it roll'd beneath their feet, some Greek
 Seiz'd 'mid the press; his eyes were clos'd in death.
 The valiant Meneläus, Atreus' son, 650
 With grief beheld; and royal Helenus
 With threat'ning mien approaching, pois'd on high
 His glitt'ring spear, while he the bowstring drew.
 Then simultaneous flew from either side
 The gleaming spear, and arrow from the string.
 The shaft of Priam's son below the breast
 The hollow cuirass struck, and bounded off;
 As bound the dark-skinn'd beans, or clatt'ring peas,
 From the broad fan upon the threshing-floor,
 By the brisk breeze impell'd, and winnower's force; 660
 From noble Meneläus' cuirass so
 The stinging arrow bounding, glanc'd afar.
 But valiant Meneläus, Atreus' son,
 Transfix'd the hand that held the polish'd bow:
 The brazen point pass'd through, and to the bow
 The hand was pinn'd; back to his comrades' ranks
 He sprang, in hope of safety, hanging down
 The wounded limb, that trail'd the ashen spear.
 Agenor from the wound the spear withdrew,

And with a twisted sling of woollen cloth, 670
 By an attendant brought, bound up the hand,
 To noble Meneläus stood oppos'd
 Peisander, to the confines dark of death
 Led by his evil fate, by thee to fall,
 Great son of Atreus, in the deadly strife.
 When near they drew, Atrides miss'd his aim,
 With erring spear divergent; next his shield
 Peisander struck, but drove not through the spear;
 For the broad shield resisted, and the shaft
 Was snapp'd in sunder; Meneläus saw 680
 Rejoicing, and with hope of triumph flush'd;
 Unsheathing then his silver-studded sword
 Rush'd on Peisander; he beneath his shield
 Drew forth a pond'rous brazen battle-axe,
 With handle long, of polish'd olive-wood;
 And both at once in deadly combat join'd.
 Then, just below the plume, Peisander struck
 The crested helmet's peak; but Atreus' son
 Met him advancing, and across the brow
 Smote him, above the nose; loud crash'd the bone, 690
 And in the dust the gory eyeballs dropp'd
 Before him; doubled with the pain, he fell:
 The victor, planting on his chest his foot,
 Stripp'd off his arms, and thus exulting cried:
 " Thus shall ye all, insatiate of the fight,
 Proud Trojans, from before our ships depart;
 Nor lack your share of insult and of wrong,
 Such as on me, vile hounds, ye cast erewhile,
 Nor fear'd th' avenger of the slighted laws
 Of hospitality, high thund'ring Jove, 700
 Who soon your lofty city shall o'erthrow.
 Kindly receiv'd, my virgin-wedded wife,
 With store of goods, ye basely bore away;
 And now ye rage, infuriate, to destroy
 With fire our ocean-going ships, and slay
 Our Grecian heroes; but the time shall come
 When ye too fain would from the war escape.
 O Father Jove, 'tis said that thou excell'st,
 In wisdom, Gods and men; all human things
 From thee proceed; and can it be, that thou 710
 With favour seest these men of violence,
 These Trojans, with presumptuous courage fill'd,

Whose rage for battle knows nor stint nor bound?
 Men are with all things sated; sleep, and love;
 Sweet sounds of music, and the joyous dance.
 Of these may some more gladly take their fill;
 But Trojans still for war, insatiate, thirst."

Thus Meneläus; and the blood-stain'd arms
 Stripp'd from the corpse, and to his comrades gave;
 Then join'd again the foremost in the fray. 720

There to th' encounter forth Harpalion sprang,
 Son of the King Pylæmenes, who came,
 His father following, to the war of Troy,
 But back return'd not to his native land.

He standing near, full in the centre struck
 Atrides' shield, but drove not through the spear;
 Back to his comrades' shelt'ring ranks he sprang
 In hopes of safety, glancing all around,
 His body to defend; but as he turn'd,
 In his right flank a brazen-pointed shaft, 730
 Shot by Meriones, was buried deep:
 Beneath the bone it pass'd, and pierc'd him through.

At once he fell; and gasping out his life,
 Amid his comrades, writhing on the ground
 Like a crush'd worm he lay; and from the wound
 The dark blood pouring, drench'd the thirsty soil.

The valiant troops of Paphlagonia clos'd
 Around him; on his car they plac'd the slain,
 And deeply sorrowing, to the city bore;
 His father, weeping, walk'd beside the car,¹ 740
 Nor vengeance for his slaughter'd son obtain'd.
 Paris with grief and anger saw him fall:

For he in former days his guest had been
 In Paphlagonia; then, with anger fill'd,
 A brass-tipp'd arrow from his bow he sent.

A certain man there was, Euchenor nam'd,
 Who dwelt in Corinth; rich, of blameless life,
 The son of Polyeidus, skilful seer:
 His fate well knowing, he embark'd; for oft
 The good old man had told him that his doom 750
 Was, or at home by sharp disease to die,
 Or with the Greeks by Trojan hands to fall.

¹ This passage would seem to be the result of an oversight on the part of the poet; who, apparently, had forgotten that Pylæmenes, "the Paphlagonian Chief," had himself been killed by Meneläus, some time before the death of his son. See Book V., l. 656.

Embarking, he escap'd alike the fine
 By Greeks impos'd, and pangs of sharp disease.
 Him Paris smote between the ear and jaw;
 Swift fled his spirit, and darkness clos'd his eyes.
 Thus rag'd, like blazing fire, the furious fight.

But nought as yet had Hector heard, nor knew
 How sorely, leftward of the ships, were press'd
 The Trojans by the Greeks; and now appear'd 760
 Their triumph sure; such succour Neptune gave,
 Their courage rousing, and imparting strength.
 But there he kept, where first the serried ranks
 Of Greeks he broke, and storm'd the wall and gates;
 There lay, drawn up beside the hoary sea,
 The ships of Ajax and Protesilas;
 There had the wall been lowest built; and there
 Were gather'd in defence the chiefest all,
 Horses and men: the stout Bœotians there,
 Join'd to th' Ionians with their flowing robes, 770
 Locrians, and Phthians, and Epeians proud,
 Could scarce protect their ships; nor could repel
 Th' impetuous fire of godlike Hector's charge.
 There too the choicest troops of Athens fought;
 Their chief, Menestheus, Petëus' son; with whom
 Were Pheidias, Stichius, Bias in command;
 Th' Epeians Meges, Phyleus' son, obey'd,
 And Dracius and Amphion; Medon next,
 With brave Podarces led the Phthian host:
 Medon, the great Oïleus' bastard son, 780
 Brother of Ajax; he in Phylace,
 Far from his native land, was driv'n to dwell,
 Since one to Eriopis near akin,
 His sire Oïleus' wife, his hand had slain.
 Podarces from Iphiclus claim'd his birth,
 The son of Phylacus; these two in arms
 The valiant Phthians leading to the fight,
 Join'd the Bœotian troops to guard the ships.
 But from the side of Ajax Telamon
 Stirr'd not a whit Oïleus' active son; 790
 But as on fallow-land, with one accord,
 Two dark-red oxen drag the well-wrought plough,
 Streaming with sweat that gathers round their horns;
 They by the polish'd yoke together held,
 The stiff soil cleaving, down the furrow strain;

So closely, side by side, those two advanc'd,
 But comrades, many and brave, on Telamon
 Attended, who, whene'er with toil and sweat
 His limbs grew faint, upheld his weighty shield;
 While in the fray, Oileus' noble son 800
 No Locrians follow'd; theirs were not the hearts
 To brook th' endurance of the standing fight;
 Nor had they brass-bound helms, with horsehair plume,
 Nor ample shields they bore, nor ashen spear;
 But came to Troy, in bows and twisted slings
 Of woollen cloth confiding; and from these
 Their bolts quick-show'ring, broke the Trojan ranks,
 While those, in front, in glitt'ring arms oppos'd
 The men of Troy, by noble Hector led;
 These, in the rear, unseen, their arrows shot. 810
 Nor stood the Trojans; for amid their ranks
 The galling arrows dire confusion spread.
 Then had the Trojans from the ships and tents
 Back to the breezy heights of Troy been driv'n
 In flight disastrous; but Polydamas
 Drew near to Hector, and address'd him thus:
 "Hector, I know thee, how unapt thou art
 To hearken to advice; yet ev'n if Jove
 Hath giv'n thee to excel in warlike might,
 Must needs thy wisdom all men's else surpass? 820
 All gifts thou canst not in thyself combine:
 To one the Gods have granted warlike might,
 To one the dance, to one the lyre and song;
 While in another's breast all-seeing Jove
 Hath plac'd the spirit of wisdom, and a mind
 Discerning, for the common good of all:
 By him are states preserv'd; and he himself
 Best knows the value of the precious gift.
 Then hear what seems to me the wisest course,
 On ev'ry side the circling ring of war 830
 Is blazing all around thee; and, thou seest,
 Our valiant Trojans, since the wall they scal'd,
 Or stand aloof, or scatter'd 'mid the ships
 Outnumber'd, with superior forces strive.
 Then thou, retiring, hither call the chiefs;
 Here take we counsel fully, if again
 Upon their well-mann'd vessels we shall fall,
 Should Heav'n vouchsafe to grant the needful strength,

Or from the ships, while yet unharm'd, withdraw;
 For much I fear they soon will pay us back 840
 Their debt of yesterday; since in their ranks
 One yet remains insatiate of the fight,
 And he, methinks, not long will stand aloof."
 Thus he: the prudent counsel Hector pleas'd;
 Down from his chariot with his arms he leap'd,
 And to Polydamas his speech address'd:

"Polydamas, detain thou here the chiefs;
 Thither will I, and meet the front of war,
 And, giv'n my orders, quickly here return."

He said; and, like a snow-clad mountain high, 850
 Uprose; and loudly shouting, in hot haste
 Flew through the Trojan and Confed'rate host.
 At sound of Hector's voice, round Panthöus' son,
 Polydamas, were gather'd all the chiefs.

But 'mid the foremost combatants he sought
 If haply he might find Deiphobus,
 And royal Helenus, and Adamas,
 And gallant Asius, son of Hyrtacus.

These found he not unscath'd by wounds or death;
 For some beside the ships of Greece had paid, 860
 By Grecian hands, the forfeit of their lives,
 While others wounded lay within the wall.

But, to the leftward of the bloody fray,
 The godlike Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord,
 Cheering his comrades to the fight, he found,
 And with reproachful words address'd him thus:

"Thou wretched Paris, fair in outward form,
 Thou slave of woman, manhood's counterfeit,
 Where is Deiphobus, and where the might
 Of royal Helenus? where Adamas, 870
 The son of Asius? where too Asius, son
 Of Hyrtacus? and where Othryoneus?
 Now from its summit totters to the fall
 Our lofty Ilium; now thy doom is seal'd."

To whom the godlike Paris thus replied:
 "Hector, since blameless I incur thy blame,
 Ne'er have I less withdrawn me from the fight,
 And me not wholly vile my mother bore;
 For since thou gav'st command to attack the ships,
 We here against the Greeks unflinching war 880
 Have wag'd; our comrades, whom thou seek'st, are slain:

Only Deiphobus hath left the field,
 And Helenus; both wounded by the spear,
 Both through the hand; but Jove their life hath spar'd.
 But thou, where'er thy courage bids, lead on:
 We shall be prompt to follow; to our pow'r
 Thou shalt in us no lack of valour find;
 Beyond his pow'r the bravest cannot fight."

Wrought on his brother's mind the hero's words:
 Together both they bent their steps, where rag'd 890
 The fiercest conflict; there Cebriones,
 Phalces, Orthæus, brave Polydamas,
 Palmys, and godlike Polyphetes' might,
 And Morys, and Ascanius fought; these two
 Hippotion's sons; from rich Ascania's plains
 They, as reliefs, but yestermorn had come:
 Impell'd by Jove, they sought the battle field.
 Onward they dash'd, impetuous as the rush
 Of the fierce whirlwind, which with lightning charg'd,
 From Father Jove sweeps downward o'er the plain: 900
 As with loud roar it mingles with the sea,
 The many-dashing ocean's billows boil,
 Upheaving, foam-white-crested, wave on wave;
 So, rank on rank, the Trojans, closely mass'd,
 In arms all glitt'ring, with their chiefs advanc'd;
 Hector, the son of Priam, led them on,
 In combat terrible as blood-stain'd Mars:
 Before his breast his shield's broad orb he bore,
 Of hides close join'd, with brazen plates o'erlaid;
 The gleaming helmet nodded o'er his brow. 910
 He, with proud step, protected by his shield,
 On ev'ry side the hostile ranks survey'd,
 If signs of yielding he might trace; but they
 Unshaken stood; and with like haughty mien,
 Ajax at Hector thus defiance hurl'd:

"Draw nearer, mighty chief; why seek to scare
 Our valiant Greeks? we boast ourselves of war
 Not wholly unskill'd, though now the hand of Jove
 Lies heavy on us with the scourge of Heav'n.
 Thou hop'st, forsooth, our vessels to destroy; 920
 But stalwart arms for their defence we boast.
 Long ere that day shall your proud city fall,
 Tak'n and destroy'd by our victorious hands.
 Not far the hour, when thou thyself in flight

To Jove and all the Gods shalt make thy pray'r,
That swifter than the falcon's wing thy steeds
May bear thee o'er the dusty plain to Troy."

Thus as he spoke, upon his right appear'd
An eagle, soaring high; the crowd of Greeks
The fav'ring omen saw, and shouted loud: 930
Then noble Hector thus: "What words are these,
Ajax, thou babbling braggart, vain of speech!
For would to Heav'n I were as well assur'd
I were the son of ægis-bearing Jove,
Born of imperial Juno, and myself
In equal honour with Apollo held
Or blue-ey'd Pallas, as I am assur'd
This day is fraught with ill to all the Greeks:
Thou 'mid the rest shalt perish, if thou dare
My spear encounter, which thy dainty skin 940
Shall rend; and slain beside the ships, thy flesh
Shall glut the dogs and carrion birds of Troy."

He said, and led them on; with eager cheers
They follow'd; shouted loud the hindmost throng.
On th' other side the Greeks return'd the shout:
Of all the Trojans' bravest they, unmov'd,
The onset bore; their mingled clamours rose
To Heav'n, and reach'd the glorious light of Jove.

BOOK XIV

ARGUMENT

AGAMEMNON and the other wounded Chiefs taking Nestor with them, visit the battle. Juno having borrowed the Cestus of Venus, first engages the assistance of sleep, then hastes to Ida to inveigle Jove. She prevails. Jove sleeps; and Neptune takes that opportunity to succour the Grecians.

NOR did the battle-din not reach the ears
Of Nestor, o'er the wine-cup; and his speech
He thus address'd to Æsculapius' son:

“ Say, good Machaon, what these sounds may mean;
For louder swells the tumult round the ships.
But sit thou here, and drink the ruddy wine,
Till fair-hair'd Hecamede shall prepare
The gentle bath, and wash thy gory wounds;
While I go forth, and all around survey.”

He said, and from the wall a buckler took, 10
Well-wrought, with brass resplendent, which his son,
Brave Thrasymedes, in the tent had left,
While with his father's shield himself was girt;
A sturdy spear too, tipp'd with brass, he took:
Without the tent he stood; and there his eyes
A woful sight beheld; the Greeks in flight,
The haughty Trojans pressing on their rout
Confus'd; the Greeks' protecting wall o'erthrown.
As heaves the darkling sea with silent swell, 20
Expectant of the boist'rous gale's approach;
Nor onward either way is pour'd its flood,
Until it feel th' impelling blast from Heav'n;
So stood th' old man, his mind perplex'd with doubt,
To mingle in the throng, or counsel seek
Of mighty Agamemnon, Atreus' son.
Thus as he mus'd, the better course appear'd,
To seek Atrides; fiercely fought the rest
With mutual slaughter; loud their armour rang
With thrusts of swords and double-pointed spears.
There, from the ships advancing, Nestor met 30

The Heav'n-born Kings, Ulysses, Diomed,
 And Agamemnon, son of Atreus, all
 By wounds disabled; for the ships were beach'd
 Upon the shore, beside the hoary sea,
 Far from the battle; higher, tow'rd the plain
 The foremost had been drawn, and with a wall
 Their sterns surrounded; for the spacious beach
 Could not contain them, and in narrow bounds
 Were pent their multitudes; so high on land
 They drew, and rang'd them side by side, and fill'd, 40
 Within the headlands, all the wide-mouth'd bay.
 Thus they, their steps supporting on their spears,
 Together came, spectators of the fight;
 Deep sorrow fill'd their breasts; them Nestor met,
 The fear increasing, which their souls possess'd.
 To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:

“O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,
 Why com'st thou here, and leav'st the battle-field?
 Greatly I fear that noble Hector now
 His menace will fulfil, who made his boast 50
 Before th' assembled Trojans, that to Troy
 He never would return, until our ships
 The flames had master'd, and ourselves the sword.
 Such was his threat, and now he makes it good.
 Heav'n! can it be that I of other Greeks,
 As of Achilles, have incurr'd the wrath,
 Who thence refuse to battle for the ships?”

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
 “Such are indeed our prospects; Jove on high
 Could to our fortunes give no diff'rent turn. 60
 The wall is raz'd, wherein our trust we plac'd
 To guard, impregnable, ourselves and ships;
 And now around the ships their war they wage,
 Unceasing, unabated; none might tell
 By closest scrutiny, which way are driv'n
 The routed Greeks, so intermix'd they fall
 Promiscuous; and the cry ascends to Heav'n.
 But come, discuss we what may best be done,
 If judgment aught may profit us; ourselves
 To mingle in the fray I counsel not; 70
 It were not well for wounded men to fight.”

Whom answer'd Agamemnon, King of men:
 “Nestor, since to the ships the war is brought,

Nor hath the wall avail'd to stay their course,
 Nor yet the deep-dug trench, on which we Greeks
 Much toil bestow'd, and which we vainly hop'd
 Might guard, impregnable, ourselves and ships;
 Seems it the will of Saturn's mighty son
 That, far from Argos, from our native land,
 We all should here in nameless graves be laid. 80
 I knew when once he lov'd to aid the Greeks;
 But now I see that to the blessed Gods
 Our foes he equals, and our strength confounds.
 Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
 The ships that nearest to the sea are beach'd
 To launch upon the main, till nightfall there
 To ride at anchor; if that ev'n by night
 The Trojans may suspend their fierce assault;
 Then may we launch in safety all the fleet.
 No shame it is to fly, although by night, 90
 Impending evil; better so to fly
 Than by the threaten'd danger be o'erta'en."

To whom, with scornful glance, Ulysses sage:
 "What words have pass'd the barrier of thy lips,
 Thou son of Atreus? counsellor of ill!
 Would thou hadst been of some ignoble band
 The leader, not the chief of such a host
 As ours, on whom, from youth to latest age,
 Jove hath the gift bestow'd, to bear the brunt
 Of hardy war, till ev'ry man be slain. 100
 And think'st thou so to leave the lofty walls
 Of Troy, the object of our painful toil?
 Be silent, that no other Greek may hear
 Words, which no man might trust his tongue to speak,
 Who nobler counsels understands, and wields
 A royal sceptre, and th' allegiance claims
 Of numbers, such as those that own thy sway.
 Thy counsels all I utterly condemn;
 Who, 'mid the close and clamour of the fight,
 Wouldst have us launch our ships, and give the foe, 110
 Already too triumphant, cause renew'd
 For boasting; then were death our certain lot;
 For, if the ships be launch'd, not long will Greeks
 Sustain the war, but with reverted eyes
 Shrink from the fight; to such pernicious end
 Would lead thy baneful counsels, mighty chief."

Whom answer'd Agamemnon, King of men:
 "Ulysses, thy rebuke hath wrung my soul;
 Yet never meant I, that against their will
 The sons of Greece should launch their well-found ships:
 But if there be who better counsel knows, 121
 Or young or old, his words would please me well."

Then rose the valiant Diomed, and said:
 "The man is near at hand, not far to seek,
 If ye will hear, nor take offence, that I,
 The youngest of you all, presume to speak.
 Yet of a noble sire I boast me sprung,
 Tydeus, who sleeps beneath the Theban soil:
 To Portheus three brave sons were born, who dwelt
 In Pleuron and in lofty Calydon, 130
 Agrius, and Melas; bravest of them all,
 My father's father, Ceneus, was the third.
 He there remain'd; my father, wand'ring long,
 To Argos came; such was the will of Jove
 And of th' Immortals all; he there espous'd
 Adrastus' daughter; own'd a wealthy house,
 With fertile corn-lands round, and orchards stor'd
 With goodly fruit-trees; num'rous flocks he had,
 And all the Greeks in feats of arms excell'd.
 Hear ye the words I speak, for they are true: 140
 And if my speech be wise, despise it not,
 As of one worthless, or ignobly born.

Though wounded, to the battle I advise
 That we perforce repair; yet not ourselves
 To join the combat, or confront the spears,
 Lest wounds to wounds be added; but to rouse
 The spirits of some, who, zealous heretofore,
 Now stand aloof, nor mingle in the fray."

He said, and they, his words approving, went,
 By Agamemnon led, the King of men. 150
 Nor careless was the watch by Neptune kept:
 With them, in likeness of an aged man,
 He went, and Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
 By the right hand he took, and thus address'd:

"O son of Atreus, great is now the joy
 With which Achilles' savage breast is fill'd,
 Who sees the slaughter and the rout of Greeks:
 For nought he has of heart, no, not a whit:
 But perish he, accursed of the Gods!

Nor deem thou that to thee the blessed Gods 160
 Are wholly hostile; yet again the chiefs
 And councillors of Troy shall scour in flight
 The dusty plain; and from the ships and tents
 Thine eyes shall see them to the city fly."

He said; and loudly shouting, onward rush'd.
 As of nine thousand or ten thousand men,
 In deadly combat meeting, is the shout;
 Such was the sound which from his ample chest
 Th' Earth-shaker sent; and ev'ry Greek inspir'd
 With stern resolve to wage unflinching war. 170

Standing on high Olympus' topmost peak,
 The golden-thronèd Juno downward look'd,
 And, busied in the glory-giving strife,
 Her husband's brother and her own she saw,
 Saw, and rejoic'd; next, seated on the crest
 Of spring-abounding Ida, Jove she saw,
 Sight hateful in her eyes! then ponder'd deep
 The stag-ey'd Queen, how best she might beguile
 The wakeful mind of ægis-bearing Jove;
 And, musing, this appear'd the readiest mode: 180

Herself with art adorning, to repair
 To Ida; there, with fondest blandishment
 And female charm, her husband to enfold
 In love's embrace; and gentle, careless sleep
 Around his eyelids and his senses pour.
 Her chamber straight she sought, by Vulcan built,
 Her son; by whom were to the door-posts hung
 Close-fitting doors, with secret keys secur'd,
 That, save herself, no God might enter in.
 There enter'd she, and clos'd the shining doors; 190
 And with ambrosia first her lovely skin
 She purified, with fragrant oil anointing,
 Ambrosial, breathing forth such odours sweet,
 That, wav'd above the brazen floor of Jove,
 All earth and Heav'n were with the fragrance fill'd;
 O'er her fair skin this precious oil she spread;
 Comb'd out her flowing locks, and with her hand
 Wreath'd the thick masses of the glossy hair,
 Immortal, bright, that crown'd th' imperial head.
 A robe ambrosial then, by Pallas wrought, 200
 She donn'd, in many a curious pattern trac'd.
 With golden brooch beneath her breast confin'd.

Her zone, from which a hundred tassels hung,
 She girt about her; and, in three bright drops,
 Her glitt'ring gems suspended from her ears;
 And all around her grace and beauty shone.
 Then o'er her head th' imperial Goddess threw
 A beauteous veil, new-wrought, as sunlight white;
 And on her well-turn'd feet her sandals bound.

Her dress completed, from her chamber forth
 She issued, and from th' other Gods apart 210
 She call'd to Venus, and address'd her thus:

“ Say, wilt thou grant, dear child, the boon I ask?
 Or wilt thou say me nay, in wrath that I
 Espouse the Greek, as thou the Trojan cause? ”

To whom the laughter-loving Venus thus:

“ Daughter of Saturn, Juno, mighty Queen,
 Tell me thy wish; to grant it if my pow'r
 May aught avail, thy pleasure shall be done.”

To whom great Juno thus, with artful speech: 220

“ Give me the loveliness, and pow'r to charm,
 Whereby thou reign'st o'er Gods and men supreme.

For to the bounteous Earth's extremest bounds

I go, to visit old Oceanus,

The sire of Gods, and Tethys, who of yore

From Rhæa took me, when all-seeing Jove

Hurl'd Saturn down below the earth and seas,

And nurs'd me in their home with tend'rest care;

I go to visit them, and reconcile

A lengthen'd feud; for since some cause of wrath 230

Has come between them, they from rites of love

And from the marriage-bed have long abstain'd:

Could I unite them by persuasive words,

And to their former intercourse restore,

Their love and rev'rence were for ever mine.”

Whom answer'd thus the laughter-loving Queen:

“ I ought not, and I cannot, say thee nay,

Who liest encircled by the arms of Jove.”

Thus Venus spoke; and from her bosom loos'd

Her broider'd cestus, wrought with ev'ry charm 240

To win the heart; there Love, there young Desire,

There fond Discourse, and there Persuasion dwelt,

Which oft enthralls the mind of wisest men.

This in her hand she plac'd, as thus she spoke:

“ Take thou from me, and in thy bosom hide,

This broider'd cestus; and, whate'er thy wish,
Thou shalt not here ungratified return."

Thus Venus; smil'd the stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n,
And, smiling, in her bosom hid the gift.
Then Venus to her father's house return'd; 250
But Juno down from high Olympus sped;
O'er sweet Emathia, and Pieria's range,
O'er snowy mountains of horse-breeding Thrace,
Their topmost heights, she soar'd, nor touch'd the earth.
From Athos then she cross'd the swelling sea,

Until to Lemnos, godlike Thoas' seat,
She came; there met she Sleep, twin-born with Death,
Whom, as his hand she clasp'd, she thus address'd:

"Sleep, universal King of Gods and men,
If ever thou hast listen'd to my voice, 260
Grant me the boon which now I ask, and win
My ceaseless favour in all time to come.
When Jove thou seest in my embraces lock'd,
Do thou his piercing eyes in slumber seal.
Rich guerdon shall be thine; a gorgeous throne,
Immortal, golden; which my skilful son,
Vulcan, shall deftly frame; beneath, a stool
Whereon at feasts thy feet may softly rest."

Whom answer'd thus the gentle God of Sleep:
"Daughter of Saturn, Juno, mighty Queen, 270
On any other of th' immortal Gods
I can with ease exert my slumb'rous pow'r;
Ev'n to the stream of old Oceanus,
Prime origin of all; but Saturn's son,
Imperial Jove, I dare not so approach,
Nor sink in sleep, save by his own desire.
Already once, obeying thy command,
A fearful warning I receiv'd, that day
When from the capture and the sack of Troy
That mighty warrior, son of Jove, set sail; 280
For, circumfus'd around, with sweet constraint
I bound the sense of ægis-bearing Jove,
While thou, with ill-design, rousing the force
Of winds tempestuous o'er the stormy sea,
Didst cast him forth on Coös' thriving isle,
Far from his friends; then Jove, awaking, pour'd
His wrath, promiscuous, on th' assembled Gods;
Me chief his anger sought; and from on high

Had hurl'd me, plung'd beneath th' unfathom'd sea,
 But Night, the vanquisher of Gods and men, 290
 Her fugitive receiv'd me; he his wrath
 Repress'd, unwilling to invade the claims
 Of holy Night; and now thou fain wouldst urge
 That I another reckless deed essay."

Whom answer'd thus the stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n:
 "Why, Sleep, with thoughts like these perplex thy mind?
 Think'st thou that Jove as ardently desires
 To aid the men of Troy, as fiercely burn'd
 His anger on his valiant son's behalf?
 Grant my request; and of the Graces one, 300
 The youngest and the fairest, have to wife,
 Pasithea, whom thy love hath long pursued."

Thus promis'd Juno; Sleep, rejoicing, heard,
 And answer'd thus: "Swear then the awful oath,
 Inviolable, by the stream of Styx,
 Thy one hand laid upon the fruitful earth,
 The other resting on the sparkling sea;
 That all the Gods who in the nether realms
 With Saturn dwell, may of our solemn bond
 Be witnesses, that of the Graces one, 310
 The youngest, fairest, I shall have to wife,
 Pasithea, whom my love hath long pursued."

He said: nor did the white-arm'd Queen refuse;
 She took the oath requir'd; and call'd by name
 On all the Titans, sub-Tartarean Gods:
 Then, sworn and ratified the oath, they pass'd
 From Lemnos, and from Imbros, veil'd in cloud,
 Skimming their airy way; on Lectum first,
 In spring-abounding Ida, nurse of beasts,
 The sea they left, and journey'd o'er the land, 320
 While wav'd beneath their feet the lofty woods.
 There Sleep, ere yet he met the eye of Jove,
 Remain'd; and, mounted on a lofty pine,
 The tallest growth of Ida, that on high
 Flung through the desert air its boughs to Heav'n,
 Amid the pine's close branches lay ensconc'd;
 Like to a mountain bird of shrillest note,
 Whom Gods the Chalcis, men the night-hawk call.
 Juno meanwhile to Ida's summit sped,
 To Gargarus; the Cloud-compeller saw; 330
 He saw, and sudden passion fir'd his soul,

As when, their parents' eyes eluding, first
They tasted of the secret joys of love.
He rose to meet her, and address'd her thus:

“ From high Olympus, Juno, whither bound,
And how, to Ida hast thou come in haste?
For horses here or chariot hast thou none.”

To whom thus Juno with deceitful speech
Replied: “ To fertile earth's extremest bounds
I go, to visit old Oceanus,

340

The sire of Gods, and Tethys, who of yore
Receiv'd, and nurtur'd me with tend'rest care.
I go to visit them, and reconcile
A lengthen'd feud; for since some cause of wrath
Has come between them, they from rites of love
And from the marriage-bed have long abstain'd.
Meanwhile at spring-abounding Ida's foot
My horses wait me, that o'er land and sea
Alike my chariot bear; on thine account
From high Olympus hither have I come,
Lest it displease thee, if, to thee unknown,
I sought the Ocean's deeply-flowing stream.”

350

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
“ Juno, thy visit yet awhile defer;

And let us now in love's delights indulge:
For never yet did such a flood of love
For Goddess or for mortal fill my soul;
Not for Ixion's beauteous wife, who bore
Pirithöus, sage in council as the Gods;
Nor the neat-footed maiden Danæe,
Acrisius' daughter, her who Perseus bore,
Th' observ'd of all; nor noble Phœnix' child,
Who bore me Minos, and the godlike might
Of Rhadamanthus; nor for Semele,
Nor for Alcmena fair, of whom was born
In Thebes the mighty warrior Hercules,
As Bacchus, joy of men, of Semele:
No, nor for Ceres, golden-tressèd Queen,
Nor for Latona bright, nor for thyself,
As now with fond desire for thee I burn.”

360

370

To whom thus Juno with deceitful speech:
“ What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?
If here on Ida, in the face of day,
We celebrate the mystic rites of love,

How if some other of th' immortal Gods
Should find us sleeping, and 'mid all the Gods
Should spread the tale abroad? I could not then
Straight to thy house, for very shame, return.
But if indeed such passion fill thy soul,
Thou hast thy secret chamber, built for thee
By Vulcan, with close-fitting doors secur'd;
Thither, if such thy pleasure, go we now."

380

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
"Juno, nor fear the eye of God or man;
For all around us I will throw such veil
Of golden cloud, that not the sun himself
With sharpest beam of light may pierce it through."

Thus saying, in his arms he clasp'd his wife;
The teeming earth beneath them caus'd to spring
The tender grass, and lotus dew-besprent,
Crocus and hyacinth, a fragrant couch,
Profuse and soft, up-springing from the earth.
There lay they, all around them spread a veil
Of golden cloud, whence heav'nly dews distill'd,
There on the topmost height of Gargarus,
By sleep and love subdued, th' immortal Sire,
Clasp'd in his arms his wife, repos'd in peace.

390

Then Sleep arose, and to the Grecian ships
In haste repairing, to th' Earth-shaking King
His tidings bore; and standing at his side
Thus to the God his wing'd words address'd:

400

"Now, Neptune, to the Greeks thy ready aid
Afford, that short-liv'd triumph they may gain,
While slumber holds the eyes of Jove; for I
In sweet unconsciousness have drown'd his sense,
Beguil'd by Juno, in whose arms he lies."

He said, and vanish'd 'mid the tribes of men:
But fir'd with keener zeal to aid the Greeks,
Neptune sprang forth in front, and call'd aloud:

"Again, ye Greeks, shall our remissness yield
The victory to Hector, Priam's son,
To seize our ships, and endless glory gain?
Such is his boast and menace, since in wrath
Achilles still beside his ships remains.
Yet him we scarce should miss, if we, the rest,
But firmly stood for mutual defence.
Hear then my counsel: let us all agree,

410

Girt with our best and broadest shields, our heads
 With flashing helmets guarded, in our hands
 Grasping our longest spears, to dare the fight. 420
 Myself will lead you on; and Priam's son,
 Though bold he be, will fear with me to cope.
 And if, among our bravest, any bear
 Too small a buckler, with some meaner man
 Let him exchange, and don the larger shield."

He said, and they assenting heard his speech.
 The Kings themselves, Ulysses, Diomed,
 And mighty Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
 Though sorely wounded, yet the troops array'd;
 Throughout the ranks they pass'd, and chang'd the arms;
 The bravest donn'd the best, the worse the worst. 431
 When with their dazzling armour all were girt,
 Forward they mov'd; th' Earth-shaker led them on:
 In his broad hand an awful sword he bore,
 Long-bladed, vivid as the lightning's flash:
 Yet in the deadly strife he might not join,
 But kindled terror in the minds of men.

Hector meantime the Trojan troops array'd.
 Then fiercer grew, and more intense the strain
 Of furious fight, when Ocean's dark-hair'd King 440
 And Priam's noble son were met in arms,
 And aided, this the Trojans, that the Greeks.
 High tow'rd the tents uprose the surging sea,
 As with loud clamour met th' opposing hosts.
 Less loud the roar of Ocean's wave, that driv'n
 By stormy Boreas, breaks upon the beach;
 Less loud the crackling of the flames that rage
 In the deep forest of some mountain glen;
 Less loud the wind, to wildest fury rous'd,
 Howls in the branches of the lofty oaks; 450
 Than rose the cry of Trojans and of Greeks,
 As each, with furious shout, encounter'd each.
 At Ajax first, who straight before him stood,
 Great Hector threw his spear, nor miss'd his aim,
 Where the two belts, the one which bore his shield,
 His silver-studded sword the other, met
 Across his breast; these two his life preserv'd.
 Hector was wroth, that from his stalwart hand
 The spear had flown in vain; and back he sprang
 For safety to his comrades' shelt'ring ranks: 460

But mighty Ajax Telamon upheav'd
 A pond'rous stone, of many, all around
 That scatter'd lay beneath the warriors' feet,
 And serv'd the ships to prop; with one of these,
 As Hector backward stepp'd, above the shield
 He smote him on the breast, below the throat.
 With whirling motion, circling as it flew,
 The mass he hurl'd. As by the bolt of Heav'n
 Uprooted, prostrate lies some forest oak;
 The sulph'rous vapour taints the air; appall'd, 470
 Bereft of strength, the near beholder stands,
 And awestruck hears the thunder-peal of Jove;
 So in the dust the might of Hector lay:
 Dropp'd from his hand the spear; the shield and helm
 Fell with him; loud his polish'd armour rang.
 On rush'd, with joyous shout, the sons of Greece,
 In hope to seize the spoil; thick flew the spears:
 Yet none might reach or wound the fallen chief;
 For gather'd close around, the bravest all,
 Valiant Æneas, and Polydamas, 480
 Godlike Agenor, and the Lycian chief
 Sarpedon, and the noble Glaucus stood.
 Nor did the rest not aid; their shields' broad orbs
 Before him still they held, while in their arms
 His comrades bore him from the battle-field,
 To where, with charioteer and well-wrought car,
 Beyond the fight, his flying coursers stood,
 Which bore him, deeply groaning, tow'rd the town.
 But when the ford was reach'd of Xanthus' stream,
 Broad-flowing, eddying, by immortal Jove 490
 Begotten, on the ground they laid him down,
 And dash'd the cooling water on his brow:
 Reviv'd, he lifted up awhile his eyes;
 Then on his knees half rising, he disgorg'd
 The clotted blood; but backward to the earth,
 Still by the blow subdued, again he fell,
 And darkling shades of night his eyes o'erspread.
 Onward, with zeal redoubled, press'd the Greeks,
 When Hector from the field they saw withdrawn.
 Foremost of all, Oileus' active son, 500
 With sudden spring assailing, Satnius slew:
 Him a fair Naiad nymph to CEnops bore,

Who by the banks of Satnoīs kept his herds.
 Him then, approaching near, Oīleus' son
 Thrust through the flank: he fell, and o'er his corpse
 Trojans and Greeks in stubborn fight engag'd.
 But Panthōus' son a swift avenger came,
 Polydamas, with brandish'd spear, and struck
 Through the right shoulder Prothōenor, son
 Of Arēilycus; right through was driv'n 510
 The sturdy spear; he, rolling in the dust,
 Clutch'd with his palms the ground; then, shouting loud,
 Thus with triumphant boast Polydamas:

“ From the strong hand of Panthōus' noble son
 Methinks that not in vain the spear has flown:
 A Greek now bears it off; and he, perchance,
 May use it as a staff to Pluto's realm.”

Thus he; the Greeks with pain his vaunting heard;
 But chief it rous'd the spirit within the breast
 Of Ajax Telamon, whom close beside 520
 The dead had fall'n; he at Polydamas,
 Retreating, hurl'd in haste his glitt'ring spear;
 He, springing sideways, 'scap'd the stroke of fate;
 But young Archilochus, Antenor's son,
 Receiv'd the spear, for Heav'n had will'd his death:
 The spine it struck, the topmost joint, where met
 The head and neck, and both the tendons broke;
 Forward he fell; and ere or knee or leg,
 His head, and mouth, and nostrils struck the ground.

Then Ajax, in his turn, exulting, thus: 530
 “ Say now, Polydamas, and tell me true,
 May this be deem'd for Prothōenor's death
 A full equivalent? no common man
 He seems, and born of no ignoble race;
 Valiant Antenor's brother, or perchance
 His son; the likeness speaks him near akin.”

Thus he, though well he knew; then bitter grief
 Possess'd the Trojans' souls; but Acamas,
 Guarding his brother's body, with his spear
 Slew the Bœotian Promachus, who fain 540
 Would by the feet have drawn away the dead:
 Then Acamas, exulting, cried aloud:

“ Ye wretched Greeks, in boasting measureless!
 Not ours alone the labour and the loss

Of battle; ye too have your share of death.
Behold where lies your Promachus, subdued
Beneath my spear; not long unpaid the debt
Due for my brother's blood! 'Tis well for him
Who leaves a brother to avenge his fate."

Thus he; the Greeks with pain his vaunting heard; 550
But chief it rous'd the spirit within the breast
Of Peneleus; on Acamas he sprang,
Who waited not th' encounter; next he slew
Ilioneus, the son of Phorbas, Lord
Of num'rous flocks, of all the Trojans most
Belov'd of Hermes, who his wealth increas'd.
To him Ilioneus, an only son,
His mother bore; who now, beneath the brow
And through the socket of the eye was struck,
Thrusting the eyeball out; for through the eye, 560
And backward through the head, the spear was driv'n:
With hands extended, down to earth he sank;
But Peneleus his weighty sword let fall
Full on his neck; the sever'd head and helm
Together fell, remaining still infix'd
The sturdy spear; then he, the gory head
Uplifting, to the Trojans vaunting cried:

"Go now, ye Trojans! bid that in the house
Of brave Ilioneus his parents raise
The voice of wailing for their gallant son; 570
As neither shall the wife of Promachus,
The son of Alegenor, with glad smile
Her husband's coming hail, when home from Troy
We sons of Greece, with vict'ry crown'd, return."

Thus as he spoke, pale fear possess'd them all,
Each looking round to seek escape from death.

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell,
Who, when th' Earth-shaker turn'd the tide of war,
First bore away his foeman's bloody spoils?

Great Ajax Telamon first Hyrtius smote, 580
The son of Gyrtius, who to battle led
The warlike Mysians; next Antilochus
From Mermerus and Phalces stripp'd their arms;
Meriones Hippotion gave to death,
And Morys; Teucer Periphetes slew,
And Prothöon; Meneläus, through the flank

Smote Hyperenor; as the grinding spear
Drain'd all his vitals, through the gaping wound
His spirit escap'd, and darkness clos'd his eyes.
But chiefest slaughter of the Trojans wrought
Oïleus' active son; of all the Greeks
No foot so swift as his, when Jove had fill'd
Their souls with fear, to chase the flying foe.

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BOOK XV

ARGUMENT

Jove, awaking and seeing the Trojans routed, threatens Juno. He sends Iris to admonish Neptune to relinquish the battle, and Apollo to restore health to Hector. Apollo armed with the Ægis, puts to flight the Grecians; they are pursued home to their fleet, and Telamonian Ajax slays twelve Trojans bringing fire to burn it.

Now when the Trojans had recross'd the trench
And palisades, and in their headlong flight
Many had fall'n by Grecian swords, the rest,
Routed, and pale with fear, made head awhile
Beside their cars; then Jove on Ida's height
At golden-thronèd Juno's side awoke;
Rising, he saw the Trojans and the Greeks,
Those in confusion, while behind them press'd
The Greeks, triumphant, Neptune in their midst:
He saw too Hector stretch'd upon the plain, 10
His comrades standing round; senseless he lay,
Drawing short breath, blood gushing from his mouth;
For by no feeble hand the blow was dealt.

Pitying, the Sire of Gods and men beheld,
And thus, with sternest glance, to Juno spoke:
"This, Juno, is thy work! thy wicked wiles
Have Hector quell'd, and Trojans driv'n to flight:
Nor know I but thyself mayst reap the fruit,
By shameful scourging, of thy vile deceit. 20
Hast thou forgotten how in former times
I hung thee from on high, and to thy feet
Attach'd two pond'rous anvils, and thy hands
With golden fetters bound, which none might break?
There didst thou hang amid the clouds of Heav'n;
Through all Olympus' breadth the Gods were wroth;
Yet dar'd not one approach to set thee free.
If any so had ventur'd, him had I
Hurl'd from Heav'n's threshold, till to earth he fell,
With little left of life. Yet was not quench'd
My wrath on godlike Hercules' account, 30

Whom thou, with Boreas, o'er the wat'ry waste
 With fell intent didst send; and tempest-toss'd,
 Cast him ashore on Coös' fruitful isle.
 I rescued him from thence, and brought him back,
 After long toil, to Argos' grassy plains.
 This to thy mind I bring, that thou mayst learn
 To cease thy treach'rous wiles, nor hope to gain
 By all thy lavish'd blandishments of love,
 Wherewith thou hast deceiv'd me, and betray'd."

He said; and terror seiz'd the stag-ey'd Queen; 40
 Who thus with wingèd words address'd her Lord:

"By Earth I swear, and yon broad Heav'n above,
 And Stygian stream beneath, the weightiest oath
 Of solemn pow'r to bind the blessed Gods;
 By thine own sacred head, our nuptial bed,
 Whose holy tie I never could forswear;
 That not by my suggestion and advice
 Earth-shaking Neptune on the Trojan host,
 And Hector, pours his wrath, and aids the Greeks;
 In this he but obeys his own desire, 50
 Who looks with pity on the Grecian host
 Beside their ships o'erborne; and could my words
 Prevail, my counsel were to shape his course,
 O cloud-girt King, obedient to thy will."

She said; the Sire of Gods and men, well-pleas'd,
 Her answer heard, and thus with gracious smile:

"If, stag-ey'd Queen, in synod of the Gods
 Thy counsels shall indeed with mine agree,
 Neptune, how strong soe'er his wish, must change
 His course, obedient to thy will and mine; 60
 And if in all sincerity thou speak,
 Go to th' assembled Gods, and hither send
 Iris, and Phœbus of the silver bow;
 That she may to the Grecian camp repair,
 And bid that Neptune from the battle-field
 Withdraw, and to his own domain retire;
 While Phœbus Hector to the fight restores,
 Inspiring new-born vigour, and allaying
 The mortal pains which bow his spirit down;
 Then, heartless fear infusing in the Greeks, 70
 Put them to flight, that flying they may fall
 Beside Achilles' ships; his comrade then,
 Patroclus, he shall send to battle forth

To be by Hector slain, in front of Troy ;
 Yet not to fall till many valiant youths
 Have felt his prowess ; and, amid the rest,
 My son, Sarpedon ; by his comrade's death
 Enrag'd, Achilles Hector shall subdue ;
 Thenceforth my counsel is, that from the ships
 The Trojan force shall still be backward driv'n, 80
 Until at length, by Pallas' deep designs,
 The Greeks possess the lofty walls of Troy.
 Yet will not I my anger intermit,
 Nor suffer other of th' immortal Gods
 To aid the Greeks, till Peleus' son behold
 His wish accomplish'd, and the boon obtain'd
 I promis'd once, and with a nod confirm'd,
 That day when sea-born Thetis clasp'd my knees,
 And pray'd me to avenge her warrior son."

Thus he ; the white-arm'd Queen of Heav'n submit 90
 His mandate heard ; and from th' Idæan mount
 With rapid flight to high Olympus sped.
 Swift as the mind of man, who many a land
 Hath travell'd o'er, and with reflective thought
 Recalls, " here was I such a day, or here,"
 And in a moment many a scene surveys ;
 So Juno sped o'er intervening space ;
 Olympus' heights she reach'd, and in the house
 Of Jove appear'd amid th' assembled Gods.
 They at her coming rose, with golden cups 100
 Greeting their Queen's approach ; the rest she pass'd,
 And from the hand of fair-fac'd Themis took
 The proffer'd cup, who first had run to meet,
 And thus with wingèd words address'd the Queen :
 " Juno, why com'st thou hither ? and with looks
 Of one distraught with fear ? hath Saturn's son,
 Thy mighty Lord, thus sore affrighted thee ?"
 To whom the white-arm'd Goddess, Juno, thus :

" Forbear thy questions, Themis ; well thou know'st 110
 How haughty and imperious is his mind ;
 Thou for the Gods in haste prepare the feast ;
 Then shalt thou learn, amid th' Immortals all,
 What evil he designs ; nor all, I ween,
 His counsels will approve, or men, or Gods,
 Though now in blissful ignorance they feast."
 She said, and sat ; the Gods, oppress'd with care,

Her farther speech awaited; on her lips
 There dwelt indeed a smile, but not a ray
 Pass'd o'er her dark'ning brow, as thus her wrath
 Amid th' assembled Gods found vent in words:

120

“Fools are we all, who madly strive with Jove,
 Or hope, by access to his throne, to sway,
 By word or deed, his course; from all apart,
 He all our counsels heeds not, but derides;
 And boasts o'er all th' immortal Gods to reign
 In unapproach'd pre-eminence of pow'r.

Prepare then each his sev'ral woe to bear;
 On Mars e'en now, methinks, the blow hath fall'n;
 Since in the fight, the man he loves the best,
 And boasts his son, Ascalaphus, is slain.”

130

He said; and Mars, enrag'd, his brawny thigh
 Smote with his hands, and thus, lamenting, spoke:

“Blame not, ye Gods, who on Olympus dwell,
 That to the Grecian ships I haste, to avenge
 My slaughter'd son, though blasted by Heav'n's fire
 'Twere mine 'mid corpses, blood, and dust to lie.”

He said, and gave command to Fear and Flight
 To yoke his car; and donn'd his glitt'ring arms.
 Then from the throne of Jove had heavier wrath
 And deeper vengeance on th' Immortals fall'n,

140

But Pallas, in alarm for all the Gods,
 Quitting in haste the throne whereon she sat,
 Sprang past the vestibule, and from his head
 The helmet lifted, from his arm the shield;
 Took from his sturdy hand, and rear'd upright,
 The brazen spear; then with reproachful words
 She thus assail'd th' impetuous God of War:

“Madman, and void of reason, thou art lost!
 Hast thou no ears to hear? or are thy mind
 And sense of rev'rence utterly destroy'd?
 Or heard'st thou not what white-arm'd Juno spoke,
 Fresh from the presence of Olympian Jove?
 Wouldst thou, thine evil destiny fulfill'd,
 By hard constraint, despite thy grief, be driv'n
 Back to Olympus; and to all the rest
 Confusion and disaster with thee bring?

150

At once from valiant Trojans and from Greeks
 His thoughts would be diverted, and his wrath
 Embroil Olympus, and on all alike,

Guilty or not, his anger would be pour'd. 160
 Waive then thy vengeance for thy gallant son;
 Others as brave of heart, as strong of arm,
 Have fall'n, and yet must fall; and vain th' attempt
 To watch at once o'er all the race of men."

Thus saying, to his seat again she forc'd
 Th' impetuous Mars: meanwhile, without the house,
 Juno, by Jove's command, Apollo call'd,
 And Iris, messenger from God to God;
 And thus to both her wingèd words address'd:

"Jove bids you with all speed to Ida haste; 170
 And when, arriv'd, before his face ye stand,
 Whate'er he orders, that observe and do."

Thus Juno spoke, and to her throne return'd;
 While they to spring-abounding Ida's heights,
 Wild nurse of forest beasts, pursued their way;
 Th' all-seeing son of Saturn there they found
 Upon the topmost crag of Gargarus,
 An incense-breathing cloud around him spread.
 Before the face of cloud-compelling Jove
 They stood; well-pleas'd he witness'd their approach 180
 In swift obedience to his consort's words,
 And thus to Iris first his speech address'd:

"Haste thee, swift Iris, and to Ocean's King
 My message bear, nor misreporting aught,
 Nor aught omitting; from the battle-field
 Bid him retire, and join th' assembled Gods,
 Or to his own domain of sea withdraw.
 If my commands he heed not, nor obey,
 Let him consider in his inmost soul
 If, mighty though he be, he dare await 190
 My hostile coming; mightier far than him,
 His elder born; nor may his spirit aspire
 To rival me, whom all regard with awe."

He said; swift-footed Iris, at the word,
 From Ida's heights to sacred Ilium sped.
 Swift as the snow-flakes from the clouds descend,
 Or wintry hail before the driving blast
 Of Boreas, ether-born; so swift to Earth
 Descended Iris; by his side she stood,
 And with these words th' Earth-shaking God address'd:
 "A message, dark-hair'd Circler of the Earth, 201
 To thee I bring from Ægis-bearing Jove.

He bids thee straightway from the battle-field
 Retire, and either join th' assembled Gods,
 Or to thine own domain of sea withdraw.
 If his commands thou heed not, nor obey,
 Hither he menaces himself to come,
 And fight against thee; but he warns thee first,
 Beware his arm, as mightier far than thee,
 Thine elder born; nor may thy spirit aspire
 To rival him, whom all regard with awe." 210

To whom in tow'ring wrath th' Earth-shaking God:
 "By Heav'n, though great he be, he yet presumes
 Somewhat too far, if me, his equal born,
 He seeks by force to baffle of my will.
 We were three brethren, all of Rhæa born
 To Saturn; Jove and I, and Pluto third,
 Who o'er the nether regions holds his sway.
 Threefold was our partition; each obtain'd
 His meed of honour due; the hoary Sea 220
 By lot my habitation was assign'd;
 The realms of Darkness fell to Pluto's share;
 Broad Heav'n, amid the sky and clouds, to Jove;
 But Earth, and high Olympus, are to all
 A common heritage; nor will I walk
 To please the will of Jove; though great he be,
 With his own third contented let him rest:
 Nor let him think that I, as wholly vile,
 Shall quail before his arm; his lofty words
 Were better to his daughters and his sons 230
 Address'd, his own begotten; who perforce
 Must listen to his mandates, and obey."

To whom swift-footed Iris thus replied:
 "Is this, then, dark-hair'd Circler of the Earth,
 The message, stern and haughty, which to Jove
 Thou bidd'st me bear? perchance thine angry mood
 May bend to better counsels; noblest minds
 Are easiest bent; and o'er superior age
 Thou know'st th' avenging Furies ever watch."

To whom Earth-shaking Neptune thus replied: 240
 "Immortal Iris, weighty are thy words,
 And in good season spoken; and 'tis well
 When envoys are by sound discretion led.
 Yet are my heart and mind with grief oppress'd,
 When me, his equal both by birth and fate,

He seeks with haughty words to overbear.
 I yield, but with indignant sense of wrong.
 This too I say, nor shall my threat be vain:
 Let him remember, if in my despite,
 'Gainst Pallas', Juno's, Hermes', Vulcan's will,
 He spare to overthrow proud Ilium's tow'rs,
 And crown with victory the Grecian arms,
 The feud between us never can be heal'd."

250

Th' Earth-shaker said, and from the field withdrew
 Beneath the ocean wave, the warrior Greeks
 His loss deploring; to Apollo then
 The Cloud-compeller thus his speech address'd:

"Go straight to Hector of the brazen helm,
 Good Phœbus; for beneath the ocean wave
 Th' Earth-shaker hath withdrawn, escaping thus
 My high displeasure: had he dar'd resist,
 The tumult of our strife had reach'd the Gods
 Who in the nether realms with Saturn dwell.
 Yet thus 'tis better, both for me and him,
 That, though indignant, to my will he yields;
 For to compel him were no easy task.
 Take thou, and wave on high thy tassell'd shield,
 The Grecian warriors daunting: thou thyself,
 Far-darting King, thy special care bestow
 On noble Hector; so restore his strength
 And vigour, that in panic to their ships,
 And the broad Hellespont, the Greeks be driv'n.
 Then will I so by word and deed contrive
 That they may gain fresh respite from their toil."

260

270

He said, nor did Apollo not obey
 His Sire's commands; from Ida's heights he flew,
 Like to a falcon, swooping on a dove,
 Swiftest of birds; then Priam's son he found,
 The godlike Hector, stretch'd at length no more,
 But sitting, now to consciousness restor'd,
 With recognition looking on his friends;
 The cold sweat dried, nor gasping now for breath,
 Since by the will of Ægis-bearing Jove
 To life new waken'd; close beside him stood
 The Far-destroyer, and address'd him thus:

280

"Hector, thou son of Priam, why apart
 From all thy comrades art thou sitting here,
 Feeble and faint? What trouble weighs thee down?"

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm
 With falt'ring voice: "Who art thou, Prince of Gods, 290
 Who thus enquirest of me? know'st thou not
 How a huge stone, by mighty Ajax hurl'd,
 As on his comrades by the Grecian ships
 I dealt destruction, struck me on the breast,
 Dash'd to the earth, and all my vigour quell'd?
 I deem'd in sooth this day my soul, expir'd,
 Should see the dead, and Pluto's shadowy realm."

To whom again the far-destroying King:
 "Be of good cheer; from Saturn's son I come
 From Ida's height to be thy guide and guard; 300
 Phœbus Apollo, of the golden sword,
 I, who of old have thy protector been,
 Thine, and thy city's walls'. Arise then straight;
 Summon thy num'rous horsemen; bid them drive
 Their flying cars to assail the Grecian ships:
 I go before; and will thy horses' way
 Make plain and smooth, and daunt the warrior Greeks."

His words fresh vigour in the chief infus'd.
 As some proud steed, at well-fill'd manger fed,
 His halter broken, neighing, scours the plain, 310
 And revels in the widely-flowing stream
 To bathe his sides; then tossing high his head,
 While o'er his shoulders streams his ample mane,
 Light borne on active limbs, in conscious pride,
 To the wide pastures of the mares he flies;
 So vig'rous, Hector plied his active limbs,
 His horsemen summoning at Heav'n's command.

As when a rustic crowd of men and dogs
 Have chas'd an antler'd stag, or mountain goat,
 That 'mid the crags and thick o'ershadowing wood 320
 Hath refuge found, and baffled their pursuit:
 If, by the tumult rous'd, a lion stand,
 With bristling mane, before them, back they turn,
 Check'd in their mid career; ev'n so the Greeks,
 Who late in eager throngs were pressing on,
 Thrusting with swords and double-pointed spears,
 When Hector moving through the ranks they saw,
 Recoil'd, and to their feet their courage fell.
 To whom thus Thoas spoke, Andræmon's son,
 Ætolia's bravest warrior, skill'd to throw 330
 The jav'lin, dauntless in the stubborn fight;

By few surpass'd in speech, when in debate
In full assembly Grecian youths contend.

He thus with prudent speech began, and said:

“Great is the marvel which our eyes behold,
That Hector see again to life restor'd,
Escap'd the death we hop'd him to have met
Beneath the hands of Ajax Telamon.

Some God hath been his guard, and Hector sav'd,
Whose arm hath slack'd the knees of many a Greek: 340

So will he now; for not without the aid
Of Jove, the Lord of thunder, doth he stand
So boldly forth, so eager for the fight.

Hear, then, and all by my advice be rul'd:
Back to the ships dismiss the gen'ral crowd;
While of our army we, the foremost men,
Stand fast, and meeting him with levell'd spears,
Hold him in check; and he, though brave, may fear
To throw himself amid our serried ranks.”

He said: they heard, and all obey'd his words: 350

The mighty Ajax, and Idomeneus
The King, and Teucer, and Meriones,
And Meges, bold as Mars, with all their best,
Their stedfast battle rang'd, to wait th' assault
Of Hector and his Trojans; while behind,
Th' unwarlike many to the ships retir'd.

The Trojan mass came on, by Hector led
With haughty stride; before him Phœbus went,
His shoulders veil'd in cloud; his arm sustain'd
The awful Ægis, dread to look on, hung 360

With shaggy tassels round and dazzling bright;
Which Vulcan, skilful workman, gave to Jove,
To scatter terror 'mid the souls of men.

This on his arm, the Trojan troops he led.
Firm stood the mass of Greeks; from either side
Shrill clamours rose; and fast from many a string
The arrows flew, and many a jav'lin, hurl'd
By vig'rous arms; some buried in the flesh
Of stalwart youths, and many, ere they reach'd
Their living mark, fell midway on the plain, 370

Fix'd in the ground, in vain athirst for blood,
While Phœbus motionless his Ægis held,
Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell
On either side; but when he turn'd its flash

Full in the faces of the astonish'd Greeks,
 And shouted loud, their spirits within them quail'd,
 Their fiery courage borne in mind no more.
 As when two beasts of prey, at dead of night,
 With sudden onset scatter wide a herd
 Of oxen, or a num'rous flock of sheep, 380
 Their keepers absent; so unnerv'd by fear
 The Greeks dispers'd; such panic 'mid their ranks,
 That vict'ry so might crown the Trojan arms,
 Apollo sent; and as the masses broke,
 Each Trojan slew his man; by Hector's hand
 Fell Stichius and Arcesilas; the one,
 The leader of Bœotia's brass-clad host,
 The other, brave Menestheus' trusted friend.
 Æneas Medon slew, and Iasus;
 Medon, the great Oileus' bastard son, 390
 Brother of Ajax; he in Phylace,
 Far from his native home, was driv'n to dwell;
 Since one to Eriopis near akin,
 His sire Oileus' wife, his hand had slain:
 And Iasus, th' Athenian chief, was deem'd
 The son of Sphelus, son of Bucolus.
 Polydamas amid the foremost ranks
 Mecistes slew, Polites Echius,
 Agenor Clonius; while from Paris' hand
 An arrow, 'mid the crowd of fugitives 400
 Shot from behind, beneath the shoulder struck
 Dëiocus, and through his chest was driv'n:
 These while the Trojans of their arms despoil'd,
 Through ditch and palisades promiscuous dash'd
 The flying Greeks, and gain'd, hard-press'd, the wall;
 While loudly Hector to the Trojans call'd
 To assail the ships, and leave the bloody spoils:
 "Whom I elsewhere, and from the ships aloof
 Shall find, my hand shall doom him on the spot;
 For him no fun'ral pyre his kin shall light, 410
 Or male or female; but before the wall
 Our city's dogs his mangled flesh shall tear."
 He said; and on his horses' shoulder-point
 Let fall the lash, and loudly through the ranks
 Call'd on the Trojans; they, with answ'ring shout
 And noise unspeakable, urg'd on with him
 Their harness'd steeds; Apollo, in the van,

Trod down with ease th' embankment of the ditch,
 And fill'd it in; and o'er it bridg'd a way
 Level and wide, far as a jav'lin's flight 420
 Hurl'd by an arm that proves its utmost strength.
 O'er this their columns pass'd; Apollo bore
 His Ægis o'er them, and cast down the wall;
 Easy, as when a child upon the beach,
 In wanton play, with hands and feet o'erthrows
 The mound of sand, which late in play he rais'd;
 So, Phœbus, thou, the Grecian toil and pains
 Confounding, sentest panic through their souls.
 Thus hemm'd beside the ships they made their stand,
 While each exhorted each, and all, with hands 430
 Outstretch'd, to ev'ry God address'd their pray'r:
 And chief, Gerenian Nestor, prop of Greece,
 With hands uplifted tow'rd the starry Heav'n:

“ O Father Jove! if any e'er to Thee
 On corn-clad plains of Argos burnt the fat
 Of bulls and sheep, and offer'd up his pray'r
 For safe return; and thine assenting nod
 Confirm'd thy promise; O remember now
 His pray'r; stave off the pitiless day of doom,
 Nor let the Greeks to Trojan arms succumb.” 440

Thus Nestor pray'd; loud thunder'd from on high
 The Lord of counsel, as he heard the pray'r
 Of Neleus' aged son; with double zeal,
 The Trojans, as the mind of Jove they knew,
 Press'd on the Greeks, with warlike ardour fir'd.
 As o'er the bulwarks of a ship pour down
 The mighty billows of the wide-path'd sea,
 Driv'n by the blast, that tosses high the waves,
 So down the wall, with shouts, the Trojans pour'd;
 The cars admitted, by the ships they fought 450
 With double-pointed spears, and hand to hand;
 These on their chariots, on the lofty decks
 Of their dark vessels those, with pond'rous spars,
 Which on the ships were stor'd for naval war,
 Compact and strong, their heads encas'd in brass.

While yet beyond the ships, about the wall
 The Greeks and Trojans fought, Patroclus still
 Within the tent of brave Eurypylus
 Remaining, with his converse sooth'd the chief,
 And healing unguents to his wound applied, 460

Of pow'r to charm away the bitter pains;
 But when the Trojans pouring o'er the wall,
 And routed Greeks in panic flight he saw,
 Deeply he groan'd, and smiting on his thigh
 With either palm, in anguish thus he spoke:

“Eurypylyus, how great soe'er thy need,
 I can no longer stay; so fierce the storm
 Of battle rages; but th' attendants' care
 Will all thy wants supply; while I in haste
 Achilles seek, and urge him to the war; 470
 Who knows but Heav'n may grant me to succeed?
 For great is oft a friend's persuasive pow'r.”
 He said, and quickly on his errand sped.

Meanwhile the Greeks, in firm array, endur'd
 The onset of the Trojans; nor could these
 Th' assailants, though in numbers less, repel;
 Nor those again the Grecian masses break,
 And force their passage through the ships and tents.
 As by a rule, in cunning workman's hand,
 Who all his art by Pallas' aid has learnt, 480
 A vessel's plank is smooth and level laid;
 So level lay the balance of the fight.

Others round other ships maintain'd the war,
 But Hector that of Ajax sought alone.
 For that one ship they two unwearied toil'd;
 Nor Hector Ajax from his post could move,
 And burn the ship with fire; nor he repel
 The foe who came protected by a God.
 Then noble Ajax with his jav'lin smote
 Caletor, son of Clytius, through the breast, 490
 As tow'rd the ship a blazing torch he bore;
 Thund'ring he fell, and dropp'd his hand the torch.

But Hector, when his eyes his kinsman saw
 By the dark vessel, prostrate in the dust,
 On Trojans and on Lycians call'd aloud:
 “Trojans and Lycians, and ye Dardans, fam'd
 In close encounter, in this press of war
 Slack not your efforts; haste to save the son
 Of Clytius, nor let Greeks his arms possess,
 Who 'mid their throng of ships has nobly fall'n.” 500

At Ajax, as he spoke, his gleaming spear
 He threw, but miss'd his aim; yet Lycophon,
 His comrade, of Cythera, Mastor's son

(Who flying from Cythera's lovely isle
 With guilt of bloodshed, near to Ajax dwelt),
 Standing beside the chief, above the ear
 He struck, and pierc'd the brain: from the tall prow
 Backwards he fell, his limbs relax'd in death.
 Then Ajax, shudd'ring, on his brother call'd:

“ Good Teucer, we have lost a faithful friend, 510
 The son of Mastor, our Cytheran guest,
 Whom as a father all rever'd; who now
 Lies slain by noble Hector. Where are then
 Thine arrows, swift-wing'd messengers of fate,
 And where thy trusty bow, Apollo's gift? ”

Thus Ajax; Teucer heard, and ran in haste,
 And stood beside him, with his bended bow,
 And well-stor'd quiver: on the Trojans fast
 He pour'd his shafts; and struck Pisenor's son,
 Clitus, the comrade of Polydamas, 520

The noble son of Panthöus; he the reins
 Held in his hand, and all his care bestow'd
 To guide his horses; for, where'er the throng
 Was thickest, there in Hector's cause, and Troy's,
 He still was found; but o'er him hung the doom
 Which none might turn aside; for from behind
 The fateful arrow struck him through the neck;
 Down from the car he fell; swerving aside,
 The startled horses whirl'd the empty car.
 Them first the King Polydamas beheld, 530

And stay'd their course; to Protiaon's son,
 Astynöus, then he gave them, with command
 To keep good watch, and still be near at hand;
 Then 'mid the foremost join'd again the fray.
 Again at Hector of the brazen helm

An arrow Teucer aim'd; and had the shaft
 The life of Hector quench'd in mid career,
 Not long the fight had rag'd around the ships:
 But Jove's all-seeing eye beheld, who watch'd
 O'er Hector's life, and Teucer's hopes deceiv'd. 540

The bow's well-twisted string he snapp'd in twain,
 As Teucer drew; the brass-tipp'd arrow flew
 Wide of the mark, and dropp'd his hand the bow.
 Then to his brother, all aghast, he cried:
 “ O Heav'n, some God our best-laid schemes of war
 Confounds, who from my hands hath wrench'd the bow,

And snapp'd the newly-twisted string, which I
But late attach'd, my swift-wing'd shafts to bear."

Whom answer'd thus great Ajax Telamon:

"O friend, leave there thine arrows and thy bow, 550
Marr'd by some God who grudges our renown;
But take in hand thy pond'rous spear, and cast
Thy shield about thy shoulders, and thyself
Stand forth, and urge the rest, to face the foe.
Let us not tamely yield, if yield we must,
Our well-built ships, but nobly dare the fight."

Thus Ajax spoke; and Teucer in the tent
Bestow'd his bow, and o'er his shoulders threw
His fourfold shield; and on his firm-set head
A helm he plac'd, well-wrought, with horsehair plume, 560
That nodded, fearful, o'er his brow; his hand
Grasp'd the firm spear, with sharpen'd point of brass:
Then ran, and swiftly stood by Ajax' side.
Hector meanwhile, who saw the weapon marr'd,
To Trojans and to Lycians call'd aloud:

"Trojans and Lycians, and ye Dardans fam'd
In close encounter, quit ye now like men;
Against the ships your wonted valour show.
Ev'n now, before our eyes, hath Jove destroy'd
A chieftain's weapon. Easy 'tis to trace 570
O'er human wars th' o'erruling hand of Jove,
To whom he gives the prize of victory,
And whom, withholding aid, he minishes,
As now the Greeks, while we his favour gain.
Pour then your force united on the ships;
And if there be among you, who this day
Shall meet his doom, by sword or arrow slain,
E'en let him die! a glorious death is his
Who for his country falls; and dying, leaves
Preserv'd from danger, children, wife, and home, 580
His heritage uninjur'd, when the Greeks
Embarking hence shall take their homeward way."

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast.

Ajax, on th' other side, address'd the Greeks:

"Shame on ye, Greeks! this very hour decides
If we must perish, or be sav'd, and ward
Destruction from our ships; and can ye hope
That each, if Hector of the glancing helm
Shall burn our ships, on foot can reach his home?"

Or hear ye not, how, burning to destroy 590
 Our vessels, Hector cheers his forces on?
 Not to the dance, but to the fight he calls;
 Nor better counsel can for us be found,
 Than in close fight with heart and hand to join.
 'Twere better far at once to die, than live
 Hemm'd in and straiten'd thus, in dire distress,
 Close to our ships, by meaner men beset."

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast.
 Then Hector Schedius, Perimedes' son,
 The Thracian leader, slew; on th' other side 600
 Ajax the captain of the foot o'ercame,
 Laödamas, Antenor's noble son;
 While of his arms Polydamas despoil'd
 Cyllenian Otus, friend of Phyleus' son,
 The proud Epeians' leader; Meges saw,
 And rush'd upon him; but Polydamas,
 Stooping, the blow evaded; him he miss'd;
 For Phœbus will'd not Panthöus' son should fall
 In the front rank contending; but the spear
 Smote Crœsmus through the breast; thund'ring he fell, 610
 And from his corpse the victor stripp'd his arms.
 Him Dolops, son of Lampus, spearman skill'd,
 Well train'd in ev'ry point of war, assail'd
 (The son of Lampus he, the prince of men,
 Son of Laomedon); from close at hand
 Forward he sprang, and thrust at Meges' shield;
 But him the solid corslet which he wore,
 With breast and back-piece fitted, sav'd from harm:
 The corslet Phyleus brought from Ephyra,
 By Selles' stream; Euphetes, King of men, 620
 Bestow'd it as a friendly gift, to wear
 In battle for a guard from hostile spears;
 Which from destruction now preserv'd his son.
 Next Meges struck, with keen-edg'd spear, the crown
 Of Dolops' brass-bound, horsehair-crested helm,
 Sev'ring the horsehair plume, which, brilliant late
 With crimson dye, now lay defil'd in dust.
 Yet fought he on, and still for vict'ry hop'd;
 But warlike Meneläus to the aid
 Of Meges came; of Dolops unobserv'd 630
 He stood, and from behind his shoulder pierc'd;
 The point, its course pursuing, through his breast

Was driv'n, and headlong on his face he fell.
 Forthwith advanc'd the two to seize the spoils;
 But loudly Hector on his kinsmen call'd;
 On all, but chief on Ictæon's son,
 The valiant Melanippus; he erewhile,
 In far Percote, ere the foes appear'd,
 Pastur'd his herds; but when the ships of Greece
 Approach'd the shore, to Ilium back he came; 640
 There, 'mid the Trojans eminent, he dwelt
 In Priam's house, belov'd as Priam's son.

Him Hector call'd by name, and thus address'd:
 "Why, Melanippus, stand we idly thus?
 Doth not thy slaughter'd kinsman touch thy heart?
 See how they rush on Dolops' arms to seize;
 Then on! no distant war must now be wag'd,
 But hand to hand, till or the Greeks be slain,
 Or lofty Troy, with all her children, fall."

He said, and led the way; him follow'd straight 650
 The godlike chief; great Ajax Telamon
 Meanwhile the Greeks encourag'd to the fight,
 And cried, "Brave comrades, quit ye now like men;
 Bear a stout heart; and in the stubborn fight
 Let each to other mutual succour give;
 By mutual succour more are sav'd than fall;
 In timid flight nor fame nor safety lies."

He said; and pond'ring well his words, they stood,
 Firm in defence; as with a wall of brass
 The ships they guarded; though against them Jove 660
 Led on the Trojans; Menelæus then
 With stirring words Antilochus address'd:
 "Antilochus, than thou, of all the Greeks
 Is none more active, or more light of foot;
 None stronger hurls the spear; then from the crowd
 Spring forth, and aim to reach some Trojan's life."

Thus saying, he withdrew; fir'd by his words,
 Forth sprang the youth, and pois'd his glitt'ring spear,
 Glancing around him; back the Trojans drew
 Before his aim; nor flew the spear in vain; 670
 But through the breast it pierc'd, as on he came,
 Brave Melanippus, Ictæon's son.
 Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.
 Forth sprang Antilochus, as springs a hound
 Upon a fawn, which from its lair disturb'd

A hunter's shaft has struck, and quell'd its pow'rs;
 So, Melanippus, sprang to seize thy spoils
 The stout Antilochus; but not unmark'd
 Of Hector's eye, who, hast'ning through the press,
 Advanc'd to meet him; waited not th' attack, 680
 Bold warrior as he was, Antilochus,
 But trembling fled: as when a beast of prey,
 Conscious of evil deed, amid the herd
 The guardian dog or herdsman's self has slain,
 And flies, ere yet th' avenging crowd collect;
 So fled the son of Nestor; onward press'd,
 By Hector led, the Trojans; loud their shouts,
 As on the Greeks their murd'rous shafts they pour'd:
 Yet turn'd he, when his comrades' ranks he reach'd.
 Then on the ships, as rav'ning lions, fell 690
 The Trojans: they but work'd the will of Jove,
 Who still their courage rais'd, and quell'd the Greeks;
 Of vict'ry these debarr'd, and those inspir'd;
 For so he will'd, that Hector, Priam's son,
 Should wrap in fire the beak'd ships of Greece,
 And Thetis to the uttermost obtain
 Her over-bold petition; yet did Jove,
 The Lord of counsel, wait but to behold
 The flames ascending from the blazing ships:
 For from that hour the Trojans, backward driv'n, 700
 Should to the Greeks the final triumph leave.
 With such design, to seize the ships, he fir'd
 Th' already burning zeal of Priam's son;
 Fiercely he rag'd, as terrible as Mars
 With brandish'd spear; or as a raging fire
 'Mid the dense thickets on the mountain side.
 The foam was on his lips; bright flash'd his eyes
 Beneath his awful brows, and terribly
 Above his temples wav'd amid the fray
 The helm of Hector; Jove himself from Heav'n 710
 His guardian hand extending, him alone
 With glory crowning 'mid the host of men;
 But short his term of glory; for the day
 Was fast approaching, when, with Pallas' aid,
 The might of Peleus' son should work his doom.
 Oft he essay'd to break the ranks, where'er
 The densest throng and noblest arms he saw;
 But strenuous though his efforts, all were vain:

They, mass'd in close array, his charge withstood;
 Firm as a craggy rock, upstanding high, 720
 Close by the hoary sea, which meets unmov'd
 The boist'rous currents of the whistling winds,
 And the big waves that bellow round its base;
 So stood unmov'd the Greeks, and undismay'd.
 At length, all blazing in his arms, he sprang
 Upon the mass; so plunging down, as when
 On some tall vessel, from beneath the clouds
 A giant billow, tempest-nurs'd, descends:
 The deck is drench'd in foam; the stormy wind
 Howls in the shrouds; th' affrighted seamen quail 730
 In fear, but little way from death remov'd;
 So quail'd the spirit in ev'ry Grecian breast.

As when a rav'ning lion on a herd
 Of heifers falls, which on some marshy mead
 Feed numberless, beneath the care of one,
 Unskill'd from beasts of prey to guard his charge;
 And while beside the front or rear he walks,
 The lion on th' unguarded centre springs,
 Seizes on one, and scatters all the rest;
 So Hector, led by Jove, in wild alarm 740
 Scatter'd the Grecians all; but one alone,
 Brave Periphetes, of Mycenæ, slew;
 The son of Copreus, whom Eurystheus sent
 His envoy to the might of Hercules;
 Far nobler than the father was the son;
 In speed of foot, in warlike might, in mind,
 In all, among Mycenians foremost he;
 Who now on Hector fresh renown conferr'd;
 For, backward as he stepp'd, against the rim
 Of the broad shield which for defence he bore, 750
 Down reaching to his feet, he tripp'd, and thus
 Entangled, backward fell; and as he fell,
 Around his temples clatter'd loud his helm.
 Hector beheld, and o'er him stood in haste,
 And with his spear transfix'd his breast, and slew
 Before his comrades' eyes; yet dar'd not one,
 Though grieving for their comrade's loss, advance
 To rescue; such of Hector was their awe.
 They fronted now the ships; the leading prows
 Which first were drawn on shore, still barr'd their way; 760
 Yet on they stream'd; and from the foremost ships,

Now hardly press'd, the Greeks perforce retir'd;
 But closely mass'd before the tents they stood,
 Not scatter'd o'er the camp; by shame restrain'd,
 And fear; and loudly each exhorted each.
 Gerenian Nestor chief, the prop of Greece,
 Thus by their fathers singly each adjur'd:
 "Quit ye like men, dear friends; and think it shame
 To forfeit now the praise of other men;
 Let each man now his children and his wife,
 His fortunes and his parents, bear in mind;
 And not the living only, but the dead;
 For them, the absent, I, your suppliant, pray,
 That firm ye stand, and scorn disgraceful flight."

770

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast;
 And from their eyeballs Pallas purg'd away
 The film of darkness; and on ev'ry side,
 Both tow'rd the ships and tow'rd the level fight,
 Clear light diffus'd; there Hector they discern'd,
 And all his comrades, those who stood aloof,
 And those who near the ships maintain'd the war.

780

Then was not Ajax' mighty soul content
 To stand where stood the other sons of Greece;
 Along the vessels' lofty decks he mov'd
 With haughty stride; a pond'rous boarding-pike,
 Well-polish'd, and with rivets well secur'd,
 Of two and twenty cubits length, he bore.
 As one well-skill'd in feats of horsemanship,
 Who from a troop of horses on the plain
 Has parted four, and down the crowded road,
 While men and women all in wonder gaze,
 Drives tow'rd the city; and with force untir'd
 From one to other springs, as on they fly;
 O'er many a vessel's deck so Ajax pass'd
 With lofty stride, and voice that reach'd to Heav'n,
 As loudly shouting on the Greeks he call'd
 To save their ships and tents: nor Hector stay'd
 Amid the closely-buckler'd Trojan ranks;
 But, as upon a flock of birds, that feed
 Beside a river's bank, or geese, or cranes,
 Or long-neck'd swans, a fiery eagle swoops;
 So on the dark-prow'd ship with furious rush
 Swept Hector down; him Jove with mighty hand
 Sustain'd, and with him forward urg'd the crowd.

790

800

Fierce round the ships again the battle rag'd;
 Well might ye deem no previous toil had worn
 Their strength, who in that dread encounter met;
 With edge so keen, and stubborn will they fought.
 But varying far their hopes and fears: the Greeks
 Of safety and escape from death despair'd; 810
 While high the hopes in ev'ry Trojan's breast,
 To burn the ships, and slay the warlike Greeks:
 So minded each, oppos'd in arms they stood.

On a swift-sailing vessel's stern, that bore
 Protesiläus to the coast of Troy,
 But to his native country bore not thence,
 Hector had laid his hand; around that ship
 Trojans and Greeks in mutual slaughter join'd.
 The arrow's or the jav'lin's distant flight
 They waited not, but, fir'd with equal rage, 820
 Fought hand to hand, with axe and hatchet keen,
 And mighty swords, and double-pointed spears.
 Many a fair-hilted blade, with iron bound,
 Dropp'd from the hands, or from the sever'd arms,
 Of warrior chiefs; the dark earth ran with blood:
 Yet loos'd not Hector of the stern his hold,
 But grasp'd the poop, and on the Trojans call'd:

“Bring fire, and all together loud and clear
 Your war-cry raise; this day will Jove repay
 Our labours all, with capture of those ships, 830
 Which hither came, against the will of Heav'n,
 And which on us unnumber'd ills have brought,
 By our own Elders' fault, who me, desiring
 Ev'n at their vessels' stern to urge the war,
 Withheld, and to the town the troops confin'd.
 But Jove all-seeing, if he then o'errul'd
 Our better mind, himself is now our aid.”

Thus he: they onward press'd with added zeal;
 Nor Ajax yet endur'd, by hostile spears
 Now sorely gall'd; yet but a little space, 840
 Back to the helmsman's sev'n-foot board he mov'd,
 Expecting death; and left the lofty deck,
 Where long he stood on guard; but still his spear
 The Trojans kept aloof, whoe'er essay'd
 Amid the ships to launch th' unwearied flames;
 And, loudly shouting, to the Greeks he call'd:

“Friends, Grecian heroes, ministers of Mars,

Quit ye like men! dear friends, remember now
Your wonted valour! think ye in your rear
To find supporting forces, or some fort
Whose walls may give you refuge from your foe?
No city is nigh, whose well-appointed tow'rs,
Mann'd by a friendly race, may give us aid;
But here, upon the well-arm'd Trojans' soil,
And only resting on the sea, we lie
Far from our country; not in faint retreat,
But in our own good arms, our safety lies."

850

He said; and with his sharp-edg'd spear his words
He follow'd up; if any Trojan dar'd,
By Hector's call inspir'd, with fiery brand
To assail the ships, him with his sharp-edg'd spear
Would Ajax meet; and thus before the ships
Twelve warriors, hand to hand, his prowess felt.

860

BOOK XVI

ARGUMENT

ACHILLES, at the suit of Patroclus, grants him his own armour, and permission to lead the Myrmidons to battle. They, sallying, repulse the Trojans. Patroclus slays Sarpedon, and Hector, when Apollo had first stripped off his armour and Euphorbus wounded him, slays Patroclus.

THUS round the well-mann'd ship they wag'd the war:
Meanwhile by Peleus' son Patroclus stood,
Weeping hot tears; as some dark-water'd fount
Pours o'er a craggy rock its gloomy stream;
Achilles, swift of foot, with pity saw,
And to his friend these wingèd words address'd:

“ Why weeps Patroclus, like an infant girl,
That prays her mother, by whose side she runs,
To take her up; and, clinging to her gown,
Impedes her way, and still with tearful eyes 10
Looks in her face, until she take her up?
Ev'n as that girl, Patroclus, such art thou,
Shedding soft tears: hast thou some tidings brought
Touching the gen'ral weal, or me alone?
Or have some evil news from Phthia come,
Known but to thee? Meneceus, Actor's son,
Yet surely lives; and 'mid his Myrmidons
Lives aged Peleus, son of Æacus:
Their deaths indeed might well demand our tears:
Or weep'st thou for the Greeks, who round their ships 20
By death their former insolence repay?
Speak out, that I may know thy cause of grief.”

To whom, with bitter groans, Patroclus thus:

“ O son of Peleus, noblest of the Greeks,
Achilles, be not wroth! such weight of woe
The Grecian camp oppresses; in their ships
They who were late their bravest and their best,
Sore wounded all by spear or arrow lie;
The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,
Pierc'd by a shaft, Ulysses by a spear, 30

And Agamemnon's self; Eurypylus
 By a sharp arrow through the thigh transfix'd;
 For these, the large resources of their art
 The leeches ply, and on their wounds attend;
 While thou, Achilles, still remain'st unmov'd.
 Oh, be it never mine to nurse such hate
 As thou retain'st, inflexibly severe!
 Who e'er may hope in future days by thee
 To profit, if thou now forbear to save
 The Greeks from shame and loss? Unfeeling man! 40
 Sure Peleus, horseman brave, was ne'er thy sire,
 Nor Thetis bore thee; from the cold grey sea
 And craggy rocks thou hadst thy birth; so hard
 And stubborn is thy soul. But if the fear
 Of evil prophesied thyself restrain,
 Or message by thy Goddess-mother brought
 From Jove, yet send me forth with all thy force
 Of Myrmidons, to be the saving light
 Of Greece; and let me to the battle bear 50
 Thy glitt'ring arms, if so the men of Troy,
 Scar'd by thy likeness, may forsake the field,
 And breathing-time afford the sons of Greece,
 Toil-worn; for little pause has yet been theirs.
 Fresh and unwearied, we may drive with ease
 To their own city, from our ships and tents,
 The Trojans, worn and battle-wearied men."

Thus pray'd he, all unwisely; for the pray'r
 He utter'd, to himself was fraught with death;
 To whom, much griev'd, Achilles, swift of foot:
 "Heav'n-born Patroclus, oh, what words are these! 60
 Of prophecy I reckon not, though I know;
 Nor message hath my mother brought from Jove;
 But it afflicts my soul, when one I see
 That basely robs his equal of his prize,
 His lawful prize, by highest valour won;
 Such grief is mine, such wrong have I sustain'd.
 Her, whom the sons of Greece on me bestow'd,
 Prize of my spear, the well-wall'd city storm'd,
 The mighty Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
 Hath borne by force away, as from the hands 70
 Of some dishonour'd, houseless vagabond.
 But let the past be past; I never meant
 My wrath should have no end; yet had not thought

My anger to abate, till my own ships
Should hear the war-cry, and the battle bear.
But go, and in my well-known armour clad,
Lead forth the valiant Myrmidons to war,
Since the dark cloud of Trojans circles round
The ships in force; and on the shingly beach,
Pent up in narrow limits, lie the Greeks; 80
And all the city hath pour'd its numbers forth
In hope undoubting; for they see no more
My helm among them flashing; else in flight
Their dead would choke the streams, if but to me
Great Agamemnon bore a kindly mind:
But round the camp the battle now is wag'd.
No more the hands of valiant Diomed,
The Greeks protecting, hurl his fiery spear;
Nor hear I now, from his detested lips,
The shout of Agamemnon; all around 90
Is heard the warrior-slayer Hector's voice,
Cheering his Trojans; with triumphant cries
They, from the vanquish'd Greeks, hold all the plain.
Nathless do thou, Patroclus, in defence
Fall boldly on, lest they with blazing fire
Our ships destroy, and hinder our retreat.
But hear, and ponder well the end of all
I have to say, and so for me obtain
Honour and glory in the eyes of Greece;
And that the beauteous maiden to my arms 100
They may restore, with costly gifts to boot.
The ships reliev'd, return forthwith; and though
The Thund'rer, Juno's Lord, should deign to crown
Thine arms with triumph, be not over-bold
To combat with the warlike sons of Troy;
(So should my name in less repute be held;)
Nor, in the keen excitement of the fight
And slaughter of the Trojans, lead thy troops
On tow'rd the city, lest thou find thyself
By some one of th' immortal Gods oppos'd; 110
For the far-darting Phœbus loves them well;
But when in safety thou hast plac'd the ships,
Delay not to return, and leave the rest
To battle on the plain: for would to Jove,
To Pallas and Apollo, that not one,
Or Greek or Trojan, might escape from death,

Save only thou and I; that so we two
Alone might raze the sacred tow'rs of Troy."

Such converse held they; while by hostile spears
Hard press'd, no longer Ajax might endure; 120
At once by Jove's high will and Trojan foes
O'ermaster'd; loud beneath repeated blows
Clatter'd around his brow the glitt'ring helm,
As on the well-wrought crest the weapons fell;
And his left arm grew faint, that long had borne
The burthen of his shield; yet nought avail'd
The press of spears to drive him from his post;
Lab'ring he drew his breath, his ev'ry limb
With sweat was reeking; breathing space was none;
Blow follow'd blow, and ills were heap'd on ill. 130

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell,
How first the fire assail'd the Grecian ships.

Hector approach'd, and on the ashen spear
Of Ajax, close behind the head, let fall
His mighty sword; right through he clove the wood;
And in his hand the son of Telamon
The headless shaft held bootless; far away,
Loud ringing, fell to earth the brazen point.
Great Ajax saw, and deep his noble soul
Was troubled, as he knew the work of Heav'n; 140
And that the Thund'rer had decreed to thwart
His warlike hopes, and vict'ry give to Troy.
Slow he retir'd; and to the vessel they
The blazing torch applied; high rose the flame
Unquenchable, and wrapp'd the poop in fire.
The son of Peleus saw, and with his palm
Smote on his thigh, and to Patroclus call'd:
"Up, nobly-born Patroclus, car-borne chief!
Up, for I see above the ships ascend
The hostile fires; and lest they seize the ships, 150
And hinder our retreat, do thou in haste
Thine armour don, while I arouse the troops."

He said: his dazzling arms Patroclus donn'd:
First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fix'd,
Fasten'd with silver clasps; his ample chest
The breastplate of Achilles, swift of foot,
Star-spangled, richly wrought, defended well;
Around his shoulders slung, his sword he bore,
Brass-bladed, silver-studded; next his shield

Weighty and strong; and on his firm-set head 160
 A helm he wore, well-wrought, with horsehair plume
 That nodded, fearful, o'er his brow; his hand
 Grasp'd two stout spears, familiar to his hold.
 One spear Achilles had, long, pond'rous, tough;
 But this he touch'd not; none of all the Greeks,
 None, save Achilles' self, that spear could poise;
 The far-fam'd Pelian ash, which to his sire,
 On Pelion's summit fell'd, to be the bane
 Of mightiest chiefs, the Centaur Chiron gave,
 Then to Automedon he gave command 170
 To yoke the horses: him he honour'd most,
 Next to Achilles' self; the trustiest he
 In battle to await his chief's behest.
 The flying steeds he harness'd to the car.
 Xanthus and Balius, fleeter than the winds;
 Whom, grazing in the marsh by ocean's stream,
 Podarge, swift of foot, to Zephyr bore:
 And by their side the matchless Pedasus,
 Whom from the capture of Eëtion's town
 Achilles bore away; a mortal horse, 180
 But with immortal coursers meet to vie.
 Meantime Achilles, through their sev'ral tents,
 Summon'd to arms the warlike Myrmidons.
 They all, like rav'ning wolves, of courage high,
 That on the mountain side have hunted down
 An antler'd stag, and batten'd on his flesh:
 Their chaps all dyed with blood, in troops they go,
 With their lean tongues from some black-water'd fount
 To lap the surface of the dark cool wave,
 Their jaws with blood yet reeking, unsubdued 190
 Their courage, and their bellies gorg'd with flesh;
 So round Pelides' valiant follower throng'd
 The chiefs and rulers of the Myrmidons.
 Achilles in the midst to charioteers
 And buckler'd warriors issued his commands,
 Fifty swift ships Achilles, dear to Jove,
 Led to the coast of Troy; and rang'd in each
 Fifty brave comrades mann'd the rowers' seats.
 O'er these five chiefs, on whom he most relied,
 He plac'd, himself the Sov'reign Lord of all. 200
 One band Menestheus led, with glancing mail,
 Son of Sperchius, Heav'n-descended stream;

Him Peleus' daughter, Polydora fair,
 A mortal in a God's embrace compress'd,
 To stout Sperchius bore; but, by repute,
 To Borus, Perieres' son, who her
 In public, and with ample dow'r, espous'd.
 The brave Eudorus led the second band,
 Whom Phylas' daughter, Polymele fair,
 To Hermes bore; the maid he saw, and lov'd, 210
 Amid the virgins, mingling in the dance
 Of golden-shafted Dian, Huntress-Queen;
 He to her chamber access found, and gain'd
 By stealth her bed; a valiant son she bore,
 Eudorus, swift of foot, in battle strong.
 But when her infant, by Lucina's aid,
 Was brought to light, and saw the face of day,
 Her to his home, with ample dow'r enrich'd,
 Echecles, son of Actor, bore away;
 While him the aged Phylas kept, and nurs'd 220
 With tender care, and cherish'd as his own.
 The brave Peisander, son of Mæmalus,
 The third commanded; of the Myrmidons,
 Next to Pelides' friend, the noblest spear.
 The fourth, the aged warrior Phœnix led;
 The fifth, Alcimedon, Laercus' son:
 These in their order due Achilles first
 Array'd, and next with stirring words address'd:
 "Ye Myrmidons, forget not now the vaunts
 Which, while my wrath endur'd, ye largely pour'd 230
 Upon the Trojans; me ye freely blam'd;
 'Ill-omen'd son of Peleus, sure in wrath
 Thou wast conceiv'd, implacable, who here
 In idleness enforc'd thy comrades keep'st!
 'Twere better far our homeward way to take,
 If such pernicious rancour fill thy soul!
 Thus ye reproach'd me oft! Lo! now ye have
 The great occasion which your souls desir'd!
 Then on, and with brave hearts the Trojans meet!"

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast; 240
 And more compact, beneath their monarch's eye,
 Their ranks were form'd; as when the builder lays
 The closely-fitting stones, to form the wall
 Of some great house, and brave the winds of Heav'n;
 So close were fitted helm and bossy shield;

Buckler on buckler press'd, and helm on helm,
 And man on man; the horsehair plumes above,
 That nodded, fearful, from the warrior's brows,
 Each other touch'd; so closely mass'd they stood.
 Before them all stood prominent in arms 250
 Two chiefs, Patroclus and Automedon,
 Both with one thought possess'd, to lead the fight
 In the fore-front of all the Myrmidons.

Achilles then within his tent withdrew,
 And of a gorgeous coffer rais'd the lid,
 Well-wrought, by silver-footed Thetis plac'd
 On board his ship, and fill'd with rich attire,
 With store of wind-proof cloaks, and carpets soft,
 There lay a goblet, richly chas'd, whence none,
 But he alone, might drink the ruddy wine, 260
 Nor might libations thence to other Gods
 Be made, save only Jove; this brought he forth,
 And first with sulphur purified, and next
 Wash'd with pure water; then his hands he wash'd,
 And drew the ruddy wine; then standing forth
 Made in the centre of the court his pray'r,
 And as he pour'd the wine, look'd up to Heav'n,
 Not unbeheld of Jove, the lightning's Lord:

“ Great King, Dodona's Lord, Pelasgian Jove,
 Who dwell'st on high, and rul'st with sov'reign sway 270
 Dodona's wintry heights; where dwell around
 Thy Sellian priests, men of unwashen feet,
 That on the bare ground sleep; thou once before
 Hast heard my pray'r, and me with honour crown'd,
 And on the Greeks inflicted all thy plagues;
 Hear yet again, and this my boon accord.
 I 'mid the throng of ships myself remain;
 But with a num'rous force of Myrmidons
 I send my comrade in my stead to fight:
 On him, all-seeing Jove, thy favour pour; 280
 Strengthen his heart, that Hector's self may learn
 If, ev'n alone, my follower knows to fight,
 Or only then resistless pow'r displays,
 When I myself the toil of battle share.
 And from our vessels when the foe is driv'n,
 Grant that with all his arms and comrades true
 He may in safety to the ships return.”

Thus pray'd he; Jove, the Lord of counsel, heard,

And half his pray'r he granted, half denied:

For from the ships the battle to repel

290

He granted; but denied his safe return.

His pray'rs and off'rings ended, to the tent

Achilles turn'd again, and in the chest

Replac'd the cup; then issuing forth, he stood

Before the tent; for much he long'd to see

The Greeks and Trojans join in battle strife.

They who in arms round brave Patroclus stood

Their line of battle form'd, with courage high

To dash upon the Trojans; and as wasps

That have their nest beside the public road,

300

Which boys delight to vex and irritate

In wanton play, but to the gen'ral harm;

Them if some passing trav'ler unawares

Disturb, with angry courage forth they rush

In one continuous swarm, to guard their nest:

Ev'n with such courage pour'd the Myrmidons

Forth from the ships; then uproar wild arose,

And loud Patroclus on his comrades call'd:

“Ye valiant Myrmidons, who boast yourselves

Achilles' comrades, quit ye now like men;

310

Your ancient valour prove; to Peleus' son,

Of all the Greeks the noblest, so shall we,

His faithful followers, highest honour give;

And Agamemnon's haughty self shall mourn

The slight on Grecia's bravest warrior cast.”

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast.

Thick on the Trojan host their masses fell;

While loud the fleet re-echoed to the sound

Of Grecian cheers; but when the Trojans saw,

Blazing in arms, Menœtius' godlike son,

320

Himself, and follower; quail'd the spirits of all;

Their firm-set ranks were shaken; for they deem'd

Achilles had beside the ships exchange'd

His wrath for friendship; and each sev'ral man

Look'd round, to find his own escape from death.

Then first Patroclus aim'd his glitt'ring spear

Amid the crowd, where thickest rag'd the war,

Around the ship of brave Protesilas;

And struck Pyræchmes, who from Amydon,

From the wide-flowing stream of Axius, led

330

The horsehair-crested Pæons; him he struck

Through the right shoulder; backwards in the dust,
 Groaning, he fell; around him quail'd with fear
 His Pæons all, such terror in their ranks
 Patroclus threw, their bravest leader slain,
 The foremost in the fight; the crowd he drove
 Far from the ships, and quench'd the blazing fire.
 There lay the half-burnt ship; with shouts confus'd
 The Trojans fled; and from amid the ships
 Forth pour'd the Greeks; and loud the clamour rose. 340

As when around a lofty mountain's top
 The lightning's Lord dispels a mass of cloud,
 And ev'ry crag, and ev'ry jutting peak
 Is plainly seen, and ev'ry forest glade;
 And the deep vault of Heav'n is open'd wide;
 So when the Greeks had clear'd the ships of fire,
 They breath'd awhile; yet ceas'd not so the strife;
 For not in headlong panic from the ships
 The Trojans by the valiant Greeks were driv'n,
 But, though perforce retiring, still made head. 350

Then of the chiefs, as wider spread the fight,
 Each singled each; Meneceus' noble son
 First threw his pointed spear, and on the thigh
 Struck Arëilochus, in act to turn;
 Right through the point was driv'n; the weighty spear
 Shatter'd the bone, and prone to earth he fell.
 The warlike Menelæus aim'd his spear
 Where Thoas' breast, unguarded by his shield,
 Was left expos'd; and slack'd his limbs in death.
 Phyleus' brave son, as rush'd Amphiclus on, 360
 Stood firm, with eye observant; then th' attack
 Preventing, through his thigh, high up, where lie
 The strongest muscles, smote; the weapon's point
 Sever'd the tendons; darkness clos'd his eyes.
 Of Nestor's sons, Antilochus, the first,
 Atymnius wounded, driving through his flank
 The brazen spear; prone on his face he fell.
 Then, burning to avenge his brother's death,
 Stood Maris o'er the corpse, and hand to hand
 Engag'd Antilochus; but ere a blow 370
 Was struck, the godlike Thrasymedes drove
 Through his right shoulder, with unerring aim,
 His glitt'ring spear; the point his upper arm
 Tore from the muscles, shatt'ring all the bone:

Thund'ring he fell, and darkness clos'd his eyes.
 So to the shades, by those two brethren's hands
 Subdued, Sarpedon's comrades brave were sent,
 The sons of Amisodarus, who rear'd
 The dread Chimæra, bane of mortal men.
 On Cleobulus, wounded in the press, 380
 Ajax Oïleus sprang, and captive took,
 Alive; but sudden on his neck let fall
 His hilted sword, and quench'd the fire of life.
 The hot blood dyed the sword; the darkling shades
 Of death, and rig'rous fate, his eyes o'erspread.
 Then Peneleus and Lycon, hand to hand,
 Engag'd in combat; both had miss'd their aim,
 And bootless hurl'd their weapons; then with swords
 They met; first Lycon on the crested helm
 Dealt a fierce blow; but in his hand the blade 390
 Up to the hilt was shiver'd; then the sword
 Of Peneleus his neck, below the ear,
 Dissever'd; deeply in his throat the blade
 Was plung'd, and by the skin alone was stay'd;
 Down droop'd his head, his limbs relax'd in death.
 Meriones by speed of foot o'ertook,
 And, as his car he mounted, Acamas
 Through the right shoulder pierc'd; down from the car
 He fell; the shades of death his eyes o'erspread.
 Full on the mouth of Erymas was thrust 400
 The weapon of Idomeneus; right through,
 The white bones crashing, pass'd the brazen spear
 Below the brain; his teeth were shatter'd all;
 With blood, which with convulsive sobs he blew
 From mouth and nostril, both his eyes were fill'd;
 And death's dark cloud encompass'd him around.
 Thus slew the Grecian leaders each his man.
 As rav'ning wolves, that lambs or kids assail,
 Stray'd from their dams, by careless shepherds left
 Upon the mountain scatter'd; these they see, 410
 And tear at once their unresisting prey;
 So on the Trojans fell the Greeks; in rout
 Disastrous they, unmann'd by terror, fled.
 Great Ajax still, unwearied, long'd to hurl
 His spear at Hector of the brazen helm;
 But he, well-skill'd in war, his shoulders broad
 Protected by his shield of tough bull's-hide,

Watch'd for the whizzing shafts, and jav'lines' whirr.
 Full well he knew the tide of battle turn'd,
 Yet held his ground, his trusty friends to save. 420

As from Olympus, o'er the clear blue sky
 Pour the dark clouds, when Jove the vault of Heav'n
 O'erspreads with storm and tempest, from the ships
 So pour'd with panic cries the flying host,
 And in disorder'd rout recross'd the trench.
 Then Hector's flying coursers bore him safe
 Far from the struggling masses, whom the ditch
 Detain'd perforce; there many a royal car
 With broken pole th' unharness'd horses left.
 On, shouting to the Greeks, Patroclus press'd 430
 The flying Trojans; they, with panic cries,
 Dispers'd, the roads encumber'd; high uprose
 The storms of dust, as from the tents and ships
 Back to the city stretch'd the flying steeds;
 And ever where the densest throng appear'd
 With furious threats Patroclus urg'd his course;
 His glowing axle trac'd by prostrate men
 Hurl'd from their cars, and chariots overthrown.
 Flew o'er the deep-sunk trench th' immortal steeds,
 The noble prize the Gods to Peleus gave, 440
 Still onward straining; for he long'd to reach,
 And hurl his spear at Hector; him meanwhile
 His flying steeds in safety bore away.

As in th' autumnal season, when the earth
 With weight of rain is saturate; when Jove
 Pours down his fiercest storms in wrath to men,
 Who in their courts unrighteous judgments pass,
 And justice yield to lawless violence,
 The wrath of Heav'n despising; ev'ry stream
 Is brimming o'er; the hills in gullies deep 450
 Are by the torrents seam'd, which, rushing down
 From the high mountains to the dark-blue sea,
 With groans and tumult urge their headlong course,
 Wasting the works of man; so urg'd their flight,
 So, as they fled, the Trojan horses groan'd.
 The foremost ranks cut off, back tow'rd the ships
 Patroclus drove them, baffling their attempts
 To gain the city; and in middle space
 Between the ships, the stream, and lofty wall,
 Dealt slaughter round him, and of many a chief 460

The bitter penalty of death requir'd.

Then Pronōus with his glitt'ring spear he struck,
Where by the shield his breast was left expos'd,
And slack'd his limbs in death; thund'ring he fell.

Next Thestor, son of CEnops, he assail'd;

He on his polish'd car, down-crouching, sat,

His mind by fear disorder'd; from his hands

The reins had dropp'd; him, thrusting with the spear,

Through the right cheek and through the teeth he smote,

Then dragg'd him, by the weapon, o'er the rail.

470

As when an angler on a prominent rock

Drags from the sea to shore with hook and line

A weighty fish; so him Patroclus dragg'd,

Gaping, from off the car; and dash'd him down

Upon his face; and life forsook his limbs.

Next Eryalus, eager for the fray,

On the mid forehead with a mighty stone

He struck; beneath the pond'rous helmet's weight

The skull was split in twain; prostrate he fell,

By life-consuming death encompass'd round.

480

Forthwith Amphoterus, and Erymas,

Echius, Epaltes, and Tlepolemus,

Son of Damastor, Pyris, Ipheus brave,

Euippus, Polymelus, Argeas' son,

In quick succession to the ground he brought.

Sarpedon his ungirdled forces saw

Promiscuous fall before Menœtius' son,

And to the Lycians call'd in loud reproof:

"Shame, Lycians! whither fly ye? why this haste?

I will myself this chief confront, and learn

490

Who this may be of bearing proud and high,

Who on the Trojans grievous harm hath wrought,

And many a warrior's limbs relax'd in death."

He said, and from his car, accoutred, sprang;

Patroclus saw, and he too leap'd to earth.

As on a lofty rock, with angry screams,

Hook-beak'd, with talons curv'd, two vultures fight;

So with loud shouts these two to battle rush'd.

The son of Saturn pitying saw, and thus

To Juno spoke, his sister and his wife:

500

"Woe, woe! that fate decrees my best-belov'd,

Sarpedon, by Patroclus' hand to fall;

Ev'n now conflicting thoughts my soul divide,

To bear him from the fatal strife unhurt,
 And set him down on Lycia's fertile plains,
 Or leave him by Patroclus' hand to fall."

Whom answer'd thus the stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n:
 "What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?
 Wouldst thou a mortal man from death withdraw
 Long since by fate decreed? Do what thou wilt; 510
 Yet cannot we, the rest, applaud thine act.
 This, too, I say, and turn it in thy mind:
 If to his home Sarpedon thou restore
 Alive, bethink thee, will not other Gods
 Their sons too from the stubborn fight withdraw?
 For in the field around the walls of Troy
 Are many sons of Gods, in all of whom
 This act of thine will angry feelings rouse.
 But if thou love him, and thy soul deplore
 His coming doom, yet in the stubborn fight 520
 Leave him beneath Patroclus' hand to fall:
 Then, when his spirit hath fled, the charge assign
 To Death and gentle Sleep, that in their arms
 They bear him safe to Lycia's wide-spread plains:
 There shall his brethren and his friends perform
 His fun'ral rites, and mound and column raise,
 The fitting tribute to the mighty dead."

Thus she; the Sire of Gods and men complied:
 But to the ground some drops of blood let fall,
 In honour of his son, whom fate decreed, 530
 Far from his country, on the fertile plains
 Of Troy to perish by Patroclus' hand.
 As near the champions drew, Patroclus first
 His weapon hurl'd, and Thrasymedes brave,
 The faithful follower of Sarpedon, struck
 Below the waist, and slack'd his limbs in death.
 Thrown in his turn, Sarpedon's glitt'ring spear
 Flew wide; and Pedasus, the gallant horse,
 Through the right shoulder wounded; with a scream
 He fell, and in the dust breath'd forth his life, 540
 As, shrieking loud, his noble spirit fled.
 This way and that his two companions swerv'd;
 Creak'd the strong yoke, and tangled were the reins,
 As in the dust the prostrate courser lay.
 Automedon the means of safety saw;
 And drawing from beside his brawny thigh

His keen-edg'd sword, with no uncertain blow
Cut loose the fallen horse; again the twain
Were righted, and again the traces stretch'd.

Again in mortal strife the warriors clos'd:

550

Once more Sarpedon hurl'd his glitt'ring spear
In vain; above Patroclus' shoulder flew

The point, innocuous; from his hand in turn
The spear not vainly thrown, Sarpedon struck

Where lies the diaphragm, below the heart.

He fell; as falls an oak, or poplar tall,

Or lofty pine, which on the mountain top

For some proud ship the woodman's axe hath hewn;

So he, with death-cry sharp, before his car

Extended lay, and clutch'd the blood-stain'd soil.

560

As when a lion on the herd has sprung,

And, 'mid the heifers seiz'd, the lordly bull

Lies bellowing, crush'd between the lion's jaws;

So by Patroclus slain, the Lycian chief,

Undaunted still, his faithful comrade call'd:

" Good Glaucus, warrior tried, behoves thee now

Thy spearmanship to prove, and warlike might.

Welcome the fray; put forth thine utmost speed;

Call on the Lycian chiefs, on ev'ry side,

To press around, and for Sarpedon fight;

570

Thou too thine arms for my protection wield;

For I to thee, through all thy future days,

Shall be a ceaseless scandal and reproach,

If me, thus slain before the Grecian ships,

The Greeks be suffer'd of my arms to spoil:

But stand thou fast, and others' courage raise."

Thus as he spoke, the shades of death o'erspread

His eyes and nostrils; then with foot firm-set

Upon his chest, Patroclus from the corpse

Drew, by main force, the fast-adhering spear;

580

The life forth issuing with the weapon's point.

Loos'd from the royal car, the snorting steeds,

Eager for flight, the Myrmidons detain'd.

Deep-grieving, Glaucus heard his comrade's voice:

His spirit was stirr'd within him, impotent

To bear him succour; with his hand he grasp'd

His wounded arm, in torture from the wound

By Teucer's arrow giv'n, as on he press'd

To aid his friends, and scale the lofty wall.

Then to Apollo thus address'd his pray'r: 590

“ Hear me, great King, who, as on Lycia's plains,
Art here in Troy; and hear'st in ev'ry place
Their voice who suffer, as I suffer now.

A grievous wound I bear, and sharpest pangs
My arm assail, nor may the blood be stanch'd:
The pain weighs down my shoulder; and my hand
Hath lost its pow'r to fight, or grasp my spear.

Sarpedon, bravest of the brave, is slain,
The son of Jove; yet Jove preserv'd him not.
But thou, O King, this grievous wound relieve; 600
Assuage the pain, and give me strength to urge
My Lycian comrades to maintain the war,
And fight myself to guard the noble dead.”

Thus, as he pray'd, his pray'r Apollo heard,
Assuag'd his pains, and from the grievous wound
Stanch'd the dark blood, and fill'd his soul with strength.

Glaucus within himself perceiv'd, and knew,
Rejoicing, that the God had heard his pray'r.
The Lycian leaders first on ev'ry side
He urg'd to hasten for their King to fight: 610

Then 'mid the Trojans went with lofty step,
And first to Panthöus' son, Polydamas,

To brave Agenor and Æneas next;
Then Hector of the brazen helm himself
Approaching, thus with wingèd words address'd:

“ Hector, forgett'st thou quite thy brave allies,
Who freely in thy cause pour forth their lives,
Far from their home and friends? but they from thee
No aid receive; Sarpedon lies in death,

The leader of the buckler'd Lycian bands, 620
Whose justice and whose pow'r were Lycia's shield;

Him by Patroclus' hand hath Mars subdued.
But, friends, stand by me now! with just revenge
Inspir'd, determine that the Myrmidons

Shall not, how griev'd soe'er for all the Greeks
Who by our spears beside the ships have fall'n,
Our dead dishonour, and his arms obtain.”

He said; and through the Trojans thrill'd the sense
Of grief intolerable, unrestrain'd;
For he, though stranger-born, was of the State 630
A mighty pillar; and his followers
A num'rous host; and he himself in fight

Among the foremost; so, against the Greeks,
 With fiery zeal they rush'd, by Hector led,
 Griev'd for Sarpedon's loss; on th' other side
 Patroclus' manly heart the Greeks arousd,
 And to th' Ajaces first, themselves inspir'd
 With martial ardour, thus address'd his speech:

“Ye sons of Ajax, now is come the time

Your former fame to rival, or surpass:

640

The man hath fall'n, who first o'erleap'd our wall,
 Sarpedon; now remains, that, having slain,
 We should his corpse dishonour, and his arms
 Strip off; and should some comrade dare attempt
 His rescue, him too with our spears subdue.”

He said; and they, with martial ardour fir'd,
 Rush'd to the conflict. When on either side
 The reinforc'd battalions were array'd,
 Trojans and Lycians, Myrmidons and Greeks
 Around the dead in sternest combat met,
 With fearful shouts; and loud their armour rang.

650

Then, to enhance the horror of the strife
 Around his son, with darkness Jove o'erspread
 The stubborn fight: the Trojans first drove back
 The keen-ey'd Greeks; for first a warrior fell,
 Not of the meanest 'mid the Myrmidons,
 Epegeus, son of valiant Agacles;
 Who in Budæum's thriving state bore rule
 Erewhile; but flying for a kinsman slain,
 To Peleus and the silver-footed Queen

660

He came a suppliant; with Achilles thence
 To Ilium sent, to join the war of Troy.
 Him, as he stretch'd his hand to seize the dead,
 Full on the forehead, with a massive stone
 Great Hector smote; within the pond'rous helm
 The skull was split in twain; prone on the corpse
 He fell, by life-destroying death subdued.

Griev'd was Patroclus for his comrade slain;
 Forward he darted, as a swift-wing'd hawk,
 That swoops amid the starlings and the daws;

670

So swift didst thou, Patroclus, car-borne chief,
 Upon the Trojans and the Lycians spring,
 Thy soul with anger for thy comrade fill'd.

A pond'rous stone he hurl'd at Sthenelas,
 Son of Ithæmenes; the mighty mass

Fell on his neck, and all the muscles crush'd.
 Back drew great Hector and the chiefs of Troy;
 Far as a jav'lin's flight, in sportive strife,
 Or in the deadly battle, hurl'd by one
 His utmost strength exerting; back so far 680
 The Trojans drew, so far the Greeks pursued.
 Glaucus, the leader of the Lycian spears,
 First turning, slew the mighty Bathycles,
 The son of Chalcon; he in Hellas dwelt,
 In wealth surpassing all the Myrmidons.
 Him, as he gain'd upon him in pursuit,
 Quick turning, Glaucus through the breast transfix'd;
 Thund'ring he fell; deep grief possess'd the Greeks
 At loss of one so valiant; fiercely joy'd
 The Trojans, and around him crowded thick; 690
 Nor of their wonted valour were the Greeks
 Oblivious, but still onward held their course.
 Then slew Meriones a crested chief,
 The bold Laogonus, Onetor's son;
 Onetor, of Idæan Jove the priest,
 And by the people as a God rever'd.
 Below the ear he struck him; from his limbs
 The spirit fled, and darkness veil'd his eyes.

Then at Meriones Æneas threw
 His brazen spear, in hopes beneath his shield 700
 To find a spot unguarded; he beheld,
 And downward stooping, shunn'd the brazen death;
 Behind him far, deep in the soil infix'd,
 The weapon stood; there Mars its impulse stay'd;
 So, bootless hurl'd, though by no feeble hand,
 Æneas' spear stood quiv'ring in the ground;
 Then thus in wrath he cried: "Meriones,
 Had it but struck thee, nimble as thou art,
 My spear had brought thy dancing to a close."

To whom the spearman skill'd, Meriones: 710
 "Brave as thou art, Æneas, 'tis too much
 For thee to hope the might of all to quell,
 Who dare confront thee; thou art mortal too!
 And if my aim be true, and should my spear
 But strike thee fair, all valiant as thou art,
 And confident, yet me thy fall shall crown
 With triumph, and thy soul to Hades send."
 He said; and him Meneceus' noble son

Address'd with grave rebuke: "Meriones,
 Brave warrior, why thus waste the time in words? 720
 Trust me, good friend, 'tis not by vaunting speech,
 Unseconded by deeds, that we may hope
 To scare away the Trojans from the slain:
 Hands are for battle, words for council meet;
 Boots it not now to wrangle, but to fight."

He said, and led the way; him follow'd straight
 The godlike chief; forthwith, as loudly rings,
 Amid the mountain forest's deep recess,
 The woodman's axe, and far is heard the sound;
 So from the wide-spread earth their clamour rose, 730
 As brazen arms, and shields, and tough bull's-hide
 Encounter'd swords and double-pointed spears.
 Nor might the sharpest sight Sarpedon know,
 From head to foot with wounds and blood and dust
 Disfigur'd; thickly round the dead they swarm'd.
 As when at spring-tide in the cattle-sheds
 Around the milk-cans swarm the buzzing flies,
 While the warm milk is frothing in the pail;
 So swarm'd they round the dead; nor Jove the while
 Turn'd from the stubborn fight his piercing glance; 740
 But still look'd down with gaze intent, and mus'd
 Upon Patroclus' coming fate, in doubt,
 If he too there beside Sarpedon slain,
 Should perish by illustrious Hector's hand,
 Spoil'd of his arms; or yet be spar'd awhile
 To swell the labours of the battle-field.
 He judg'd it best at length, that once again
 The gallant follower of Peleus' son
 Should tow'rd the town with fearful slaughter drive
 The Trojans, and their brazen-helm'd chief. 750
 First Hector's soul with panic fear he fill'd;
 Mounting his car, he fled, and urg'd to flight
 The Trojans; for he saw the scales of Jove.
 Then nor the valiant Lycians held their ground;
 All fled in terror, as they saw their King
 Pierc'd through the heart, amid a pile of dead;
 For o'er his body many a warrior fell,
 When Saturn's son the conflict fierce inflam'd.
 Then from Sarpedon's breast they stripp'd his arms,
 Of brass refulgent; these Menœtius' son 760
 Sent by his comrades to the ships of Greece.

To Phœbus then the Cloud-compeller thus:
 "Hie thee, good Phœbus, from amid the spears
 Withdraw Sarpedon, and from all his wounds
 Cleanse the dark gore; then bear him far away,
 And lave his body in the flowing stream;
 Then with divine ambrosia all his limbs
 Anointing, clothe him in immortal robes.
 To two swift bearers give him then in charge,
 To Sleep and Death, twin brothers, in their arms
 To bear him safe to Lycia's wide-spread plains:
 There shall his brethren and his friends perform
 His fun'ral rites, and mound and column raise,
 The fitting tribute to the mighty dead."

770

He said; obedient to his father's words,
 Down to the battle-field Apollo sped
 From Ida's height; and from amid the spears
 Withdrawn, he bore Sarpedon far away,
 And lav'd his body in the flowing stream;
 Then with divine ambrosia all his limbs
 Anointing, cloth'd him in immortal robes;
 To two swift bearers gave him then in charge,
 To Sleep and Death, twin brothers; in their arms
 They bore him safe to Lycia's wide-spread plains.

780

Then to Automedon Patroclus gave
 His orders, and the flying foe pursued.
 Oh much deceiv'd, insensate! had he now
 But borne in mind the words of Peleus' son,
 He might have 'scap'd the bitter doom of death.
 But still Jove's will the will of man o'errules:
 Who strikes with panic, and of vict'ry robs
 The bravest; and anon excites to war;
 Who now Patroclus' breast with fury fill'd.
 Whom then, Patroclus, first, whom slew'st thou last,
 When summon'd by the Gods to meet thy doom?
 Adrastus, and Autonöus, Perimus
 The son of Meges, and Echeclus next;
 Epistor, Melanippus, Elasmus,
 And Mulius, and Pylartes; these he slew;
 The others all in flight their safety found.

790

800

Then had the Greeks the lofty-gated town
 Of Priam captur'd by Patroclus' hand,
 So forward and so fierce he bore his spear;
 But on the well-built tow'r Apollo stood,

In hostile attitude, for Troy's defence.
 The jutting angle of the lofty wall
 Patroclus thrice assail'd; his onset thrice
 Apollo, with his own immortal hands
 Repelling, backward thrust his glitt'ring shield.
 But when again, with more than mortal force
 He made his fourth attempt, with awful mien
 And threat'ning voice the Far-destroyer spoke:

810

“Back, Heav'n-born chief, Patroclus! not to thee
 Hath fate decreed the triumph to destroy
 The warlike Trojans' city; no, nor yet
 To great Achilles, mightier far than thou.”

Thus as he spoke, Patroclus backward stepp'd,
 Shrinking before the Far-destroyer's wrath.
 Still Hector kept before the Scaean gates
 His coursers; doubtful, if again to dare
 The battle-throng, or summon all the host
 To seek the friendly shelter of the wall.

820

Thus as he mus'd, beside him Phœbus stood,
 In likeness of a warrior stout and brave,
 Brother of Hecuba, the uncle thence
 Of noble Hector, Asius, Dymas' son;
 Who dwelt in Phrygia, by Sangarius' stream;
 His form assuming, thus Apollo spoke:

“Hector, why shrink'st thou from the battle thus?
 It ill beseems thee! Would to Heav'n that I
 So far thy greater were, as thou art mine;
 Then sorely shouldst thou rue this abstinence.
 But, forward thou! against Patroclus urge
 Thy fiery steeds, so haply by his death
 Apollo thee with endless fame may crown.”

830

This said, the God rejoïn'd the strife of men;
 And noble Hector bade Cebriones
 Drive 'mid the fight his car; before him mov'd
 Apollo, scatt'ring terror 'mid the Greeks,
 And lustre adding to the arms of Troy.

840

All others Hector pass'd unnotic'd by,
 Nor stay'd to slay; Patroclus was the mark
 At which his coursers' clatt'ring hoofs he drove,
 On th' other side, Patroclus from his car
 Leap'd to the ground: his left hand held his spear;
 And in the right a pond'rous mass he bore
 Of rugged stone, that fill'd his ample grasp:

This sent he whirling; not in vain it flew,
 Nor miss'd its mark; but Hector's charioteer
 It struck, Cebriones, a bastard son 850
 Of royal Priam, as the reins he held.
 Full on his temples fell the jagged mass,
 Drove both his eyebrows in, and crush'd the bone;
 Before him in the dust his eyeballs fell;
 And, like a diver, from the well-wrought car
 Headlong he plung'd; and life forsook his limbs.
 O'er whom Patroclus thus with bitter jest:
 "Heav'n! what agility! how deftly thrown
 That somersault! if only in the sea
 Such feats he wrought, with him might few compete, 860
 Diving for oysters, if with such a plunge
 He left his boat, how rough soe'er the waves,
 As from his car he plunges to the ground:
 Troy can, it seems, accomplish'd tumblers boast."

Thus saying, on Cebriones he sprang,
 As springs a lion, through the breast transfix'd,
 In act the sheepfold to despoil, and dies
 The victim of his courage; so didst thou
 Upon Cebriones, Patroclus, spring.
 Down from his car too Hector leap'd to earth. 870
 So, o'er Cebriones, oppos'd they stood;
 As on the mountain, o'er a slaughter'd stag,
 Both hunger-pinch'd, two lions fiercely fight,
 So o'er Cebriones two mighty chiefs,
 Meneceus' son and noble Hector, strove,
 Each in the other bent to plunge his spear.
 The head, with grasp unyielding, Hector held;
 Patroclus seiz'd the foot; and, crowding round,
 Trojans and Greeks in stubborn conflict clos'd.
 As when, encount'ring in some mountain-glen, 880
 Eurus and Notus shake the forest deep,
 Of oak, or ash, or slender cornel-tree,
 Whose tap'ring branches are together thrown,
 With fearful din, and crash of broken boughs;
 So mix'd confus'dly, Greeks and Trojans fought,
 No thought of flight by either entertain'd.
 Thick o'er Cebriones the jav'lines flew,
 And feather'd arrows, bounding from the string;
 And pond'rous stones that on the bucklers rang,
 As round the dead they fought; amid the dust 890

That eddyng rose, his art forgotten all,

A mighty warrior, mightily he lay.

While in mid Heav'n the sun pursued his course,

Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell

On either side; but when declining day

Brought on the hour that sees the loosen'd steers,

The Greeks were stronger far; and from the darts

And Trojan battle-cry Cebriones

They drew, and from his breast his armour stripp'd.

Fiercely Patroclus on the Trojans fell:

900

Thrice he assail'd them, terrible as Mars,

With fearful shouts; and thrice nine foes he slew:

But when again, with more than mortal force

His fourth assault he made, thy term of life,

Patroclus, then approach'd its final close:

For Phœbus' awful self encounter'd thee,

Amid the battle throng, invisible,

In thickest darkness shrouded all his form:

He stood behind, and with extended palm

Dealt on Patroclus' neck and shoulders broad

910

A mighty buffet; dizzy swam his eyes,

And from his head Apollo snatch'd the helm;

Clank'd, as it roll'd beneath the horses' feet,

The visor'd helm; the horsehair plume with blood

And dust polluted; never till that day

Was that proud helmet so with dust defil'd,

That wont to deck a godlike chief, and guard

Achilles' noble head, and graceful brow:

Now by the will of Jove to Hector giv'n.

Now death was near at hand; and in his grasp

920

His spear was shiver'd, pond'rous, long, and tough,

Brass-pointed; with its belt, the ample shield

Fell from his shoulders; and Apollo's hand,

The royal son of Jove, his corslet loos'd.

Then was his mind bewilder'd; and his limbs

Gave way beneath him; all aghast he stood:

Him, from behind, a Dardan, Panthöus' son,

Euphorbus, peerless 'mid the Trojan youth,

To hurl the spear, to run, to drive the car,

Approaching close, between the shoulders stabb'd;

930

He, train'd to warfare, from his car, ere this

A score of Greeks had from their chariots hurl'd:

Such was the man who thee, Patroclus, first

Wounded, but not subdued; the ashen spear
 He, in all haste, withdrew; nor dar'd confront
 Patroclus, though disarm'd, in deadly strife.

Back to his comrades' shelt'ring ranks retir'd,
 From certain death, Patroclus: by the stroke
 Of Phœbus vanquish'd, and Euphorbus' spear:
 But Hector, when Patroclus from the fight 940
 He saw retreating, wounded, through the ranks
 Advancing, smote him through the flank; right through
 The brazen spear was driv'n; thund'ring he fell;
 And deeply mourn'd his fall the Grecian host.

As when a lion hath in fight o'erborne
 A tuskèd boar, when on the mountain top
 They two have met, in all their pride of strength,
 Both parch'd with thirst, around a scanty spring;
 And vanquish'd by the lion's force, the boar
 Hath yielded, gasping; so Meneceus' son, 950
 Great deeds achiev'd, at length beneath the spear
 Of noble Hector yielded up his life;

Who o'er the vanquish'd thus, exulting, spoke:
 "Patroclus, but of late thou mad'st thy boast
 To raze our city walls, and in your ships
 To bear away to your far-distant land,
 Their days of freedom lost, our Trojan dames:
 Fool that thou wast! nor knew'st, in their defence,
 That Hector's flying coursers scour'd the plain;
 From them, the bravest of the Trojans, I 960

Avert the day of doom; while on our shores
 Thy flesh shall glut the carrion birds of Troy.
 Poor wretch! though brave he be, yet Peleus' son
 Avail'd thee nought, when, hanging back himself,
 With sage advice he sent thee forth to fight:
 'Come not to me, Patroclus, car-borne chief,
 Nor to the ships return, until thou bear
 The warrior-slayer Hector's bloody spoils,
 Torn from his body;' such were, I suppose,
 His counsels; thou, poor fool, becam'st his dupe." 970
 To whom Patroclus thus in accents faint:

"Hector, thou boastest loudly now, that Jove,
 With Phœbus join'd, hath thee with vict'ry crown'd:
 They wrought my death, who stripp'd me of my arms.
 Had I to deal with twenty such as thee,
 They all should perish, vanquish'd by my spear:

Me fate hath slain, and Phœbus; and, of men,
Euphorbus; thou wast but the third to strike.
This too I say, and bear it in thy mind;
Not long shalt thou survive me; death e'en now
And final doom hangs o'er thee, by the hand
Of great Achilles, Peleus' matchless son."

980

Thus as he spoke, the gloom of death his eyes
O'erspread, and to the shades his spirit fled,
Mourning his fate, his youth and strength cut off.

To whom, though dead, the noble Hector thus:
" Patroclus, why predict my coming fate?
Or who can say but fair-hair'd Thetis' son,
Achilles, by my spear may first be slain? "

He said, and planting firm his foot, withdrew
The brazen spear, and backward drove the dead
From off the weapon's point; then, spear in hand,
Intent to slay, Automedon pursued,
The godlike follower of Æacides:
But him in safety bore th' immortal steeds,
The noble prize the Gods to Peleus gave.

990

BOOK XVII

ARGUMENT

SHARP contest ensues around the body of Patroclus. Hector puts on the armour of Achilles. Meneläus, having dispatched Antilochus to Achilles with news of the death of Patroclus, returns to the battle, and, together with Meriones, bears Patroclus off the field, while the Ajaces cover their retreat.

NOR was Patroclus' fall, by Trojans slain,
Of warlike Meneläus unobserv'd;
Forward he sprang, in dazzling arms array'd,
And round him mov'd, as round her new-dropp'd calf,
Her first, a heifer moves with plaintive moan:
So round Patroclus Meneläus mov'd,
His shield's broad orb and spear before him held,
To all who might oppose him threat'ning death.
Nor, on his side, was Panthöus' noble son
Unmindful of the slain; but, standing near,
The warlike Meneläus thus address'd:

10

“ Illustrious son of Atreus, Heav'n-born chief,
Quit thou the dead; yield up the bloody spoils;
For, of the Trojans and their fam'd Allies,
Mine was the hand that in the stubborn fight
First struck Patroclus; leave me then to wear
Among the men of Troy my honours due,
Lest by my spear thou lose thy cherish'd life.”

To whom in anger Meneläus thus:
“ O Father Jove, how ill this vaunting tone
Beseems this braggart! In their own esteem,
With Panthöus' sons for courage none may vie;
Nor pard, nor lion, nor the forest boar,
Fiercest of beasts, and proudest of his strength.
Yet nought avail'd to Hyperenor's might
His youthful vigour, when he held me cheap,
And my encounter dar'd; of all the Greeks
He deem'd my prowess least; yet he, I ween,
On his own feet return'd not, to rejoice
His tender wife's and honour'd parents' sight.

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So shall thy pride be quell'd, if me thou dare
 Encounter; but I warn thee, while 'tis time,
 Ere ill betide thee, 'mid the gen'ral throng
 That thou withdraw, nor stand to me oppos'd.
 After th' event may ev'n a fool be wise."

He spoke in vain; Euphorbus thus replied:

"Now, Heav'n-born Meneläus, shalt thou pay
 The forfeit for my brother's life, o'er whom,
 Slain by thy hand, thou mak'st thy boasting speech.
 Thou in the chambers of her new-found home
 Hast made his bride a weeping widow; thou
 Hast fill'd with bitt'rest grief his parents' hearts:
 Some solace might those hapless mourners find,
 Could I thy head and armour in the hands
 Of Panthöus and of honour'd Phrontis place;
 Nor uncontested shall the proof remain,
 Nor long deferr'd, of vict'ry or defeat."

He said, and struck the centre of the shield,
 But broke not through; against the stubborn brass
 The point was bent; then with a pray'r to Jove
 The son of Atreus in his turn advanc'd;
 And, backward as he stepp'd, below his throat
 Took aim, and pressing hard with stalwart hand
 Drove through the yielding neck the pond'rous spear:
 Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.
 Those locks, that with the Graces' hair might vie,
 Those tresses bright, with gold and silver bound,
 Were dabbled all with blood. As when a man
 Hath rear'd a fair and vig'rous olive plant,
 In some lone spot, by copious-gushing springs,
 And seen expanding, nurs'd by ev'ry breeze,
 Its whit'ning blossoms; till with sudden gust
 A sweeping hurricane of wind and rain
 Uproots it from its bed, and prostrate lays;
 So lay the youthful son of Panthöus, slain
 By Atreus' son, and of his arms despoil'd.
 And as a lion, in the mountains bred,
 In pride of strength, amid the pasturing herd
 Seizes a heifer in his pow'rful jaws,
 The choicest; and, her neck first broken, rends,
 And, on her entrails gorging, laps the blood;
 Though with loud clamour dogs and herdsmen round
 Assail him from afar, yet ventures none

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To meet his rage, for fear is on them all;
 So there was none so bold, with dauntless breast
 The noble Meneläus' wrath to meet.

Now had Atrides borne away with ease
 The spoils of Panthöus' son; but Phœbus grudg'
 His prize of vict'ry, and against him launch'd
 The might of Hector, terrible as Mars:
 To whom his wingèd words, in Mentès' form,
 Chief of the Cicones, he thus address'd:

80

“Hector, thy labour all is vain, pursuing
 Pelides' flying steeds; and hard are they
 For mortal man to harness, or control,
 Save for Achilles' self, the Goddess-born.
 The valiant Meneläus, Atreus' son,
 Defends meanwhile Patroclus; and ev'n now
 Hath slain a noble Trojan, Panthöus' son,
 Euphorbus, and his youthful vigour quell'd.”

90

He said, and join'd again the strife of men:
 Hector's dark soul with bitter grief was fill'd;
 He look'd amid the ranks, and saw the two,
 One slain, the other stripping off his arms,
 The blood outpouring from the gaping wound.
 Forward he sprang, in dazzling arms array'd,
 Loud shouting, blazing like the quenchless flames
 Of Vulcan: Meneläus heard the shout,
 And, troubled, commun'd with his valiant heart:

“Oh, woe is me! for should I now the spoils

100

Abandon, and Patroclus, who for me
 And in my cause lies slain, of any Greek
 Who saw me, I might well incur the blame:
 And yet if here alone I dare to fight
 With Hector and his Trojans, much I fear,
 Singly, to be by numbers overwhelm'd;
 For Hector all the Trojans hither brings.
 But wherefore entertain such thoughts, my soul?
 Who strives, against the will divine, with one
 Belov'd of Heav'n, a bitter doom must meet.
 Then none may blame me, though I should retreat
 From Hector, who with Heav'n's assistance wars.
 Yet could I hear brave Ajax' battle-cry,
 We two, returning, would th' encounter dare,
 Ev'n against Heav'n, if so for Peleus' son
 We might regain, and bear away the dead:

110

Some solace of our loss might then be ours."

While in his mind and spirit thus he mus'd,
By Hector led, the Trojan ranks advanc'd:
Backward he mov'd, abandoning the dead; I 20
But turning oft, as when with shouts and spears
A bearded lion from the fold is driv'n
By men and dogs; yet grieves his mighty heart,
And with reluctant step he quits the yard:
So from Patroclus Meneläus mov'd;
Yet when he reach'd his comrades' ranks, he turn'd,
And look'd around, if haply he might find
The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon.

Him on the battle's farthest left he spied,
Cheering his friends and urging to the fight, I 30
For sorely Phœbus had their courage tried;
And hast'ning to his side, address'd him thus:

" Ajax, haste hither; to the rescue come
Of slain Patroclus; if perchance we two
May to Achilles, Peleus' son, restore
His body: his naked body, for his arms
Are prize to Hector of the glancing helm."

He said, and Ajax' spirit within him stirr'd;
Forward he sprang, and with him Atreus' son.
Hector was dragging now Patroclus' corpse, I 40
Stripp'd of its glitt'ring armour, and intent
The head to sever with his sword, and give
The mangled carcase to the dogs of Troy:
But Ajax, with his tow'r-like shield, approach'd;
Then Hector to his comrades' ranks withdrew,
Rush'd to his car, and bade the Trojans bear
The glitt'ring arms, his glorious prize, to Troy:
While Ajax with his mighty shield o'erspread
Menœtius' son; and stood, as for his cubs
A lion stands, whom hunters, unaware, I 50
Have with his offspring met amid the woods.

Proud in his strength he stands; and down are drawn,
Cov'ring his eyes, the wrinkles of his brow:
So o'er Patroclus mighty Ajax stood,
And by his side, his heart with grief oppress'd,
The warlike Meneläus, Atreus' son.

Then Glaucus, leader of the Lycian host,
To Hector thus, with scornful glance, address'd
His keen reproaches: " Hector, fair of form,

How art thou wanting in the fight! thy fame,
 Coward and runaway, thou hast belied.
 Bethink thee now, if thou alone canst save
 The city, aided but by Trojans born;
 Henceforth no Lycian will go forth for Troy
 To fight with Greeks; since favour none we gain
 By unremitting toil against the foe.
 How can a meaner man expect thine aid,
 Who basely to the Greeks a prize and spoil
 Sarpedon leav'st, thy comrade and thy guest?
 Greatly he serv'd the city and thyself,
 While yet he liv'd; and now thou dar'st not save
 His body from the dogs! By my advice
 If Lycians will be rul'd, we take at once
 Our homeward way, and Troy may meet her doom.
 But if in Trojan bosoms there abode
 The daring, dauntless courage, meet for men
 Who in their country's cause against the foe
 Endure both toil and war, we soon should see
 Patroclus brought within the walls of Troy;
 Him from the battle could we bear away,
 And, lifeless, bring to royal Priam's town,
 Soon would the Greeks Sarpedon's arms release,
 And we to Ilium's heights himself might bear:
 For with his valiant comrades there lies slain
 The follower of the bravest chief of Greece.
 But thou before the mighty Ajax stood'st
 With downcast eyes, nor durst in manly fight
 Contend with one thy better far confess'd."

160

170

180

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm,
 With stern regard, replied: "Why, Glaucus, speak,
 Brave as thou art, in this o'erbearing strain?
 Good friend, I heretofore have held thee wise
 O'er all who dwell in Lycia's fertile soil;
 But now I change, and hold thy judgment cheap,
 Who chargest me with flying from the might
 Of giant Ajax; never have I shrunk
 From the stern fight, and clatter of the cars;
 But all o'erruling is the mind of Jove,
 Who strikes with panic, and of vict'ry robs
 The bravest; and anon excites to war.
 Stand now beside me, and behold my deeds,
 And see if through the day I merit blame,

190

200

Or suffer that a Greek, how brave soe'er,
Shall rescue from my hands Patroclus' corpse."

He said, and loudly on the Trojans call'd:
"Trojans and Lycians, and ye Dardans, fam'd
In close encounter, quit ye now like men;
Maintain awhile the stubborn fight, while I
The splendid armour of Achilles don,
My glorious prize from slain Patroclus torn."

210

So saying, Hector of the glancing helm,
Withdrawing from the field, with rapid steps
His comrades follow'd, and ere long o'ertook,
Who tow'rd the town Achilles' armour bore;
Then standing from the bloody fight aloof
The armour he exchang'd; his own he bade
The warlike Trojans to the city bear;
While he, of Peleus' son, Achilles, donn'd
The heav'nly armour, which th' immortal Gods
Gave to his sire; he to his son convey'd;
Yet in that armour grew not old that son.

220

Him when apart the Cloud-compeller saw
Girt with the arms of Peleus' godlike son,
He shook his head, as inly thus he mus'd:
"Ah hapless! little deem'st thou of thy fate,
Though now so nigh! Thou of the prime of men,
The dread of all, hast donn'd th' immortal arms,
Whose comrade, brave and good, thy hand hath slain;
And sham'd him, stripping from his head and breast
Helmet and cuirass; yet thy latest hours
Will I with glory crown; since ne'er from thee,
Return'd from battle, shall Andromache
Receive the spoils of Peleus' godlike son."

230

He said, and nodded with his shadowy brows;
Then with the armour, fitted to his form
By Jove himself, was Hector girt by Mars
The fierce and terrible; with vig'rous strength
His limbs were strung, as 'mid his brave allies
He sprang, loud-shouting; glitt'ring in his arms,
To all he seem'd Achilles' godlike self.
To each and all in cheering tones he spoke,
Mesthles and Glaucus and Thersilochus,
Asteropæus and Hippothöus,
Medon, Deisenor, Phorcys, Chromius,
And Ennomus the seer: to all of these

240

His wingèd words he cheeringly address'd:

"Hear me, ye countless tribes, that dwelling round
 Assist our cause! You from your sev'ral homes
 Not for display of numbers have I call'd,
 But that with willing hearts ye should defend 250
 Our wives and infants from the warlike Greeks:
 For this I drain my people's stores, for food
 And gifts for you, exalting your estate;
 Then, who will boldly onward, he may fall,
 Or safe escape, such is the chance of war;
 But who within our valiant Trojans' ranks
 Shall but the body of Patroclus bring,
 Despite the might of Ajax; half the spoils
 To him I give, the other half myself
 Retaining; and his praise shall equal mine." 260

He said; and onward, with uplifted spears,
 They march'd upon the Greeks; high rose their hopes
 From Ajax Telamon to snatch the dead;
 Vain hopes, which cost them many a life! Then thus
 To valiant Meneläus Ajax spoke:

"O Heav'n-born Meneläus, noble friend,
 For safe return I dare no longer hope:
 Not for Patroclus' corpse so much I fear,
 Which soon will glut the dogs and birds of Troy,
 As for my life and thine I tremble now: 270
 For, like a war-cloud, Hector's might I see
 O'ershadowing all around; now is our doom
 Apparent; but do thou for succour call
 On all the chiefs, if haply they may hear."
 Thus Ajax spoke: obedient to his word,
 On all the chiefs Atrides call'd aloud:

"O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
 All ye that banquet at the gen'ral cost
 With Atreus' sons, and o'er your sev'ral states
 Dominion hold; whose honour is of Jove; 280
 'Twere hard to call by name each single man,
 So fierce the combat rages; but let each
 And all their aid afford, and deem it shame
 Patroclus' corpse should glut the dogs of Troy."

He said: first heard Oileus' active son,
 And hast'ning through the fray, beside him stood.
 Next him Idomeneus, with whom there came,
 Valiant as Mars, his friend Meriones,

But who can know or tell the names of all,
 Who, following, swell'd the battle of the Greeks? 290
 Onward the Trojans press'd, by Hector led:
 With such a sound, as when the ocean wave
 Meets on the beach th' outpouring of a stream,
 Swoll'n by the rains of Heav'n; the lofty cliffs
 Resound, and bellows the big sea without;
 With such a sound advanc'd the Trojan host:
 While round Patroclus, with one heart and mind,
 The Greeks a fence of brass-clad bucklers rais'd.
 O'er their bright helms the son of Saturn shed
 A veil of darkness; for Meneceus' son, 300
 While yet he liv'd, Achilles' faithful friend,
 Jove hated not, nor would that now his corpse
 Should to the dogs of Troy remain a prey,
 But to the rescue all his comrades stirr'd.
 At first the Trojans drove the keen-ey'd Greeks;
 Leaving the corpse, they fled; nor with their spears
 The valiant Trojans reach'd a single Greek;
 But on the dead they seiz'd; yet not for long
 Endur'd their flight; them Ajax rallied soon,
 In form pre-eminent, and deeds of arms, 310
 O'er all the Greeks, save Peleus' matchless son.
 Onward he sprang, as springs a mountain boar,
 Which, turning in the forest glade to bay,
 Scatters with ease both dogs and stalwart youths;
 So Ajax scatter'd soon the Trojan ranks,
 That round Patroclus closing, hop'd to bear,
 With glory to themselves, his corpse to Troy.
 Hippothöus, Pelasgian Lethus' son,
 Was dragging by the feet the noble dead,
 A leathern belt around his ancles bound, 320
 The favour seeking of the men of Troy;
 But on himself he brought destruction down,
 Which none might turn aside; for from the crowd
 Outsprang the son of Telamon, and struck,
 In close encounter, on the brass-cheek'd helm;
 The plum'd helm was shiver'd by the blow,
 Dealt by a weighty spear and stalwart hand;
 Gush'd from the wound the mingled blood and brain,
 His vital spirit quench'd; and on the ground
 Fell from his pow'rless grasp Patroclus' foot; 330
 While he himself lay stretch'd beside the dead,

Far from his own Larissa's teeming soil:
 Not destin'd he his parents to repay
 Their early care; for short his term of life,
 By godlike Ajax' mighty spear subdued.

At Ajax Hector threw his glitt'ring spear:
 He saw, and narrowly the brazen death
 Escap'd; but Schedius, son of Iphitus,
 (The bravest of the Phocian chiefs, who dwelt
 In far-fam'd Panopeus, the mighty Lord
 Of num'rous hosts,) below the collar-bone
 It struck, and passing through, the brazen point
 Came forth again beneath his shoulder-blade:
 Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.

340

As Phorcys, son of Phænops, kept his watch
 O'er slain Hippothöus, him Ajax smote
 Below the waist; the weighty spear broke through
 The hollow breastplate, and th' intestines tore;
 Prone in the dust he fell, and clutch'd the ground.
 At this the Trojan chiefs and Hector's self
 'Gan to give way; the Greeks, with joyful shouts,
 Seiz'd both the dead, and stripp'd their armour off.
 To Ilium now, before the warlike Greeks,
 O'ercome by panic, had the Trojans fled;
 And now had Greeks, despite the will of Jove,
 By their own strength and courage, won the day,
 Had not Apollo's self Æneas rous'd,
 In likeness of a herald, Periphas,
 The son of Epytus, now aged grown
 In service of Æneas' aged sire,

350

A man of kindest soul: his form assum'd
 Apollo, and Æneas thus address'd:
 " Æneas, how, against the will of Heav'n,
 Could ye defend your city, as others now
 In their own strength and courage confident,
 Their numbers, and their troops' undaunted hearts,
 I see their cause maintaining; if when Jove
 Rather to us than them the vict'ry wills,
 With fear unspeakable ye shun the fight? "

360

He said: the presence of the Archer-God
 Æneas knew, and loud to Hector call'd:
 " Hector, and all ye other chiefs of Troy,
 And brave Allies, foul shame it were that we,
 O'ercome by panic, should to Ilium now

370

In flight be driv'n before the warlike Greeks;
 And by my side, but now, some God there stood,
 And told how Jove, the sov'reign arbiter
 Of battle, on our side bestow'd his aid;
 On then! nor undisturb'd allow the Greeks
 To bear Patroclus' body to their ships."

380

He said, and far before the ranks advanc'd;
 They rallying turn'd, and fac'd again the Greeks.

Then first Æneas' spear the comrade brave
 Of Lycomedes struck, Leocritus,

Son of Arisbas; Lycomedes saw

With pitying eyes his gallant comrade's fall;
 And standing near, his glitt'ring spear he threw,

And through the midriff Apisaon struck,
 His people's guardian chief, the valiant son
 Of Hipposus, and slack'd his limbs in death.

390

He from Pæonia's fertile fields had come,

O'er all his comrades eminent in fight,

All save Asteropæus, who with eyes

Of pity saw his gallant comrade's fall,

And forward sprang to battle with the Greeks;

Yet could not force his way; for all around

Patroclus rose a fence of serried shields,

And spears projecting: such the orders giv'n

By Ajax, and with earnest care enforc'd;

That from around the dead should none retire,

400

Nor any to the front advance alone

Before his fellows; but their steady guard

Maintain, and hand to hand the battle wage.

So order'd Ajax; then with crimson blood

The earth was wet; and hand to hand they fell,

Trojans alike, and brave Allies, and Greeks;

For neither these a bloodless fight sustain'd,

Though fewer far their losses; for they stood

Of mutual succour mindful, and support.

Thus, furious as the rage of fire, they fought;

Nor might ye deem the glorious sun himself

Nor moon was safe; for darkest clouds of night

O'erspread the warriors, who the battle wag'd

Around the body of Menœtius' son:

Elsewhere the Trojans and the well-greav'd Greeks

Fought, undisturb'd, in the clear light of day;

The sun's bright beams were shed abroad; no cloud

410

Lay on the face of earth or mountain tops;
 They but by fits, at distant intervals,
 And far apart, each seeking to avoid 420
 The hostile missiles, fought; but in the midst
 The bravest all, in darkness and in strife
 Sore press'd, toil'd on beneath their armour's weight.

As yet no tidings of Patroclus' fall
 Had reach'd two valiant chiefs, Antilochus
 And Thrasymedes; but they deem'd him still
 Alive, and fighting in the foremost ranks.
 They, witnessing their comrades' flight and death,
 Fought on apart, by Nestor so enjoin'd,
 When from the ships he bade them join the fray. 430
 Great was meanwhile their labour, who sustain'd,
 Throughout the livelong day, that weary fight;
 Reek'd with continuous toil and sweat, the knees,
 And legs and feet, the arms, and eyes, of all
 Who round Achilles' faithful comrade fought.

As when a chief his people bids to stretch
 A huge bull's-hide, all drench'd and soak'd with grease;
 They in a circle rang'd, this way and that,
 Pull the tough hide, till ent'ring in, the grease
 Is all absorb'd; and dragg'd by num'rous hands 440
 The supple skin to th' utmost length is stretch'd;
 So these in narrow space this way and that
 The body dragg'd; and high the hopes of each
 To bear it off in triumph; to their ships
 The Greeks, to Troy the Trojans; fiercely rag'd
 The struggle; spirit-stirring Mars himself,
 Or Pallas to her utmost fury rous'd,
 Had not that struggle with contempt beheld:
 Such grievous labour o'er Patroclus' corpse
 Had Jove to horses and to men decreed. 450

But of Patroclus' fall no tidings yet
 Had reach'd Achilles; for the war was wag'd
 Far from the ships, beneath the walls of Troy;
 Nor look'd he of his death to hear, but deem'd
 That when the Trojans to their gates were driv'n,
 He would return in safety; for no hope
 Had he of taking by assault the town,
 With, or without, his aid; for oft apart
 His Goddess-mother had his doom foretold,
 Revealing to her son the mind of Jove; 460

Yet ne'er had warn'd him of such grief as this,
Which now befell, his dearest comrade's loss.

Still round the dead they held their pointed spears,
Fought hand to hand, and mutual slaughter dealt;
And thus perchance some brass-clad Greek would say:

“O friends, 'twere shameful should we to the ships
Ingloriously return; ere that should be,
Let earth engulph us all; so better far
Than let these Trojans to their city bear
Our dead, and boast them of their triumph gain'd.” 470
On th' other hand some valiant Trojan thus
Would shout: “O friends, though fate decreed that here
We all should die, yet let not one give way.”

Thus, cheering each his comrades, would they speak,
And thus they fought; the iron clangour pierc'd
The empty air, and brazen vault of Heav'n.
But, from the fight withdrawn, Achilles' steeds
Wept, as they heard how in the dust was laid
Their charioteer, by Hector's murd'rous hand.
Automedon, Dioces' valiant son, 480
Essay'd in vain to rouse them with the lash,
In vain with honey'd words, in vain with threats;
Nor to the ships would they return again
By the broad Hellespont, nor join the fray;
But as a column stands, which marks the tomb
Of man or woman, so immovable
Beneath the splendid car they stood, their heads
Down-dropping to the ground, while scalding tears
Dropp'd earthward from their eyelids, as they mourn'd
Their charioteer; and o'er the yoke-band shed 490
Down stream'd their ample manes, with dust defil'd.

The son of Saturn pitying saw their grief,
And sorrowing shook his head, as thus he mus'd:

“Ah hapless horses! wherefore gave we you
To royal Peleus, to a mortal man,
You that from age and death are both exempt!
Was it that you the miseries might share
Of wretched mortals? for of all that breathe,
And walk upon the earth, or creep, is nought
More wretched than th' unhappy race of man. 500
Yet shall not ye, nor shall your well-wrought car,
By Hector, son of Priam, be controll'd;
I will not suffer it; enough for him

To hold, with vaunting boast, Achilles' arms;
 But to your limbs and spirits will I impart
 Such strength, that from the battle to the ships
 Ye shall in safety bear Automedon;
 For yet I will the Trojans shall prevail,
 And slay, until they reach the well-mann'd ships,
 Till sets the sun, and darkness shrouds the earth."

510

He said, and in their breasts fresh spirit infus'd;
 They, shaking from their manes the dust, the car
 Amid the Greeks and Trojans lightly bore.

Then, as a vulture 'mid a flock of geese,
 Amid the battle rush'd Automedon,
 His horses' course directing, and their speed
 Exciting, though he mourn'd his comrade slain.

Swiftly he fled from out the Trojan host;
 Swiftly again assail'd them in pursuit;
 Yet, speedy to pursue, he could not slay;

520

Nor, in the car alone, had pow'r at once
 To guide the flying steeds, and hurl the spear.
 At length a comrade brave, Alcimedon,

Laerces' son, beheld; behind the car
 He stood, and thus Automedon address'd:

"Automedon, what God has fill'd thy mind
 With counsels vain, and thee of sense bereft?
 That with the Trojans, in the foremost ranks,
 Thou fain wouldst fight alone, thy comrade slain,
 While Hector proudly on his breast displays
 The glorious arms of great Æacides."

530

To whom Automedon, Dioces' son:
 "Alcimedon, since none of all the Greeks
 May vie with thee, the mettle to control
 Of these immortal horses, save indeed,
 While yet he liv'd, Patroclus, godlike chief;
 But him stern death and fate have overta'en;
 Take thou the whip and shining reins, while I,
 Descending from the car, engage in fight."

He said; and, mounting on the war-car straight,
 Alcimedon the whip and reins assum'd;
 Down leap'd Automedon; great Hector saw,
 And thus address'd Æneas at his side:

540

"Æneas, prince and counsellor of Troy,
 I see, committed to unskilful hands,
 Achilles' horses on the battle-field:

These we may hope to take, if such thy will;
 For they, methinks, will scarcely stand oppos'd,
 Or dare th' encounter of our joint assault."

He said; Anchises' valiant son complied; 550
 Forward they went, their shoulders cover'd o'er
 With stout bull's-hide, thick overlaid with brass.
 With them both Chromius and Aretus went;
 And high their hopes were rais'd, the warriors both
 To slay, and make the strong-neck'd steeds their prize:
 Blind fools! nor destin'd scatheless to escape
 Automedon's encounter; he his pray'r
 To Jove address'd, and straight with added strength
 His soul was fill'd; and to Alcimedon,
 His trusty friend and comrade, thus he spoke: 560

"Alcimedon, do thou the horses keep
 Not far away, but breathing on my neck;
 For Hector's might will not, I deem, be stay'd,
 Ere us he slay, and mount Achilles' car,
 And carry terror 'mid the Grecian host,
 Or in the foremost ranks himself be slain."

Thus spoke Automedon, and loudly call'd
 On Meneläus and th' Ajaces both:

"Ye two Ajaces, leaders of the host,
 And, Meneläus, with our bravest all, 570
 Ye on the dead alone your care bestow,
 To guard him, and stave off the hostile ranks;
 But haste, and us, the living, save from death;
 For Hector and Æneas hitherward,
 With weight o'erpow'ring, through the bloody press,
 The bravest of the Trojans, force their way:
 Yet is the issue in the hands of Heav'n;
 I hurl the spear, but Jove directs the blow."

He said, and, poisoning, hurl'd his pond'rous spear;
 Full on Aretus' broad-orb'd shield it struck; 580
 Nor stay'd the shield its course; the brazen point
 Drove through the belt, and in his body lodg'd.
 As with sharp axe in hand a stalwart man,
 Striking behind the horns a sturdy bull,
 Severs the neck; he, forward, plunging, falls;
 So forward first he sprang, then backwards fell:
 And quiv'ring, in his vitals deep infix'd,
 The sharp spear soon relax'd his limbs in death.
 Then at Automedon great Hector threw

His glitt'ring spear; he saw, and forward stoop'd, 590
 And shunn'd the brazen death; behind him far
 Deep in the soil infix'd, with quiv'ring shaft
 The weapon stood; there Mars its impulse stay'd.
 And now with swords, and hand to hand, the fight
 Had been renew'd; but at their comrade's call
 The two Ajaces, pressing through the throng,
 Between the warriors interpos'd in haste.

Before them Hector and Æneas both,
 And godlike Chromius, in alarm recoil'd;
 Pierc'd through the heart, Aretus there they left; 600
 And, terrible as Mars, Automedon
 Stripp'd off his arms, and thus exulting cried:
 "Of some small portion of its load of grief,
 For slain Patroclus, is my heart reliev'd,
 In slaying thee, all worthless as thou art."

Then, throwing on the car the bloody spoils,
 He mounted, hands and feet imbrued with blood,
 As 'twere a lion, fresh from his repast
 Upon the carcase of a slaughter'd bull.

Again around Patroclus' body rag'd 610
 The stubborn conflict, direful, sorrow-fraught:
 From Heav'n descending, Pallas stirr'd the strife,
 Sent by all-seeing Jove to stimulate
 The warlike Greeks; for so his will inclin'd.
 As o'er the face of Heav'n when Jove extends
 His bright-hued bow, a sign to mortal men
 Of war, or wintry storms, which bid surcease
 The rural works of man, and pinch the flocks;
 So Pallas, in a bright-hued cloud array'd,
 Pass'd through the ranks, and rous'd each sev'ral man.
 To noble Meneläus, Atreus' son, 621

Who close beside her stood, the Goddess first,
 The form of Phœnix and his pow'rful voice
 Assuming, thus her stirring words address'd:

"On thee, O Meneläus, foul reproach
 Will fasten, if Achilles' faithful friend
 The dogs devour beneath the walls of Troy;
 Then hold thou firm, and all the host inspire."

To whom thus Meneläus, good in fight:
 "O Phœnix, aged warrior, honour'd sire, 630
 If Pallas would the needful pow'r impart,
 And o'er me spread her ægis, then would I

Undaunted for Patroclus' rescue fight,
 For deeply by his death my heart is touch'd;
 But valiant Hector, with the strength of fire
 Still rages, and destruction deals around:
 For Jove is with him, and his triumph wills."

He said: the blue-ey'd Goddess heard with joy
 That, chief of all the Gods, her aid he sought.

She gave fresh vigour to his arms and knees,
 And to his breast the boldness of the fly,
 Which, oft repell'd by man, renews th' assault

640

Incessant, lur'd by taste of human blood;
 Such boldness in Atrides' manly breast
 Pallas inspir'd; beside Patroclus' corpse
 Again he stood, and pois'd his glitt'ring spear.

There was one Podes in the Trojan ranks,
 Son of Eëtion, rich, of blameless life,
 Of all the people most to Hector dear,
 And at his table oft a welcome guest:

650

Him, as he turn'd to fly, beneath the waist
 Atrides struck; right through the spear was driv'n;
 Thund'ring he fell; and Atreus' son the corpse
 Dragg'd from the Trojans 'mid the ranks of Greece.

Then close at Hector's side Apollo stood,
 Clad in the form of Phænops, Asius' son,
 Who in Abydos dwelt; of all th' Allies
 Honour'd of Hector most, and best belov'd;
 Clad in his form, the Far-destroyer spoke:

"Hector, what other Greek will scare thee next?"

660

Who shrink'st from Meneläus, heretofore
 A warrior deem'd of no repute; but now,
 Alone, he robs our Trojans of their dead;
 And in the foremost ranks e'en now hath slain
 Podes, thine own good friend, Eëtion's son."

He said; dark grief o'erclouded Hector's brow,
 As to the front in dazzling arms he sprang.

Then Saturn's son his tassell'd ægis wav'd,
 All glitt'ring bright; and Ida's lofty head
 In clouds and darkness shrouded; then he bade

670

His lightning flash, his volleying thunder roar,
 That shook the mountain; and with vict'ry crown'd
 The Trojan arms, and panic-struck the Greeks.

The first who turn'd to fly was Peneleus,
 Bœotian chief; him, facing still the foe,

A spear had slightly on the shoulder struck,
 The bone just grazing: by Polydamas,
 Who close before him stood, the spear was thrown.
 Then Hector Lëitus, Alectryon's son,
 Thrust through the wrist, and quell'd his warlike might;
 Trembling, he look'd around, nor hop'd again 681
 The Trojans, spear in hand, to meet in fight;
 But, onward as he rush'd on Lëitus,
 Idomeneus at Hector threw his spear:

Full on his breast it struck; but near the head
 The sturdy shaft was on the breastplate snapp'd:
 Loud was the Trojans' shout; and he in turn
 Aim'd at Idomeneus, Deucalion's son,
 Upstanding on his car; his mark he miss'd,
 But Cœranus he struck, the charioteer 690
 And faithful follower of Meriones,

Who with him came from Lyctus' thriving town:
 The chief had left on foot the well-trimm'd ships;
 And, had not Cœranus his car in haste
 Driv'n to the rescue, by his fall had giv'n
 A Trojan triumph; to his Lord he brought
 Safety, and rescue from unsparing death;
 But fell, himself, by Hector's murd'rous hand.
 Him Hector struck between the cheek and ear,
 Crashing the teeth, and cutting through the tongue. 700
 Headlong he fell to earth, and dropp'd the reins:
 These, stooping from the car, Meriones
 Caught up, and thus Idomeneus address'd:

“Ply now the lash, until thou reach the ships:
 Thyself must see how crush'd the strength of Greece.”

He said; and tow'rd the ships Idomeneus
 Urg'd his fleet steeds; for fear was on his soul.
 Nor did not Ajax and Atrides see

How in the Trojans' favour Saturn's son
 The wav'ring scale of vict'ry turn'd; and thus 710
 Great Ajax Telamon his grief express'd:

“O Heav'n! the veriest child might plainly see
 That Jove the Trojans' triumph has decreed:
 Their weapons all, by whomsoever thrown,
 Or weak, or strong, attain their mark; for Jove
 Directs their course; while ours upon the plain
 Innocuous fall. But take we counsel now
 How from the fray to bear away our dead,

And by our own return rejoice those friends
 Who look with sorrow on our plight, and deem 720
 That we, all pow'rless to resist the might
 Of Hector's arm, beside the ships must fall.

Would that some comrade were at hand, to bear
 A message to Achilles; him, I ween,
 As yet the mournful tidings have not reach'd,
 That on the field his dearest friend lies dead.
 But such I see not; for a veil of cloud
 O'er men and horses all around is spread.

O Father Jove, from o'er the sons of Greece
 Remove this cloudy darkness; clear the sky, 730
 That we may see our fate, and die at least,
 If such thy will, in th' open light of day."

He said, and, pitying, Jove beheld his tears;
 The clouds he scatter'd, and the mist dispers'd;
 The sun shone forth, and all the field was clear;
 Then Ajax thus to Meneläus spoke:

"Now, Heav'n-born Meneläus, look around
 If haply 'mid the living thou mayst see
 Antilochus, the noble Nestor's son;
 And bid him to Achilles bear in haste 740
 The tidings, that his dearest friend lies dead."

He said, nor did Atrides not comply;
 But slow as moves a lion from the fold,
 Which dogs and youths with ceaseless toil hath worn,
 Who all night long have kept their watch, to guard
 From his assault the choicest of the herd;
 He, hunger-pinch'd, hath oft th' attempt renew'd,
 But nought prevail'd; by spears on ev'ry side,
 And jav'lines met, wielded by stalwart hands,
 And blazing torches, which his courage daunt; 750
 Till with the morn he sullenly withdraws;

So from Patroclus, with reluctant step
 Atrides mov'd; for much he fear'd the Greeks
 Might to the Trojans, panic-struck, the dead
 Abandon; and departing, he besought
 The two Ajaces and Meriones:

"Ye two Ajaces, leaders of the Greeks,
 And thou, Meriones, remember now
 Our lost Patroclus' gentle courtesy,
 How kind and genial was his soul to all, 760
 While yet he liv'd—now sunk, alas! in death."

Thus saying, Meneläus took his way,
 Casting his glance around on ev'ry side,
 Like to an eagle, fam'd of sharpest sight
 Of all that fly beneath the vault of Heav'n;
 Whom, soaring in the clouds, the crouching hare
 Eludes not, though in leafiest covert hid;
 But swooping down, he rends her life away:
 So, Meneläus, through the ranks of war
 Thy piercing glances ev'ry way were turn'd,
 If Nestor's son, alive, thou mightst descry;
 Him on the field's extremest left he found,
 Cheering his friends, and urging to the fight;
 He stood beside him, and address'd him thus:

770

“ Antilochus, come hither, godlike friend,
 And woful tidings hear, which would to Heav'n
 I had not to impart; thyself thou seest
 How Jove hath heap'd disaster on the Greeks,
 And vict'ry giv'n to Troy; but one has fall'n,
 Our bravest, best! Patroclus lies in death;
 And deeply must the Greeks his loss deplore.
 But haste thee to the ships, to Peleus' son
 The tidings bear, if haply he may save
 The body of Patroclus from the foe;
 His naked body, for his arms are now
 The prize of Hector of the glancing helm.”

780

He said; and at his words Antilochus
 Astounded stood; long time his tongue in vain
 For utt'rance strove; his eyes were fill'd with tears,
 His cheerful voice was mute; yet not the less
 To Meneläus' bidding gave his care:

790

Swiftly he sped; but to Læodocus,
 His comrade brave, who waited with his car
 In close attendance, first consign'd his arms;
 Then from the field with active limbs he flew,
 Weeping, with mournful news, to Peleus' son.
 Nor, noble Meneläus, did thy heart
 Incline thee to remain, and aid thy friends,
 Where from their war-worn ranks the Pylian troops
 Deplor'd the absence of Antilochus;
 But these in godlike Thrasymedes' charge
 He left; and to Patroclus hast'ning back,
 Beside th' Ajaces stood, as thus he spoke:
 “ Him to Achilles, to the ships, in haste

800

I have despatch'd; yet fiercely as his wrath
 May burn tow'rd Hector, I can scarce expect
 His presence here; for how could he, unarm'd,
 With Trojans fight? But take we counsel now
 How from the field to bear away our dead,
 And 'scape ourselves from death by Trojan hands." 810

Whom answer'd thus great Ajax Telamon:
 "Illustrious Meneläus, all thy words
 Are just and true; then from amid the press,
 Thou and Meriones, take up in haste,
 And bear away the body; while behind
 We two, in heart united, as in name,
 Who side by side have still been wont to fight,
 Will Hector and his Trojans hold at bay."

He said; they, lifting in their arms the corpse,
 Uprais'd it high in air; then from behind 820
 Loud yell'd the Trojans, as they saw the Greeks
 Retiring with their dead; and on they rush'd,
 As dogs that in advance of hunter youths
 Pursue a wounded boar; awhile they run,
 Eager for blood; but when, in pride of strength,
 He turns upon them, backward they recoil,
 This way and that in fear of death dispers'd:
 So onward press'd awhile the Trojan crowd,
 With thrust of swords, and double-pointed spears;
 But ever as th' Ajaces turn'd to bay, 830
 Their colour chang'd to pale, not one so bold
 As, dashing on, to battle for the corpse.
 Thus they, with anxious care, from off the field
 Bore tow'rd the ships their dead; but on their track
 Came sweeping on the storm of battle, fierce,
 As, on a sudden breaking forth, the fire
 Seizes some populous city, and devours
 House after house amid the glare and blaze,
 While roar the flames before the gusty wind;
 So fiercely press'd upon the Greeks' retreat 840
 The clatt'ring tramp of steeds and armed men.
 But as the mules, with stubborn strength endued,
 That down the mountain through the trackless waste
 Drag some huge log, or timber for the ships,
 And spent with toil and sweat, still labour on
 Unflinching; so the Greeks with patient toil
 Bore on their dead; th' Ajaces in their rear

Stemming the war, as stems the torrent's force
Some wooded cliff, far stretching o'er the plain;
Checking the mighty river's rushing stream, 850
And flinging it aside upon the plain,
Itself unbroken by the strength of flood:
So firmly, in the rear, th' Ajaces stemm'd
The Trojan force; yet these still onward press'd,
And, 'mid their comrades proudly eminent,
Two chiefs, Æneas, old Anchises' son,
And glorious Hector, in the van were seen.
Then, as a cloud of starlings or of daws
Fly screaming, as they see the hawk approach,
To lesser birds the messenger of death; 860
So before Hector and Æneas fled,
Screaming, forgetful of their warlike fame,
The sons of Greece; and scatter'd here and there
Around the ditch lay store of goodly arms,
By Greeks abandon'd in their hasty flight.
Yet still, unintermitted, rag'd the war.

BOOK XVIII

ARGUMENT

ACHILLES, by command of Juno, shows himself to the Trojans, who fly at his appearance; Vulcan, at the instance of Thetis, forges for him a suit of armour.

THUS, furious as the rage of fire, they fought.
Meantime Antilochus to Peleus' son,
Swift-footed messenger, his tidings bore.
Him by the high-beak'd ships he found, his mind
Th' event presaging, fill'd with anxious thoughts,
As thus he commun'd with his mighty heart:

“Alas! what means it, that the long-hair'd Greeks,
Chas'd from the plain, are thronging round the ships?
Let me not now, ye Gods, endure the grief
My mother once foretold, that I should live
To see the bravest of the Myrmidons
Cut off by Trojans from the light of day.
Menœtius' noble son has surely fall'n;
Foolhardy! yet I warn'd him, and besought,
Soon as the ships from hostile fires were safe,
Back to return, nor Hector's onset meet.”

10

While in his mind and spirit thus he mus'd,
Beside him stood the noble Nestor's son,
And weeping, thus his mournful message gave:

“Alas! great son of Peleus, woful news,
Which would to Heav'n I had not to impart,
To thee I bring: Patroclus lies in death;
And o'er his body now the war is wag'd;
His naked body, for his arms are now
The prize of Hector of the glancing helm.”

20

He said; and darkest clouds of grief o'erspread
Achilles' brow; with both his hands he seiz'd
And pour'd upon his head the grimy dust,
Marring his graceful visage; and defil'd
With black'ning ashes all his costly robes.
Stretch'd in the dust his lofty stature lay,
As with his hands his flowing locks he tore;

30

Loud was the wailing of the female band,
 Achilles' and Patroclus' prize of war,
 As round Achilles, rushing out of doors,
 Beating their breasts, with tott'ring limbs they press'd.
 In tears beside him stood Antilochus,
 And in his own Achilles' hand he held,
 Groaning in spirit, fearful lest for grief
 In his own bosom he should sheathe his sword. 40
 Loud were his moans; his Goddess-mother heard,
 Beside her aged father where she sat
 In the deep ocean caves; she heard, and wept:
 The Nereids all, in ocean's depths who dwell,
 Encircled her around; Cymodoce,¹
 Nesæe, Spio, and Cymothœe,
 The stag-ey'd Halia, and Amphithœe,
 Actæa, Limnorea, Melite,
 Doris, and Galatea, Panope;
 There too were Oreithyia, Clymene, 50
 And Amatheia with the golden hair,
 And all the denizens of ocean's depths.
 Fill'd was the glassy cave; in unison
 They beat their breasts, as Thetis led the wail:
 "Give ear, my sister Nereids all, and learn
 How deep the grief that in my breast I bear.
 Me miserable! me, of noblest son
 Unhappiest mother! me, a son who bore,
 My brave, my beautiful, of heroes chief!
 Like a young tree he throve: I tended him, 60
 In a rich vineyard as the choicest plant;
 Till in the beak'd ships I sent him forth
 To war with Troy; him ne'er shall I behold,
 Returning home, in aged Peleus' house.
 Ev'n while he lives, and sees the light of day,
 He lives in sorrow; nor, to soothe his grief,
 My presence can avail; yet will I go,
 That I may see my dearest child, and learn
 What grief hath reach'd him, from the war withdrawn."

¹ L. 45 et seqq. I hope I may be pardoned for having somewhat curtailed the list of these ladies, which in the original extends over ten lines of names only. In doing so, I have followed the example of Virgil, who represents the same ladies, evidently the *élite* of submarine society (G. 4. 336), in attendance on Cyrene; and has not only reduced the list, but added some slight touches illustrating their occupations and private history: a liberty permissible to an imitator, but not to a translator.

She said, and left the cave; with her they went, 70
Weeping; before them parted th' ocean wave.

But when they reach'd the fertile shore of Troy,
In order due they landed on the beach,
Where frequent, round Achilles swift of foot,
Were moor'd the vessels of the Myrmidons.

There, as he groan'd aloud, beside him stood
His Goddess-mother; weeping, in her hands
She held his head, while pitying thus she spoke:

“Why weeps my son? and what his cause of grief?
Speak out, and nought conceal; for all thy pray'r 80
Which with uplifted hands thou mad'st to Jove,
He hath fulfill'd, that, flying to their ships,
The routed sons of Greece should feel how much
They need thine aid, and mourn their insult past.”

To whom Achilles, deeply groaning, thus:
“Mother, all this indeed hath Jove fulfill'd;
Yet what avails it, since my dearest friend
Is slain, Patroclus? whom I honour'd most
Of all my comrades, lov'd him as my soul,
Him have I lost: and Hector from his corpse 90
Hath stripp'd those arms, those weighty, beauteous arms,
A marvel to behold, which from the Gods
Peleus receiv'd, a glorious gift, that day
When thou, a Goddess, shar'dst a mortal's bed.
How better were it, if thy lot had been
Still 'mid the Ocean deities to dwell,
And Peleus had espous'd a mortal bride!
For now is bitter grief for thee in store,
Mourning thy son; whom to his home return'd
Thou never more shalt see; nor would I wish 100
To live, and move amid my fellow-men,
Unless that Hector, vanquish'd by my spear,
May lose his forfeit life, and pay the price
Of foul dishonour to Patroclus done.”

To whom, her tears o'erflowing, Thetis thus:
“Ev'n as thou sayst, my son, thy term is short;
Nor long shall Hector's fate precede thine own.”

Achilles, answ'ring, spoke in passionate grief:
“Would I might die this hour, who fail'd to save
My comrade slain! far from his native land 110
He died, sore needing my protecting arm;
And I, who ne'er again must see my home,

Nor to Patroclus, nor the many Greeks
 Whom Hector's hand hath slain, have render'd aid;
 But idly here I sit, cumb'ring the ground:
 I, who amid the Greeks no equal own
 In fight; to others, in debate, I yield.
 Accurs'd of Gods and men be hateful strife
 And anger, which to violence provokes
 Ev'n temp'rate souls; though sweeter be its taste 120
 Than dropping honey, in the heart of man
 Swelling, like smoke; such anger in my soul
 Hath Agamemnon kindled, King of men.
 But pass we that; though still my heart be sore,
 Yet will I school my angry spirit down.

In search of Hector now, of him who slew
 My friend, I go; prepar'd to meet my death,
 When Jove shall will it, and th' Immortals all.
 From death not ev'n the might of Hercules,
 Though best belov'd of Saturn's son, could fly, 130
 By fate and Juno's bitter wrath subdued.
 I too, since such my doom, must lie in death;
 Yet, ere I die, immortal fame will win;

And from their delicate cheeks, deep-bosom'd dames,
 Dardan and Trojan, bitter tears shall wipe,
 And groan in anguish; then shall all men know
 How long I have been absent from the field;
 Then, though thou love me, seek not from the war
 To stay my steps; for bootless were thy speech."

Whom answer'd thus the silver-footed Queen: 140
 " True are thy words, my son; and good it is,
 And commendable, from the stroke of death
 To save a worsted comrade; but thine arms,
 Thy brazen, flashing arms, the Trojans hold:
 Them Hector of the glancing helm himself
 Bears on his breast, exulting; yet not long
 Shall be his triumph, for his doom is nigh.
 But thou, engage not in the toils of war,
 Until thine eyes again behold me here;
 For with to-morrow's sun will I return
 With arms of heav'nly mould, by Vulcan wrought." 150

Thus saying, from her son she turn'd away,
 And turning, to her sister Nereids spoke:
 " Back to the spacious bosom of the deep
 Retire ye now; and to my father's house,

The aged Ocean God, your tidings bear;
 While I to high Olympus speed, to crave
 At Vulcan's hand, the skill'd artificer,
 A boon of dazzling armour for my son."

She said; and they beneath the ocean wave 160
 Descended, while to high Olympus sped
 The silver-footed Goddess, thence in hope
 To bear the dazzling armour to her son.

She to Olympus sped; the Greeks meanwhile
 Before the warrior-slayer Hector fled
 With wild, tumultuous uproar, till they reach'd
 Their vessels and the shore of Hellespont.

Nor had the well-greav'd Greeks Achilles' friend,
 Patroclus, from amid the fray withdrawn;
 For close upon him follow'd horse and man, 170
 And Hector, son of Priam, fierce as flame;

Thrice noble Hector, seizing from behind,
 Sought by the feet to drag away the dead,
 Cheering his friends; thrice, clad in warlike might,
 The two Ajaces drove him from his prey.

Yet, fearless in his strength, now rushing on
 He dash'd amid the fray; now, shouting loud,
 Stood firm; but backward not a step retir'd.
 As from a carcass herdsman strive in vain 180
 To scare a tawny lion, hunger-pinch'd;

Ev'n so th' Ajaces, mail-clad warriors, fail'd
 The son of Priam from the corpse to scare.
 And now the body had he borne away,
 With endless fame; but from Olympus' height

Came storm-swift Iris down to Peleus' son,
 And bade him don his arms; by Juno sent,
 Unknown to Jove, and to th' Immortals all.
 She stood beside him, and address'd him thus:

"Up, son of Peleus! up, thou prince of men!
 Haste to Patroclus' rescue; whom around, 190
 Before the ships, is wag'd a fearful war,
 With mutual slaughter; these the dead defending,

And those to Ilium's breezy heights intent
 To bear the body; noble Hector chief,
 Who longs to sever from the tender neck,
 And fix upon the spikes, thy comrade's head.

Up then! delay no longer; deem it shame
 Patroclus' corpse should glut the dogs of Troy,

Dishon'ring thee, if aught dishonour him."

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot: 200

"Say, heav'nly Iris, of th' immortal Gods
Who bade thee seek me, and this message bring?"

To whom swift Iris thus: "To thee I come
By Juno sent, th' imperial wife of Jove;
Unknown to Saturn's son, and all the Gods
Who on Olympus' snowy summit dwell."

To whom again Achilles, swift of foot:

"How in the battle toil can I engage?

My arms are with the Trojans; and to boot
My mother warn'd me not to arm for fight, 210

Till I again should see her; for she hop'd
To bring me heav'nly arms by Vulcan wrought:

Nor know I well whose armour I could wear,
Save the broad shield of Ajax Telamon;

And he, methinks, amid the foremost ranks
Ev'n now is fighting o'er Patroclus' corpse."

Whom answer'd storm-swift Iris: "Well we know

Thy glorious arms are by the Trojans held;

But go thou forth, and from above the ditch
Appear before them; daunted at the sight, 220

Haply the Trojans may forsake the field,
And breathing-time afford the sons of Greece,
Toil-worn; for little pause has yet been theirs."

Swift Iris said, and vanish'd; then arose

Achilles, dear to Jove; and Pallas threw
Her tassell'd ægis o'er his shoulders broad;

His head encircling with a coronet

Of golden cloud, whence fiery flashes gleam'd.

As from an island city up to Heav'n

The smoke ascends, which hostile forces round
Beleaguer, and all day with cruel war 230

From its own state cut off; but when the sun
Hath set, blaze frequent forth the beacon fires;

High rise the flames, and to the dwellers round
Their signal flash, if haply o'er the sea

May come the needful aid; so brightly flash'd

That fiery light around Achilles' head.

He left the wall, and stood above the ditch,

But from the Greeks apart, rememb'ring well

His mother's prudent counsel; there he stood, 240

And shouted loudly; Pallas join'd her voice,

And fill'd with terror all the Trojan host.
 Clear as the trumpet's sound, which calls to arms
 Some town, encompass'd round with hostile bands,
 Rang out the voice of great Æacides.
 But when Achilles' voice of brass they heard,
 They quail'd in spirit; the sleek-skinn'd steeds themselves,
 Conscious of coming ill, bore back the cars:
 Their charioteers, dismay'd, beheld the flame
 Which, kindled by the blue-ey'd Goddess, blaz'd 250
 Unquench'd around the head of Peleus' son.
 Thrice shouted from the ditch the godlike chief;
 Thrice terror struck both Trojans and Allies;
 And there and then beside their chariots fell
 Twelve of their bravest; while the Greeks, well pleas'd,
 Patroclus' body from the fray withdrew,
 And on a litter laid; around him stood
 His comrades, mourning; with them, Peleus' son,
 Shedding hot tears, as on his friend he gaz'd,
 Laid on the bier, and pierc'd with deadly wounds: 260
 Him to the war with horses and with cars
 He sent; but ne'er to welcome his return.

By stag-ey'd Juno sent, reluctant sank
 Th' unwearied sun beneath the ocean wave;
 The sun had set, and breath'd awhile the Greeks
 From the fierce labours of the balanc'd field;
 Nor less the Trojans, from the stubborn fight
 Retiring, from the chariots loos'd their steeds:
 But ere they shar'd the ev'ning meal, they met
 In council; all stood up; none dar'd to sit; 270
 For fear had fall'n on all, when reappear'd
 Achilles, from the battle long withdrawn.
 First Panthöus' son, the sage Polydamas,
 Address'd th' assembly; his sagacious mind
 Alone beheld the future and the past;
 The friend of Hector, born the selfsame night;
 One in debate, the other best in arms;
 Who thus with prudent speech began, and said:
 " Be well advis'd, my friends! my counsel is
 That we regain the city, nor the morn 280
 Here in the plain, beside the ships, await,
 So far remov'd from our protecting walls.
 While fiercely burn'd 'gainst Atreus' godlike son
 That mightly warrior's wrath, 'twas easier far

With th' other Greeks to deal; and I rejoic'd
 When by the ships we pass'd the night, in hopes
 We soon might call them ours; but now, I own,
 Achilles, swift of foot, excites my fear.
 His proud, impetuous spirit will spurn the plain,
 Where Greeks and Trojans oft in warlike strife 290
 Their balanc'd strength exert; if he come forth,
 Our fight will be to guard our homes and wives.
 Gain we the city; trust me, so 'twere best.
 Now, for a while, ambrosial night detains
 The son of Peleus; but at early morn
 If issuing forth in arms he find us here,
 His prowess we shall know; and happy he
 Who, flying, shall in safety reach the walls
 Of sacred Troy; for many a Trojan slain
 Shall feed the vultures: Heav'n avert such fate! 300
 But if, though loth, ye will by me be rul'd,
 This night in council husband we our strength;
 While tow'rs, and lofty gates, and folding doors
 Close join'd, well-fitting, shall our city guard:
 Then issuing forth in arms at early morn
 Man we the tow'rs; so harder were his task
 If, from the ships advancing, round the wall
 He offer battle; bootless to return,
 His strong-neck'd horses worn with labour vain
 In coursing, purposeless, around the town. 310
 To force an entrance, or the town destroy,
 Is not his aim; and ere that end be gain'd,
 The dogs of Troy upon his flesh shall feed."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm
 With stern regard: "Polydamas, thy words
 Are such as grate unkindly on mine ear,
 Who fain wouldst have us to the walls retire.
 What? have ye not already long enough
 Been coop'd within the tow'rs? the wealth of Troy,
 Its brass, its gold, were once the common theme 320
 Of ev'ry tongue; our hoarded treasures now
 Are gone, to Phrygian and Mæonian shores
 For sale exported, costly merchandise,
 Since on our city fell the wrath of Jove.
 And now, when deep-designing Saturn's son
 Such glory gives me as to gain the ships,
 And, crowded by the sea, hem in the Greeks,

Fool! put not thou these timid counsels forth,
 Which none will follow, nor will I allow.
 But hear ye all, and do as I advise: 330
 Share now the meal, by ranks, throughout the host;
 Then set your watch, and each keep careful guard;
 And whom his spoils o'erload, if such there be,
 Let him divide them with the gen'ral crowd;
 Better that they should hold them than the Greeks:
 And with the morn, in arms, beside the ships,
 Will we again awake the furious war.
 But if indeed Achilles by the ships
 Hath reappear'd, himself, if so he choose,
 Shall be the suff'rer; from the perilous strife 340
 I will not shrink, but his encounter meet:
 So he, or I, shall gain immortal fame;
 Impartial Mars hath oft the slayer slain."

Thus Hector spoke; the Trojans cheer'd aloud:
 Fools, and by Pallas of their sense bereft,
 Who all applauded Hector's ill advice,
 None the sage counsel of Polydamas!
 Then through the camp they shar'd the ev'ning meal.

Meantime the Greeks all night with tears and groans
 Bewail'd Patroclus: on his comrade's breast 350
 Achilles laid his murder-dealing hands,
 And led with bitter groans the loud lament.
 As when the hunters, in the forest's depth,
 Have robb'd a bearded lion of his cubs;
 Too late arriving, he with anger chafes;
 Then follows, if perchance he may o'ertake,
 Through many a mountain glen, the hunters' steps,
 With grief and fury fill'd; so Peleus' son,
 With bitter groans, the Myrmidons address'd:
 "Vain was, alas! the promise which I gave, 360
 Seeking the brave Menœtius to console,
 To bring to Opus back his gallant son,
 Rich with his share of spoil from Troy o'erthrown;
 But Jove fulfils not all that man designs:
 For us hath fate decreed, that here in Troy
 We two one soil should redden with our blood;
 Nor me, returning to my native land,
 Shall aged Peleus in his halls receive,
 Nor Thetis; here must earth retain my bones.
 But since, Patroclus, I am doom'd on earth 370

Behind thee to remain, thy fun'ral rites
 I will not celebrate, till Hector's arms,
 And head, thy haughty slayer's, here I bring;
 And on thy pyre twelve noble sons of Troy
 Will sacrifice, in vengeance of thy death.
 Thou by our beakèd ships till then must lie;
 And weeping o'er thee shall deep-bosom'd dames,
 Trojan and Dardan, mourn both night and day;
 The prizes of our toil, when wealthy towns
 Before our valour and our spears have fall'n."

380

He said, and bade his comrades on the fire
 An ample tripod place, without delay
 To cleanse Patroclus from the bloody gore:
 They on the burning fire the tripod plac'd,
 With water fill'd, and kindled wood beneath.
 Around the bellying tripod rose the flames,
 Heating the bath; within the glitt'ring brass
 Soon as the water boil'd, they wash'd the corpse,
 With lissom oils anointing, and the wounds
 With fragrant ointments fill'd, of nine years old;
 Then in fine linen they the body wrapp'd
 From head to feet, and laid it on a couch,
 And cover'd over with a fair white sheet.
 All night around Achilles swift of foot
 The Myrmidons with tears Patroclus mourn'd.

390

To Juno then, his sister and his wife,
 Thus Saturn's son: "At length thou hast thy will,
 Imperial Juno, who hast stirr'd to war
 Achilles swift of foot; well might one deem
 These long-hair'd Greeks from thee deriv'd their birth."

To whom in answer thus the stag-ey'd Queen: 401

"What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?
 Ev'n man, though mortal, and inferior far
 To us in wisdom, might so much effect
 Against his fellow-man; then how should I,
 By double title chief of Goddesses,
 First by my birth, and next because thy wife
 I boast me, thine, o'er all the Gods supreme,
 Not work my vengeance on the Trojan race?"

410

Such converse while they held, to Vulcan's house,
 Immortal, starlike bright, among the Gods
 Unrivall'd, all of brass, by Vulcan's self
 Constructed, sped the silver-footed Queen.

Him swelt'ring at his forge she found, intent
 On forming twenty tripods, which should stand
 The wall surrounding of his well-built house;
 With golden wheels beneath he furnish'd each,
 And to th' assembly of the Gods endued
 With pow'r to move spontaneous, and return,
 A marvel to behold! thus far his work
 He had completed; but not yet had fix'd
 The rich-wrought handles; these his labour now
 Engag'd, to fit them, and to rivet fast.
 While thus he exercis'd his practis'd skill,
 The silver-footed Queen approach'd the house.
 Charis, the skilful artist's wedded wife,
 Beheld her coming, and advanc'd to meet;
 And, as her hand she clasp'd, address'd her thus:

420

“ Say, Thetis of the flowing robe, belov'd
 And honour'd, whence this visit to our house,
 An unaccustom'd guest? but come thou in,
 That I may welcome thee with honour due.”

430

Thus, as she spoke, the Goddess led her in,
 And on a seat with silver studs adorn'd,
 Fair, richly wrought, a footstool at her feet,
 She bade her sit; then thus to Vulcan call'd:
 “ Haste hither, Vulcan; Thetis asks thine aid.”

Whom answer'd thus the skill'd artificer:

“ An honour'd and a venerated guest
 Our house contains; who sav'd me once from woe,
 When by my mother's act from Heav'n I fell,
 Who, for that I was crippled in my feet,
 Deem'd it not shame to hide me; hard had then
 My fortune been, had not Eurynome
 And Thetis in their bosoms shelter'd me;
 Eurynome, from old Oceanus
 Who drew her birth, the ever-circling flood.
 Nine years with them I dwelt, and many a work
 I fashion'd there of metal, clasps, and chains
 Of spiral coil, rich cups, and collars fair,
 Hid in a cave profound; where th' ocean stream
 With ceaseless murmur foam'd and moan'd around;
 Unknown to God or man, but to those two
 Who sav'd me, Thetis and Eurynome.
 Now to my house hath fair-hair'd Thetis come;
 To her, my life preserv'd its tribute owes:

440

450

Then thou the hospitable rites perform,
While I my bellows and my tools lay by."

He said, and from the anvil rear'd upright
His massive strength; and as he limp'd along, 460
His tott'ring knees were bow'd beneath his weight.

The bellows from the fire he next withdrew,
And in a silver casket plac'd his tools;
Then with a sponge his brows and lusty arms
He wip'd, and sturdy neck and hairy chest.
He donn'd his robe, and took his weighty staff;
Then through the door with halting step he pass'd;
There waited on their King th' attendant maids;
In form as living maids, but wrought in gold;
Instinct with consciousness, with voice endued, 470
And strength, and skill from heav'nly teachers drawn.

These waited, duteous, at the Monarch's side,
His steps supporting; he, with halting gait,
Pass'd to a gorgeous chair by Thetis' side,
And, as her hand he clasp'd, address'd her thus:

"Say, Thetis, of the flowing robe, belov'd
And honour'd, whence this visit to our house,
An unaccustom'd guest? say what thy will,
And, if within my pow'r, esteem it done."

To whom in answer Thetis, weeping, thus: 480
"Vulcan, of all the Goddesses who dwell
On high Olympus, lives there one whose soul
Hath borne such weight of woe, so many griefs,
As Saturn's son hath heap'd on me alone?
Me, whom he chose from all the sea-born nymphs,
And gave to Peleus, son of Æacus,
His subject; I endur'd a mortal's bed,
Though sore against my will; he now, bent down
By feeble age, lies helpless in his house.
Now adds he farther grief; he granted me 490
To bear, and rear, a son, of heroes chief;
Like a young tree he throve; I tended him,
In a rich vineyard as the choicest plant:
Till in the beak'd ships I sent him forth
To war with Troy; him ne'er shall I behold,
Returning home, in aged Peleus' house.
Ev'n while he lives, and sees the light of day,
He lives in sorrow; nor, to soothe his grief,
My presence can avail; a girl, his prize,

Selected for him by the sons of Greece, 500
 Great Agamemnon wrested from his arms:
 In grief and rage he pin'd his soul away;
 Then by the Trojans were the Greeks hemm'd in
 Beside their ships, and from within their camp
 No outlet found; the Grecian Elders then
 Implor'd his aid, and promis'd costly gifts.
 With his own hand to save them he refus'd;
 But, in his armour clad, to battle sent
 His friend Patroclus, with a num'rous band.
 All day they fought before the Scæan gates; 510
 And in that day had Ilium been destroy'd,
 But in the van, Meneceus' noble son,
 After great deeds achiev'd, Apollo slew,
 And crown'd with glory Hector, Priam's son.
 Therefore a suppliant to thy knees I come,
 If to my son, to early death condemn'd,
 Thou wilt accord the boon of shield and helm,
 And well-wrought greaves with silver clasps secur'd,
 And breastplate; for his own, his faithful friend,
 By Trojan hands subdued, hath lost; and he, 520
 O'erwhelm'd with grief, lies prostrate on the earth."

Whom answer'd thus the skill'd artificer:
 "Take comfort, nor let this disturb thy mind;
 Would that as surely, when his hour shall come,
 I could defend him from the stroke of death,
 As I can promise that he shall possess
 Such arms as they shall marvel who behold."

He left her thus, and to his forge return'd;
 The bellows then directing to the fire,
 He bade them work; through twenty pipes at once 530
 Forthwith they pour'd their diverse-temper'd blasts;
 Now briskly seconding his eager haste,
 Now at his will, and as the work requir'd.
 The stubborn brass, and tin, and precious gold,
 And silver, first he melted in the fire;
 Then on its stand his weighty anvil plac'd;
 And with one hand the hammer's pond'rous weight
 He wielded, while the other grasp'd the tongs.

And first a shield he fashion'd, vast and strong,
 With rich adornment; circled with a rim, 540
 Threifold, bright-gleaming, whence a silver belt
 Depended; of five folds the shield was form'd;

And on its surface many a rare design
Of curious art his practis'd skill had wrought.

Thereon were figur'd earth, and sky, and sea,
The ever-circling sun, and full-orb'd moon,
And all the signs that crown the vault of Heav'n;
Pleiads and Hyads, and Orion's might,
And Arctos, call'd the Wain, who wheels on high
His circling course, and on Orion waits;
Sole star that never bathes in th' ocean wave.

550

And two fair populous towns were sculptur'd there:
In one were marriage pomp and revelry,
And brides, in gay procession, through the streets
With blazing torches from their chambers borne,
While frequent rose the hymeneal song.
Youths whirl'd around in joyous dance, with sound
Of flute and harp; and, standing at their doors,
Admiring women on the pageant gaz'd.

Meanwhile a busy throng the forum fill'd:
There between two a fierce contention rose,
About a death-fine; to the public one
Appeal'd, asserting to have paid the whole;
While one denied that he had aught receiv'd.
Both were desirous that before the Judge
The issue should be tried; with noisy shouts
Their sev'ral partisans encourag'd each.

560

The heralds still'd the tumult of the crowd:
On polish'd chairs, in solemn circle, sat
The rev'rend Elders; in their hands they held
The loud-voic'd heralds' sceptres; waving these,
They heard th' alternate pleadings; in the midst
Two talents lay of gold, which he should take
Who should before them prove his righteous cause.

570

Before the second town two armies lay,
In arms refulgent; to destroy the town
Th' assailants threaten'd, or among themselves
Of all the wealth within the city stor'd
An equal half, as ransom, to divide.
The terms rejecting, the defenders mann'd
A secret ambush; on the walls they plac'd
Women and children muster'd for defence,
And men by age enfeebled; forth they went,
By Mars and Pallas led; these, wrought in gold,
In golden arms array'd, above the crowd

580

For beauty and stature, as befitting Gods,
 Conspicuous shone; of lesser height the rest.
 But when the destin'd ambuscade was reach'd,
 Beside the river, where the shepherds drove
 Their flocks and herds to water, down they lay, 590
 In glitt'ring arms accoutred; and apart
 They plac'd two spies, to notify betimes
 Th' approach of flocks of sheep and lowing herds.
 These, in two shepherds' charge, ere long appear'd,
 Who, unsuspecting as they mov'd along,
 Enjoy'd the music of their past'ral pipes.
 They on the booty, from afar discern'd,
 Sprang from their ambuscade; and cutting off
 The herds, and fleecy flocks, their guardians slew.
 Their comrades heard the tumult, where they sat 600
 Before their sacred altars, and forthwith
 Sprang on their cars, and with fast-stepping steeds
 Pursued the plund'ers, and o'ertook them soon.
 There on the river's bank they met in arms,
 And each at other hurl'd their brazen spears.
 And there were figur'd Strife, and Tumult wild,
 And deadly Fate, who in her iron grasp
 One newly-wounded, one unwounded bore,
 While by the feet from out the press she dragg'd
 Another slain: about her shoulders hung 610
 A garment crimson'd with the blood of men.
 Like living men they seem'd to move, to fight,
 To drag away the bodies of the slain.

And there was grav'n a wide-extended plain
 Of fallow land, rich, fertile, mellow soil,
 Thrice plough'd; where many ploughmen up and down
 Their teams were driving; and as each attain'd
 The limit of the field, would one advance,
 And tender him a cup of gen'rous wine:
 Then would he turn, and to the end again 620
 Along the furrow cheerly drive his plough.
 And still behind them darker show'd the soil,
 The true presentment of a new-plough'd field,
 Though wrought in gold; a miracle of art.

There too was grav'n a corn-field, rich in grain,
 Where with sharp sickles reapers plied their task;
 The binders, following close, the bundles tied:
 Three were the binders; and behind them boys

In close attendance waiting, in their arms
 Gather'd the bundles, and in order pil'd. 630
 Amid them, staff in hand, in silence stood
 The King, rejoicing in the plenteous swathe.
 A little way remov'd, the heralds slew
 A sturdy ox, and now beneath an oak
 Prepar'd the feast; while women mix'd, hard by,
 White barley porridge for the lab'ers' meal.

And, with rich clusters laden, there was grav'n
 A vineyard fair, all gold; of glossy black
 The bunches were, on silver poles sustain'd;
 Around, a darksome trench; beyond, a fence 640
 Was wrought, of shining tin; and through it led
 One only path, by which the bearers pass'd,
 Who gather'd in the vineyard's bounteous store.
 There maids and youths, in joyous spirits bright,
 In woven baskets bore the luscious fruit.
 A boy, amid them, from a clear-ton'd harp
 Drew lovely music; well his liquid voice
 The strings accompanied; they all with dance
 And song harmonious join'd, and joyous shouts,
 As the gay bevy lightly tripp'd along. 650

Of straight-horn'd cattle too a herd was grav'n;
 Of gold and tin the heifers all were wrought:
 They to the pasture, from the cattle-yard,
 With gentle lowings, by a babbling stream,
 Where quiv'ring reed-beds rustled, slowly mov'd.
 Four golden shepherds walk'd beside the herd,
 By nine swift dogs attended; then amid
 The foremost heifers sprang two lions fierce
 Upon the lordly bull: he, bellowing loud,
 Was dragg'd along, by dogs and youths pursued. 660
 The tough bull's-hide they tore, and gorging lapp'd
 Th' intestines and dark blood; with vain attempt
 The herdsmen following closely, to th' attack
 Cheer'd their swift dogs; these shunn'd the lions' jaws,
 And close around them baying, held aloof.

And there the skilful artist's hand had trac'd
 A pasture broad, with fleecy flocks o'erspread,
 In a fair glade, with fold, and tents, and pens.

There, too, the skilful artist's hand had wrought,
 With curious workmanship, a mazy dance, 670
 Like that which Dædalus in Cnossus erst

At fair-hair'd Ariadne's bidding fram'd.
There, laying each on other's wrists their hand,
Bright youths and many-suitor'd maidens danc'd:
In fair white linen these; in tunics those,
Well woven, shining soft with fragrant oils;
These with fair coronets were crown'd, while those
With golden swords from silver belts were girt.
Now whirl'd they round with nimble practis'd feet,
Easy, as when a potter, seated, turns
A wheel, new fashion'd by his skilful hand,
And spins it round, to prove if true it run:
Now featly mov'd in well-beseeming ranks.
A num'rous crowd, around, the lovely dance
Survey'd, delighted; while with measur'd chant
Two tumblers, in the midst, were whirling round.

680

About the margin of the massive shield
Was wrought the mighty strength of th' ocean stream.

The shield completed, vast and strong, he forg'd
A breastplate, dazzling bright as flame of fire;
And next, a weighty helmet for his head,
Fair, richly wrought, with crest of gold above;
Then last, well-fitting greaves of pliant tin.

690

The skill'd artificer his works complete
Before Achilles' Goddess-mother laid:
She, like a falcon, from the snow-clad heights
Of huge Olympus, darted swiftly down,
Charg'd with the glitt'ring arms by Vulcan wrought.

BOOK XIX

ARGUMENT

ACHILLES is reconciled to Agamemnon and, clothed in new armour forged by Vulcan, leads out the Myrmidons to battle.

Now morn in saffron robe, from th' ocean stream
Ascending, light diffus'd o'er Gods and men;
As Thetis, to the ships returning, bore
The gift of Vulcan; there her son she found,
Who o'er Patroclus hung in bitter grief;
Around him mourn'd his comrades; in the midst
She stood, and clasp'd his hand, as thus she spoke:

“Leave we, my son, though deep our grief, the dead;
Here let him lie, since Heav'n hath doom'd his fall;
But thou these arms receive, by Vulcan sent,
Fairer than e'er on mortal breast were borne.” 10

The arms before Achilles, as she spoke,
The Goddess laid; loud rang the wondrous work.
With awe the Myrmidons beheld; nor dar'd
Affront the sight: but as Achilles gaz'd,
More fiery burn'd his wrath; beneath his brows
His eyes like lightning flash'd; with fierce delight
He seiz'd the glorious gift; and when his soul
Had feasted on the miracle of art,
To Thetis thus his wingèd words address'd: 20

“Mother, the God hath giv'n me arms indeed,
Worthy a God, and such as mortal man
Could never forge; I go to arm me straight;
Yet fear I for Mencæti' noble son,
Lest in his spear-inflicted wounds the flies
May gender worms, and desecrate the dead,
And, life extinct, corruption reach his flesh.”

Whom answer'd thus the silver-footed Queen:
“Let not such fears, my son, disturb thy mind;
I will myself the swarms of flies disperse,
That on the flesh of slaughter'd warriors prey;
And should he here remain a year complete, 30

Still should his flesh be firm and fresh as now:
 But thou to council call the chiefs of Greece;
 Against the monarch Agamemnon there,
 The leader of the host, abjure thy wrath;
 Then arm thee quickly, and put on thy might."

Her words with dauntless courage fill'd his breast.
 She in Patroclus' nostrils, to preserve
 His flesh, red nectar and ambrosia pour'd.

40

Along the ocean beach Achilles pass'd,
 And loudly shouting, call'd on all the chiefs;
 Then all who heretofore remain'd on board,
 The steersmen, who the vessels' rudders hold,
 The very stewards that serv'd the daily bread,
 All to th' assembly throng'd, when reappear'd
 Achilles, from the fight so long withdrawn.
 Two noble chiefs, two ministers of Mars,
 Ulysses sage, and valiant Diomed,
 Appear'd, yet crippled by their grievous wounds,
 Their halting steps supporting with their spears,
 And on the foremost seats their places took.
 Next follow'd Agamemnon, King of men,
 He also wounded; for Antenor's son,
 Coön, had stabb'd him in the stubborn fight.
 When all the Greeks were closely throng'd around,
 Up rose Achilles swift of foot, and said:

50

"Great son of Atreus, what hath been the gain
 To thee or me, since heart-consuming strife
 Hath fiercely rag'd between us, for a girl,
 Who would to Heav'n had died by Dian's shafts
 That day when from Lyrnessus' captur'd town
 I bore her off? so had not many a Greek
 Bitten the bloody dust, by hostile hands
 Subdued, while I in anger stood aloof.
 Great was the gain to Troy; but Greeks, methinks,
 Will long retain the mem'ry of our feud.
 Yet pass we that; and though our hearts be sore,
 Still let us school our angry spirits down.
 My wrath I here abjure; it is not meet
 It burn for ever unappeas'd; do thou
 Muster to battle straight the long-hair'd Greeks;
 That, to the Trojans once again oppos'd,
 I may make trial if beside the ships
 They dare this night remain; but he, I ween,

60

70

Will gladly rest his limbs, who safe shall fly,
My spear escaping, from the battle-field."

He said: the well-greav'd Greeks rejoic'd to hear
His wrath abjur'd by Peleus' godlike son;
And from his seat, not standing in the midst,

80

Thus to th' assembly Agamemnon spoke:
" Friends, Grecian Heroes, Ministers of Mars,
When one stands up to speak, 'tis meet for all
To lend a patient ear, nor interrupt;
For ev'n to practis'd speakers hard the task:
But, in this vast assembly, who can speak
That all may hear? the clearest voice must fail.

To Peleus' son, Achilles, I my mind
Will frankly open; ye among yourselves
Impart the words I speak, that all may know.
Oft hath this matter been by Greeks discuss'd,
And I their frequent censure have incurr'd:
Yet was not I the cause; but Jove, and Fate,
And gloomy Erinnys, who combin'd to throw
A strong delusion o'er my mind, that day
I robb'd Achilles of his lawful prize.

90

What could I do? a Goddess all o'er-rul'd,
Daughter of Jove, dread Até, baleful pow'r,
Misleading all; with lightest step she moves,
Not on the earth, but o'er the heads of men,
With blighting touch; and many hath caus'd to err.
Ev'n Jove, the wisest deem'd of Gods and men,
In errors she involv'd, when Juno's art
By female stratagem the God deceiv'd,
When in well-girdled Thebes Alcmena lay
In travail of the might of Hercules.

100

In boastful tone amid the Gods he spoke:
' Hear all ye Gods, and all ye Goddesses,
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.
This day Lucina shall to light bring forth
A child, the future Lord of all around,
Of mortal men, who trace to me their blood.'

110

Whom answer'd Juno thus, with deep deceit:
' Thou dost but feign, nor wilt fulfil thy word:
Come now, Olympian, swear a solemn oath
That he shall be the Lord of all around,
Who on this day shall be of woman born,
Of mortal men, who trace to thee their blood.'

She said, and Jove, the snare unseeing, swore
 A solemn oath; but found his error soon. 120
 Down from Olympus' height she sped in haste
 To Argos of Achaia; for the wife
 Of Sthenelus, the son of Perseus, there,
 She knew, was sev'n months pregnant of a son;
 Whom, though untimely born, she brought to light,
 Staying meanwhile Alcmena's labour-pangs.
 To Saturn's son herself the tidings brought,
 And thus address'd him: ' Jove, the lightning's Lord,
 I bring thee news; this day a mighty man,
 By thee ordain'd to be the Argives' King, 130
 Is born, Eurystheus, son of Sthenelus,
 The son of Perseus, issue of thy blood;
 Well worthy he to be the Argives' King.'
 She said: keen sorrow deeply pierc'd his soul;
 Then Até by the glossy locks he seiz'd
 In mighty wrath; and swore a solemn oath,
 That to Olympus and the starry Heav'n
 She never should return, who all misleads.
 His arm then whirling, from the starry Heav'n
 He flung her down, to vex th' affairs of men. 140
 Yet oft her fraud remember'd he with groans,
 When by Eurystheus' hard commands he saw
 Condemn'd to servile tasks his noble son.
 So, oft as Hector of the glancing helm
 Beside the ships the Greeks to slaughter gave,
 Back to my mind my former error came.
 I err'd, for Jove my judgment took away;
 But friendly reconciliation now I seek,
 And tender costly presents; then thyself
 Uprouse thee, and excite the rest to arms. 150
 While I prepare the gifts, whate'er of late¹
 The sage Ulysses promis'd in thy tent:
 Or, if thou wilt, though eager for the fray,
 Remain thou here awhile, till from my ship
 My followers bring the gifts; that thou mayst see
 I make my off'rings with no niggard hand."
 Whom answer'd thus Achilles swift of foot:

¹ L. 151. *Xθιζός*, yesterday. But either the word must have a more extended signification than is usually given to it, or Homer must here have fallen into an error; for two complete nights, and one day, that on which Patroclus met his death, had intervened since the visit of Ajax and Ulysses to the tent of Achilles. See also l. 215.

" Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
 The gifts thou deem'st befitting, 'tis for thee
 To give, or to withhold; but now at once
 Prepare we for the battle; 'tis not meet
 On trivial pretexts here to waste our time,
 Or idly loiter; much remains to do:

160

Again be seen Achilles in the van,
 Scatt'ring with brazen spear the Trojan ranks;
 And ye, forget not man with man to fight."

To whom in answer sage Ulysses thus:

" Brave as thou art, Achilles, godlike chief,
 Yet fasting lead not forth the sons of Greece
 To fight the Trojans; for no little time
 Will last the struggle, when the serried ranks
 Are once engag'd in conflict, and the Gods
 With equal courage either side inspire:

170

But bid them, by the ships, of food and wine
 (Wherein are strength and courage) first partake;
 For none throughout the day till set of sun,
 Fasting from food, may bear the toils of war;
 His spirit may still be eager for the fray;
 Yet are his limbs by slow degrees weigh'd down,
 Himself by thirst and hunger worn, his knees
 Unable, as he moves, to bear his weight.

180

But he who, first with food and wine refresh'd,
 All day maintains the combat with the foe,
 His spirit retains unbroken, and his limbs
 Unwearied, till both armies quit the field.
 Disperse then now the crowd, and bid prepare
 The morning meal; meantime to public view
 Let Agamemnon, King of men, display
 His costly gifts; that all the Greeks may see,
 And that thy heart within thee melt with joy:

190

And there in full assembly let him swear
 A solemn oath, that he hath ne'er approach'd
 The fair Briseis' bed, nor held with her
 Such intercourse as man with woman holds.
 Be thou propitious, and accept his oath.
 Then at a sumptuous banquet in his tent
 Let him receive thee; that thine honour due
 May nothing lack; and so, Atrides, thou
 Shalt stand in sight of all men clear of blame;
 For none can wonder that insulting speech

200

Should rouse the anger of a sceptred King."

To whom thus Agamemnon, King of men:
 " Son of Laertes, I accept thy speech
 With cordial welcome: all that thou hast said
 Is well and wisely spoken; for the oath,
 I am prepar'd, with willing mind, to swear;
 Nor in the sight of Heav'n will be forsworn.
 Let then Achilles here awhile remain,
 Though eager for the fray; ye too remain,
 Until the presents from my tent be brought,
 And we our solemn compact ratify.
 Then this command upon thyself I lay:
 That thou the noblest youths of all the Greeks
 Select, and bid them from my vessel bear
 The gifts, which to Achilles yesternight
 We promis'd, and withal the women bring;
 And let Talthybius through the host seek out
 A boar, for sacrifice to Jove and Sol."

210

Whom answer'd thus Achilles swift of foot:
 " Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
 These matters to some future time were best
 Deferr'd, some hour of respite from the fight,
 Of rage less fiercely burning in my breast;
 But slaughter'd now they lie, whom Priam's son,
 Hector, hath slain, by Jove to vict'ry led.
 Ye bid us take our food; if I might rule,
 I would to battle lead the sons of Greece,
 Unfed, and fasting; and at set of sun,
 Our shame aveng'd, an ample feast prepare;
 Till then, nor food nor drink shall pass my lips,
 My comrade slain; who pierc'd with mortal wounds,
 Turn'd tow'rd the doorway, lies within my tent,
 His mourning friends around; while there he lies,
 No thought have I for these or aught beside
 Save carnage, blood, and groans of dying men."

220

230

To whom Ulysses, sage in council, thus:
 " O son of Peleus, noblest of the Greeks,
 How far, Achilles, thou surpasses me
 In deeds of arms, I know; but thou must yield
 To me in counsel, for my years are more,
 And my experience greater far than thine:
 Then to my words incline a patient ear.
 Men soonest weary of battle, where the sword

240

The bloodiest harvest reaps; the lightest crop
 Of slaughter is where Jove inclines the scale,
 Dispenser, at his will, of human wars.
 The Greeks by fasting cannot mourn their dead;
 For day by day successive numbers fall;
 Where were the respite then from ceaseless fast?
 Behoves us bury out of sight our dead, 250
 Steeling our hearts, and weeping but a day;
 And we, the rest, whom cruel war hath spar'd,
 Should first with food and wine recruit our strength;
 Then, girding on our arms, the livelong day
 Maintain the war, unwearied; then let none
 Require a farther summons to the field;
 (And woe to him who loit'ring by the ships
 That summons hears;) but with united force
 Against the Trojans wake the furious war."
 He said, and call'd on noble Nestor's sons, 260
 On Melanippus, and Meriones,
 Thoas, and Lycomedes, Creon's son,
 And Meges, Phyleus' son; with these he sought
 The mighty monarch Agamemnon's tent.
 Soon as the word was giv'n, the work was done;
 Sev'n tripods brought they out, the promis'd gifts;
 Twelve horses, twenty caldrons glitt'ring bright;
 Sev'n beauteous women, skill'd in household cares,
 With whom, the eighth, the fair Briseis came. 270
 Ulysses led the way, and with him brought
 Ten talents full of gold; th' attendant youths
 The other presents bore, and in the midst
 Display'd before th' assembly: then uprose
 The monarch Agamemnon; by his side,
 With voice of godlike pow'r, Talthybius stood,
 Holding the victim: then Atrides drew
 The dagger, ever hanging at his side,
 Close by the scabbard of his mighty sword,
 And from the victim's head the bristles shore. 280
 With hands uplifted then to Jove he pray'd;
 While all around the Greeks in silence stood,
 List'ning, decorous, to the monarch's words,
 As looking up to Heav'n he made his pray'r:
 "Be witness, Jove, thou King of Gods, most high,
 And Sun, and Earth, and ye who vengeance wreak
 Beneath the earth on souls of men forsworn,

Furies! that never, or to love unchaste
 Soliciting, or otherwise, my hand
 Hath fair Briseis touch'd; but in my tent
 Still pure and undefil'd hath she remain'd: 290
 And if in this I be forsworn, may Heav'n
 With all the plagues afflict me, due to those
 Who sin by perjur'd oaths against the Gods."

Thus as he spoke, across the victim's throat
 He drew the pitiless blade; Talthylbius then
 To Ocean's hoary depths the carcase threw,
 Food for the fishes; then Achilles rose,
 And thus before th' assembled Greeks he spoke:

"O Father Jove, how dost thou lead astray
 Our human judgments! ne'er had Atreus' son 300
 My bosom fill'd with wrath, nor from my arms,
 To his own loss, against my will had torn
 The girl I lov'd, but that the will of Jove
 To death predestin'd many a valiant Greek.
 Now to the meal; anon the war renew."

This said, th' assembly he dismiss'd in haste,
 The crowd dispersing to their sev'ral ships;
 Upon the gifts the warlike Myrmidons
 Bestow'd their care, and bore them to the ships
 Of Peleus' godlike son; within the tent 310
 They laid them down, and there the women plac'd,
 While to the drove the followers led the steeds.
 Briseis, fair as golden Venus, saw
 Patroclus lying, pierc'd with mortal wounds,
 Within the tent; and with a bitter cry,
 She flung her down upon the corpse, and tore
 Her breast, her delicate neck, and beauteous cheeks;
 And, weeping, thus the lovely woman wail'd:

"Patroclus, dearly lov'd of this sad heart!
 When last I left this tent, I left thee full 320
 Of healthy life; returning now, I find
 Only thy lifeless corpse, thou Prince of men!
 So sorrow still, on sorrow heap'd, I bear.
 The husband of my youth, to whom my sire
 And honour'd mother gave me, I beheld
 Slain with the sword before the city walls:
 Three brothers, whom with me one mother bore,
 My dearly-lov'd ones, all were doom'd to death:
 Nor wouldst thou, when Achilles swift of foot

My husband slew, and royal Mynes' town
 In ruin laid, allow my tears to flow; 33°
 But thou wouldst make me (such was still thy speech)
 The wedded wife of Peleus' godlike son:
 Thou wouldst to Phthia bear me in thy ship,
 And there, thyself, amid the Myrmidons,
 Wouldst give my marriage feast; then, unconsol'd,
 I weep thy death, my ever-gentle friend!"

Weeping, she spoke; the women join'd her wail:
 Patroclus' death the pretext for their tears,
 But each in secret wept her private griefs. 34°

Around Achilles throng'd the elder men,
 Urging to eat; but he, with groans, refus'd:
 "I pray you, would you show your love, dear friends,
 Ask me not now with food or drink to appease
 Hunger or thirst; a load of bitter grief
 Weighs heavy on my soul; till set of sun
 Fasting will I remain, and still endure."

The other monarchs at his word withdrew:
 The two Atridæ, and Ulysses sage,
 And Nestor and Idomeneus remain'd, 35°
 And aged Phœnix, to divert his grief;
 But comfort none, save in the bloody jaws
 Of battle would he take; by mem'ry stirr'd,
 He heav'd a deep-drawn sigh, as thus he spoke:

"How oft hast thou, ill-fated, dearest friend,
 Here in this tent with eager zeal prepar'd
 The tempting meal, whene'er the sons of Greece
 In haste would arm them for the bloody fray!
 Now liest thou there, while I, for love of thee,
 From food and drink, before me plac'd, refrain: 36°
 For ne'er shall I again such sorrow know,
 Not though I heard of aged Peleus' death,
 Who now in Phthia mourns, with tender tears,
 His absent son; he on a foreign shore
 Is warring in that hateful Helen's cause;
 No, nor of his, who now in Scyros' isle
 Is growing up, if yet indeed he live,
 Young Neoptolemus, my godlike son.
 My hope had been indeed, that here in Troy,
 Far from the plains of Argos, I alone 37°
 Was doom'd to die; and that to Phthia thou,
 Return'd in safety, mightst my son convey

From Scyros home, and show him all my wealth,
 My spoils, my slaves, my lofty, spacious house.
 For Peleus or to death, methinks, e'en now
 Hath yielded, or, not far from death remov'd,
 Lives on in sorrow, bow'd by gloomy age,
 Expecting day by day the messenger
 Who bears the mournful tidings of my death."

Weeping, Achilles spoke; and with him wept 380
 The Elders; each to fond remembrance mov'd
 Of all that in his home himself had left.

The son of Saturn, pitying, saw their grief,
 And Pallas thus with wingèd words address'd:
 " My child, dost thou a hero's cause forsake,
 Or does Achilles claim no more thy care,
 Who sits in sorrow by the high-prow'd ships,
 Mourning his comrade slain; nor tastes of food,
 Wherewith the other Greeks their strength recruit?
 Then haste thee, and, with hunger lest he faint, 390
 Drop nectar and ambrosia on his breast."

His words fresh impulse gave to Pallas' zeal:
 Down, like the long-wing'd falcon, shrill of voice,
 Through the clear sky she swoop'd: the Greeks she found
 Arm'd for the fight; Achilles she approach'd,
 And nectar and ambrosia on his breast
 Distill'd, lest hunger should his strength subdue;
 Back to her mighty Father's ample house
 Returning, as from out the ships they pour'd.
 Thick as the snow-flakes that from Heav'n descend, 400
 Before the sky-born Boreas' chilling blast;
 So thick, outpouring from the ships, the stream
 Of helmets polish'd bright, and bossy shields,
 And breastplates firmly brac'd, and ashen spears:
 Their brightness flash'd to Heav'n; and laugh'd the Earth
 Beneath the brazen glare; loud rang the tramp
 Of armèd men: Achilles in the midst,
 The godlike chief, in dazzling arms array'd.
 His teeth were gnashing audibly; his eye
 Blaz'd with the light of fire; but in his heart 410
 Was grief unbearable; with furious wrath
 He burn'd against the Trojans, as he donn'd
 The heav'nly gifts, the work of Vulcan's hand.
 First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fix'd.
 Fasten'd with silver clasps; his breastplate next

Around his chest; and o'er his shoulders flung
 His silver-studded sword, with blade of brass;
 Then took his vast and weighty shield, whence gleam'd
 A light refulgent as the full-orb'd moon;
 Or as to seamen o'er the wave is borne 420
 The watchfire's light, which, high among the hills,
 Some shepherd kindles in his lonely fold:
 As they, reluctant, by the stormy winds,
 Far from their friends are o'er the waters driv'n;
 So from Achilles' shield, bright, richly wrought,
 The light was thrown. The weighty helm he rais'd,
 And plac'd it on his head; the plum'd helm
 Shone like a star; and wav'd the hairs of gold,
 Thick-set by Vulcan in the gleaming crest.
 Then all the arms Achilles prov'd, to know 430
 If well they fitted to his graceful limbs:
 Like wings, they seem'd to lift him from the ground.
 Last, from its case he drew his father's spear,
 Long, pond'rous, tough; not one of all the Greeks,
 None, save Achilles' self, could poise that spear;
 The far-fam'd Pelian ash, which to his sire,
 On Pelion's summit fell'd, to be the bane
 Of mighty chiefs, the Centaur Chiron gave.
 With care Automedon and Alcimus
 The horses yok'd, with collars fair attach'd: 440
 Plac'd in their mouths the bits, and pass'd the reins
 Back to the well-built car: Automedon
 Sprang on the car, with shining lash in hand:
 Behind, Achilles came, array'd for war,
 In arms all glitt'ring as the gorgeous sun,
 And loudly to his father's steeds he call'd:
 "Xanthus and Balius, noble progeny
 Of swift Podarge, now in other sort
 Back to the Grecian ranks in safety bear,
 When he shall quit the field, your charioteer; 450
 Nor leave him, as ye left Patroclus, slain."
 To whom in answer from beneath the yoke
 Xanthus, the noble horse, with glancing feet:
 Bowing his head the while, till all his mane
 Down from the yoke-band streaming, reach'd the ground;
 By Juno, white-arm'd Queen, with speech endued:
 "Yes, great Achilles, we this day again
 Will bear thee safely; but thy day of doom

Is nigh at hand; nor we shall cause thy death,
But Heav'n's high will, and Fate's imperious pow'r. 460
By no default of ours, nor lack of speed,
The Trojans stripp'd Patroclus of his arms:
The mighty God, fair-hair'd Latona's son,
Achiev'd his death, and Hector's vict'ry gain'd.
Our speed of foot may vie with Zephyr's breeze,
Deem'd swiftest of the winds; but thou art doom'd
To die, by force combin'd of God and man."

He said; his farther speech the Furies stay'd.
To whom in wrath Achilles swift of foot:
"Xanthus, why thus predict my coming fate? 470
It ill beseems thee! well I know myself
That I am fated here in Troy to die,
Far from my home and parents; yet withal
I cease not, till these Trojans from the field
Before me fly." He said, and to the front,
His war-cry shouting, urg'd his fiery steeds.

BOOK XX

ARGUMENT

By permission of Jupiter the Gods descend into the battle, and range themselves on either side respectively. Neptune rescues Æneas from death by the hand of Achilles, from whom Apollo, soon after, rescues Hector. Achilles slays many Trojans.

ROUND thee, Achilles, eager for the fray,
Stood thus accoutred, by their beakèd ships,
The sons of Greece; the Trojan host, oppos'd,
Stood on the sloping margin of the plain.
Then Jove to Themis gave command to call
The Gods to council from the lofty height
Of many-ridg'd Olympus; to the house
Of Jove she summon'd them from ev'ry side.
Thence of the Rivers, save Oceanus,
Not one was absent; nor of Nymphs, who haunt 10
Clear fount, or shady grove, or grassy mead.
They, at the Cloud-compeller's house arriv'd,
Within the polish'd corridor reclin'd,
Which Vulcan's cunning hand for Jove had built.
There were they gather'd in th' abode of Jove:
Nor did th' Earth-shaking Neptune slight the call,
But came from ocean's depths, and in the midst
He sat, and thus the will of Jove enquir'd:
"Why, Lord of lightning, hast thou summon'd here
The Gods to council? dost thou aught devise 20
Touching the Greeks and Trojans? who e'en now
Kindle anew, it seems, the blaze of war."
To whom the Cloud-compeller, answ'ring, thus:
"The purpose, Neptune, well thou know'st thyself
For which I call'd ye; true, they needs must die,
But still they claim my care; yet here will I
Upon Olympus' lofty ridge remain,
And view, serene, the combat; you, the rest,
Go, as you list, to Trojans or to Greeks,
And at your pleasure either party aid. 30
For if we leave Achilles thus alone

To fight against the Trojans, not an hour
 Will they before the son of Peleus stand.
 They dreaded him before; but now, I fear,
 Since rous'd to fury by his comrade's death,
 He ev'n in fate's despite may storm the wall."

Thus Saturn's son, and quenchless battle rous'd:
 The Gods, divided, hasten'd to the war:
 Juno and Pallas to the ships of Greece,
 With them th' Earth-shaker, and the helpful God, 40
 Hermes, for cunning subtleties unmatch'd;
 And Vulcan too, exulting in his strength,
 Yet halting, and on feeble limbs sustain'd.
 Mars of the glancing helm took part with Troy,
 And golden Phœbus with his locks unshorn,
 Latona too, and Dian, Archer-Queen,
 Xanthus, and Venus, laughter-loving dame.
 While from the fight of men the Gods abstain'd,
 High rose the Grecian vaunts, as, long withdrawn,
 Achilles on the field again appear'd; 50
 And ev'ry Trojan's limbs with terror quak'd,
 Trembling, as Peleus' godlike son they saw,
 In arms all-glitt'ring, fierce as blood-stain'd Mars.
 But when th' Immortals mingled in the throng,
 Then furious wax'd the spirit-stirring strife;
 Then Pallas rais'd her war-cry, standing now
 Beside the deep-dug trench, without the wall,
 Now shouting loud along the sounding beach.
 On th' other side, as with the tempest's roar,
 Mars to the Trojans shouted loud; one while 60
 From Ilium's topmost height; anon again
 From the fair hill, o'erhanging Simöis' stream.
 Thus, either side exciting to the fray,
 Th' immortal Gods unchain'd the angry war.
 Thunder'd on high the Sire of Gods and men
 With awful din; while Neptune shook beneath
 The boundless earth, and lofty mountain tops.
 The spring-abounding Ida quak'd and rock'd
 From her firm basis to her loftiest peak,
 And Troy's proud city, and the ships of Greece. 70
 Pluto, th' infernal monarch, heard alarm'd,
 And, springing from his throne, cried out in fear,
 Lest Neptune, breaking through the solid earth,
 To mortals and Immortals should lay bare

His dark and drear abode, of Gods abhorr'd.
 Such was the shock when Gods in battle met;
 For there to royal Neptune stood oppos'd
 Phœbus Apollo with his arrows keen;
 The blue-ey'd Pallas to the God of War;
 To Juno, Dian, heav'nly Archeress,
 Sister of Phœbus, golden-shafted Queen. 80
 Stout Hermes, helpful God, Latona fac'd;
 While Vulcan met the mighty rolling stream,
 Xanthus by Gods, by men Scamander call'd.
 Thus Gods encounter'd Gods: Achilles' soul
 Meantime was burning 'mid the throng to meet
 Hector, the son of Priam; with whose blood
 He long'd to glut th' insatiate Lord of War.
 Apollo then, the spirit-stirring God,
 Æneas mov'd Achilles to confront, 90
 And fill'd with courage high; and thus, the voice
 Assuming of Lycaon, Priam's son,
 Apollo, son of Jove, the chief address'd:
 " Æneas, prince and councillor of Troy,
 Where are the vaunts, which o'er the wine-cup late
 Thou mad'st amid th' assembled chiefs of Troy,
 That hand to hand thou wouldst Achilles meet? "
 To whom Æneas thus in answer spoke:
 " Why, son of Priam, urge me to contend,
 Against my will, with Peleus' mighty son? 100
 Not for the first time should I now engage
 Achilles swift of foot: I met him once,
 And fled before his spear, on Ida's hill,
 When on our herds he fell; Lyrnessus then
 He raz'd, and Pedasus; me Jove preserv'd,
 With strength endowing, and with speed of foot.
 Else had I fall'n beneath Achilles' hand,
 By Pallas aided; who before him moves,
 Light of his life, and guides his brazen spear
 Trojans and Leleges alike to slay. 110
 'Tis not in mortal man with him to fight,
 Whom still some God attends, and guards from harm;
 And, ev'n unaided, to the mark his spear
 Unerring flies, uncheck'd until it pierce
 A warrior's breast; yet if the Gods the scale
 Impartial held, all brass-clad as he is,
 O'er me no easy triumph should he gain."

To whom the King Apollo, son of Jove:
 " Brave chief, do thou too to th' immortal Gods
 Address thy pray'r; men say that thou art sprung 120
 From Venus, child of Jove; his mother owns
 A humbler origin; one born to Jove,
 The other to the aged Ocean God.
 On then with dauntless spear, nor be dismay'd
 By his high tone and vaunting menaces."

His words with courage fill'd the hero's breast,
 And on he sprang, in dazzling arms array'd;
 But not unmark'd of white-arm'd Juno pass'd,
 To meet Achilles, through the press of men,
 Who thus address'd the Gods, to council call'd: 130

" Neptune and Pallas both, bethink ye well
 What now should be our course; Æneas comes,
 In dazzling arms array'd, to meet in fight
 The son of Peleus; Phœbus sends him forth.
 Say, then, shall we, encount'ring, to retreat
 Perforce constrain him? or shall one of us
 Beside Achilles stand, and give him strength
 That he may nothing lack; and know himself
 By all the mightiest of th' immortal Gods
 Belov'd, and those how pow'rless, by whose aid 140
 The Trojans yet maintain defensive war?
 Therefore, to join the battle, came we all
 From high Olympus, that in this day's fight
 No ill befall him; though the time shall come
 For him to meet the doom, by fate decreed,
 When at his birth his thread of life was spun.
 But if Achilles from a voice divine
 Receive not this assurance, he may well
 Be struck with fear, if haply to some God
 He find himself oppos'd: 'tis hard for man 150
 To meet, in presence visible, a God."

To whom Earth-shaking Neptune thus replied:
 " Juno, thine anger carry not too far;
 It ill beseems thee. Not with my consent
 Shall we, the stronger far, provoke to arms
 The other Gods; but rather, from the field
 Retiring, let us from on high survey,
 To mortals left, the turmoil of the war.
 Should Mars or Phœbus then begin the fight,
 Or stay Achilles, and his arm restrain, 160

Then in the contest we too may engage;
 And soon, methinks, will they be fain to join,
 Driv'n from the field, the Synod of the Gods,
 Subdued perforce by our victorious hands."

The dark-hair'd monarch spoke; and led the way
 To the high wall, by Trojans built of old,
 With Pallas' aid, for godlike Hercules;

Within whose circle he might safety seek,
 When from the beach the monster of the deep
 Came, raging, to the plain; there Neptune sat,

170

And with him, th' other Gods, a veil of cloud
 Impenetrable around their shoulders spread.
 On th' other side, upon the fair hill's brow,
 Phœbus with Mars the fort-destroyer sat.
 On either side they sat, each facing each
 With hostile counsels; yet reluctant both
 To take th' initiative of ruthless war;

Till Jove, enthron'd on high, the signal gave.
 Then all the plain, with men and horses throng'd,
 The brazen gleam illumin'd; rang the earth

180

Beneath their feet, as to the battle-shock
 They rush'd; but in the midst, both hosts between,
 Eager for fight, stood forth two warriors bold,
 Proudly pre-eminent; Anchises' son
 Æneas, and Achilles' godlike might.

Æneas first with threat'ning mien advanc'd,
 Nodding his pond'rous helm; before his breast
 His shield he bore, and pois'd his brazen spear.
 Him met Achilles from th' opposing ranks;
 Fierce as a rav'ning lion, whom to slay

190

Pour forth the stalwart youths, th' united strength
 Of the rous'd village; he unheeding moves
 At first; but wounded by a jav'lin thrown
 By some bold youth, he turns, with gaping jaws,
 And frothing fangs, collecting for the spring,
 His breast too narrow for his mighty heart;

And with his tail he lashes both his flanks
 And sides, as though to rouse his utmost rage;
 Then on, in pride of strength, with glaring eyes
 He dashes, if some hunter he may slay,

200

Or in the foremost rank himself be slain.
 So mov'd his dauntless spirit Peleus' son
 Æneas to confront; when near they came,

Thus first Achilles, swift of foot, began:

“Æneas, why so far before the ranks
 Advanc'd? dost thou presume with me to fight?
 Perchance expecting that the throne of Troy
 And Priam's royal honours may be thine.
 Ev'n if thou slay me, deem not to obtain
 Such boon from Priam; valiant sons are his, 210
 And he not weak, but bears a constant mind.
 Or have the Trojans set apart for thee
 Some favour'd spot, the fairest of the land,
 Orchard or corn-field, shouldst thou work my death;
 Which thou shalt find, I trust, too hard a task?
 Already hast thou fled before my spear;
 Hast thou forgotten how amid thy herds
 Alone I found thee, and with flying foot
 Pursued thee down the steep of Ida's hill?
 Nor didst thou dare to turn, or pause in flight. 220
 Thou to Lyrnessus fledd'st; Lyrnessus I,
 With Pallas' aid and Jove's, assail'd and took:
 Their women thence, their days of freedom lost,
 I bore away, my captives; thee from death
 Jove and the other Gods defended then;
 But will not now bestow, though such thy hope,
 Their succour; then I warn thee, while 'tis time,
 Ere ill betide thee, to the gen'ral throng
 That thou withdraw, nor stand to me oppos'd:
 After th' event may ev'n a fool be wise.” 230

To whom in answer thus Æneas spoke:

“Achilles, think not me, as though a fool,
 To daunt with lofty speech; I too could well
 With cutting words, and insult, answer thee.
 Each other's race and parents well we know
 From tales of ancient days; although by sight
 Nor mine to thee, nor thine to me are known.
 To noble Peleus thou, 'tis said, wast born
 Of Thetis, fair-hair'd daughter of the sea; 240
 Of great Anchises, Heav'n-descended chief,
 I boast me sprung, to him by Venus borne.
 Of these shall one or other have this day
 To mourn their son; since not with empty words
 Shall thou and I from mortal combat part.
 But if thou farther wouldst enquire, and learn
 The race I spring from, not unknown to men,

By Dardanus, of cloud-compelling Jove
 Begotten, was Dardania peopled first,
 Ere sacred Ilium, populous city of men,
 Was founded on the plain; as yet they dwelt 250
 On spring-abounding Ida's lowest spurs.
 To Dardanus was Erichthonius born,
 Great King, the wealthiest of the sons of men;
 For him were pastur'd in the marshy mead,
 Rejoicing with their foals, three thousand mares;
 Them Boreas, in the pasture where they fed,
 Beheld, enamour'd; and amid the herd
 In likeness of a coal-black steed appear'd;
 Twelve foals, by him conceiving, they produc'd.
 These, o'er the teeming corn-fields as they flew, 260
 Skimm'd o'er the standing ears, nor broke the haulm;
 And, o'er wide Ocean's bosom as they flew,
 Skimm'd o'er the topmost spray of th' hoary sea.
 Again, to Erichthonius Tros was born,
 The King of Troy; three noble sons were his,
 Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymede;
 The fairest he of all the sons of men;
 Him, for his beauty, bore the Gods away,
 To minister as cup-bearer to Jove,
 And dwell amid th' Immortals: Ilus next 270
 Begot a noble son, Laomedon;
 Tithonus he, and Priam; Clytius,
 Lampus and Icetäon, plant of Mars;
 Capys, begotten of Assaracus,
 Begot Anchises, and Anchises me:
 To Priam godlike Hector owes his birth.
 Such is my race, and such the blood I boast;
 But Jove, at will, to mortals valour gives
 Or minishes; for he is Lord of all.
 Then cease we now, like babbling fools, to prate 280
 Here in the centre of the coming fight.
 Terms of reproach we both might find, whose weight
 Would sink a galley of a hundred oars;
 For glibly runs the tongue, and can at will
 Give utt'rance to discourse in ev'ry vein;
 Wide is the range of language; and such words
 As one may speak, another may return.
 What need that we should insults interchange?
 Like women, who some paltry quarrel wage,

Scolding and brawling in the public street, 290
 And in opprobrious terms their anger vent,
 Some true, some false; for so their rage suggests.
 With words thou shalt not turn me from the field,
 Till we have met in arms; then try we now
 Each other's prowess with our brazen spears."

He said, and hurl'd against the mighty shield
 His brazen spear; loud rang the weapon's point:
 And at arm's length Achilles held the shield
 With his broad hand, in fear that through its folds
 Æneas' spear would easy passage find; 300
 Blind fool! forgetful that the glorious gifts
 Bestow'd by Gods, are not with ease o'ercome,
 Nor yield before th' assaults of mortal men.
 So broke not through Æneas' sturdy spear,
 Stay'd by the golden plate, the gift of Heav'n;
 Yet through two plates it pass'd, but three remain'd,
 For five were in the shield by Vulcan wrought;
 Two were of brass, the inner two of tin,
 And one of gold, which stay'd the brazen spear.

Achilles threw in turn his pond'rous spear, 310
 And struck the circle of Æneas' shield
 Near the first rim, where thinnest lay the brass,
 And thinnest too th' o'erlying hide; right through
 The Pelian shaft was driv'n; wide gap'd the shield.
 Æneas crouch'd, in fear, as o'er his head
 He held his shield; the eager weapon pass'd
 Through both the circles of his ample shield,
 And in the ground, behind him, quiv'ring, stood.
 Escap'd the pond'rous weapon, sharpest pain
 Flashing across his eyes, in fear he stood, 320
 So close the spear had pass'd him; onward then,
 Drawing his trenchant blade, Achilles rush'd,
 With fearful shout; a rocky fragment then
 Æneas lifted up, a mighty mass,
 Which scarce two men, as men are now, could bear,
 But he, unaided, lifted it with ease.
 Then had Æneas, with the massive stone,
 Or on the helmet, or the shield, his death
 Averting, struck Achilles; and himself
 Had by the sword of Peleus' son been slain, 330
 Had not th' Earth-shaking God his peril seen,
 And to th' Immortals thus address'd his speech:

" Oh, woe is me for great Æneas' sake,
 Who, by Achilles slain, must visit soon
 The viewless shades; insensate, who relied
 On Phœbus' words; yet nought shall he avail
 From death to save him. Yet oh why should he,
 Blameless himself, the guilt of others rue?
 Who still his grateful sacrifice hath paid
 To all the Gods in wide-spread Heav'n who dwell. 340
 Let us then interpose to guard his life;
 Lest, if Achilles slay him, Saturn's son
 Be mov'd to anger; for his destiny
 Would have him live; lest, heirless, from the earth
 Should perish quite the race of Dardanus;
 By Saturn's son the best-belov'd of all
 His sons, to him by mortal women born.
 For Jove the race of Priam hath abhorr'd;
 But o'er the Trojans shall Æneas reign,
 And his sons' sons, through ages yet unborn." 350

Whom answer'd thus the stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n:

" Neptune, do thou determine for thyself
 Æneas to withdraw, or leave to fall,
 Good as he is, beneath Achilles' sword;
 But we before th' immortal Gods are bound,
 Both I and Pallas, by repeated oaths,
 Ne'er from his doom one Trojan life to save,
 Though to devouring flames a prey, all Troy
 Were blazing, kindled by the valiant Greeks."

Th' Earth-shaker heard; and through the fight he pass'd,
 And through the throng of spears, until he came 361
 Where great Achilles and Æneas stood.

Around the eyes of Peleus' son he spread
 A veil of mist; then from Æneas' shield
 The brass-tipp'd spear withdrawing, laid it down
 Before Achilles' feet; and lifting up
 Æneas, bore him high above the ground.
 O'er many a rank of warriors and of cars
 Æneas flew, supported by the God;
 Till to the field's extremest verge he came, 370
 Where stood the Caucons, arming for the war.
 There to Æneas, standing by his side,
 Th' Earth-shaker thus his wingèd words address'd:
 " Æneas, say what God has mov'd thee thus
 Against Achilles, reckless, to contend,

Thy stronger far, and dearer to the Gods?
 If e'er he cross thy path, do thou retire,
 Lest ev'n, despite of fate, thou find thy death.
 But when Achilles hath to fate succumb'd,
 Then, fearless, with the foremost join the fray: 380
 No other Greek shall bear away thy spoils."

Thus plainly warn'd, Æneas there he left.

Then from Achilles' eyes he purg'd the film:
 Astonish'd, he with eyes wide open gaz'd,
 As thus he commun'd with his mighty heart:

"O Heav'n, what marvel do mine eyes behold?
 My spear before me laid, and vanish'd he
 At whom I hurl'd it with intent to slay!
 Then is Æneas of th' immortal Gods
 In truth belov'd, though vain I deem'd his boast. 390

A curse go with him! yet methinks not soon
 Will he again presume to prove my might,
 Who gladly now in flight escapes from death.
 Then, to the valiant Greeks my orders giv'n,
 Let me some other Trojan's mettle prove."

Then tow'rd the ranks he sprang, each sev'ral man
 Exhorting: "From the Trojans, valiant Greeks,
 No longer stand aloof; but man to man
 Confront the foe, and nobly dare the fight.

'Twere hard for me, brave warrior though I be, 400
 To face such numbers, and to fight with all:
 Not Mars, nor Pallas, though immortal Gods,
 Could face, and vanquish, such a mighty mass.
 But what my single arm, and feet, and strength
 May profit, not a jot will I relax;
 Right through the ranks I mean to force my way;
 And small shall be that Trojan's cause for joy,
 Who comes within the compass of my spear."

Thus he, exhorting; Hector cheering on
 Meanwhile the Trojans, with assurance giv'n 410
 That he himself Achilles would confront.

"Ye valiant Trojans, fear not Peleus' son;
 I too in words could with the Gods contend,
 Though not in arms; so much the stronger they;
 Not all his words Achilles shall make good;
 Fulfilling some, in others he shall fail,
 His course midway arrested. Him will I
 Encounter, though his hands were hands of fire,

Of fire his hands, his strength as burnish'd steel."

Thus he, exhorting: with uplifted spears
 Advanc'd the Trojans; from the mingling hosts
 Loud rose the clamour; then at Hector's side
 Apollo stood, and thus address'd the chief:

"Hector, forbear Achilles to defy;
 And 'mid the crowd withdraw thee from the fray;
 Lest with the spear he slay thee, thrown from far,
 Or with the sword in combat hand to hand."

He said; and troubled by the heav'nly voice,
 Hector amid the throng of men withdrew.

Then, girt with might, amid the Trojans sprang,
 With fearful shouts, Achilles; first he slew
 Otryntes' son, Iphition, valiant chief

Of num'rous warriors; him a Naiad nymph,
 In Hyde's fertile vale, beneath the feet
 Of snow-clad Tmolus, to Otryntes bore;
 At him, as on he rush'd, Achilles hurl'd,
 And through his forehead drove his glitt'ring spear;
 The head was cleft in twain; thund'ring he fell,
 And o'er him thus Achilles made his boast:

"Son of Otryntes, lie thou there, of men
 The most vain-glorious; here thou find'st thy death,
 Far from thy place of birth, beside the lake
 Gygæan; there hadst thou thine heritage
 Of old, beside the fish-abounding stream
 Of Hyllus, and by Hermus' eddying flood."

Thus he, exulting: o'er Iphition's eyes
 Were spread the shades of death; his mangled corpse
 Was crush'd beneath the Grecian chariot wheels,
 In the first shock. Demoleon next he smote,
 A helpful aid in war, Antenor's son,
 Pierc'd through the temples, through the brass-bound
 helm;

Nor check'd the brazen helm the spear, whose point
 Went crashing through the bone, that all the brain
 Was shatter'd; onward as he rush'd, he fell.
 Then through the neck Hippodamas he smote,
 Flying before him, mounted on his car.
 Deep groan'd he, breathing out his soul, as groans
 A bull, by sturdy youths to th' altar dragg'd
 Of Neptune, King divine of Helice;
 Th' Earth-shaking God, well-pleas'd, the gift receives: 460

Ev'n with such groans his noble spirit fled.
 The godlike Polydore he next assail'd,
 The son of Priam; him his aged sire
 Would fain have kept at home, of all his sons
 At once the youngest and the best-belov'd;
 Among them all for speed of foot unmatch'd;
 Whose youthful folly, in the foremost ranks
 His speed displaying, cost him now his life.
 Him, as he darted by, Achilles' spear
 Struck through the centre of the back, where met 470
 The golden clasps that held the glitt'ring belt,
 And where the breastplate form'd a double guard:
 Right through his body pass'd the weapon's point;
 Groaning, he fell upon his knees; dark clouds
 O'erspread his eyes; supporting with his hand
 His wounded bowels, on the ground he writh'd.
 When Hector saw his brother Polydore
 Writhing in death, a mist o'erspread his eyes;
 Nor longer could he bear to stand aloof,
 But sprang to meet Achilles, flashing fire, 480
 His keen spear brandishing; at sight of him
 Up leap'd Achilles, and exulting cried:

"Lo, here the man who most hath wrung my soul,
 Who slew my lov'd companion; now, methinks,
 Upon the pass of war not long shall we
 Stand separate, nor each the other shun."

Then, with stern glance, to godlike Hector thus:
 "Draw near, and quickly meet thy doom of death."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm,
 Unterrified: "Achilles, think not me, 490
 As though a fool and ignorant of war,
 To daunt with lofty speech; I too could well
 With cutting words and insult answer thee.
 I know thee strong and valiant; and I know
 Myself to thee inferior; but th' event
 Is with the Gods; and I, if such their will,
 The weaker, with my spear may reach thy life:
 My point too hath, ere now, its sharpness prov'd."

He said, and, poising, hurl'd his pond'rous spear,
 Which from Achilles Pallas turn'd aside 500
 With lightest breath; and back to Hector sent,
 And laid before his feet; intent to slay,
 Onward Achilles rush'd, with fearful shout;

But Phœbus Hector from the field convey'd,
 (As Gods can only,) veil'd in thickest cloud.
 Thrice Peleus' godlike son, with brazen spear,
 His onset made; thrice struck the misty cloud;
 But when, with pow'r as of a God, he made
 His fourth essay, in fury thus he cried:

“ Yet once again, vile hound, hast thou escap'd; 510
 Thy doom was nigh, but thee thy God hath sav'd,
 Phœbus, to whom, amid the clash of spears,
 Well mayst thou pray! We yet shall meet again;
 When I shall end thee, if a guardian God
 I too may claim; meanwhile, from thee I turn,
 And others seek on whom my hap may light.”

He said, and drove through Dryops' neck his spear,
 And stretch'd him at his feet, and pass'd him by.
 Next with his spear he struck below the knee
 Philetor's son, Demuchus, stout and tall, 520
 And check'd his forward course; then rushing on
 Dealt with his mighty sword the mortal blow.
 The sons of Bias next, Laögonus

And Dardanus, he hurl'd from off their car,
 One with the spear, and one by sword-stroke slain.
 Tros too he slew, Alastor's son, who came
 To meet him, and embrace his knees, and pray
 To spare his life, in pity of his youth:

Little he knew how vain would be his pray'r;
 For not of temper soft, nor mild of mood 530
 Was he, but sternly fierce; and as he knelt

And clasp'd his knees, and would his pray'r prefer,
 Achilles clove him with his mighty sword,
 Gash'd through the liver; as from out the wound

His liver dropp'd, the dark blood gushing forth
 His bosom fill'd, and darkness clos'd his eyes,
 As ebb'd his life away. Then through the ear

Mulius he thrust; at th' other ear came forth
 The brazen point. Echeclus next he met,

Son of Agenor, and his hilted sword 540
 Full on the centre of his head let fall.

The hot blood dy'd the blade; the darkling shades
 Of death, and rig'rous fate, his eyes o'erspread.

Next, where the tendons bind the elbow-joint,
 The brazen spear transfix'd Deucalion's arm;
 With death in prospect, and disabled arm

He stood, till on his neck Achilles' sword
 Descending, shar'd, and flung afar, both head
 And helmet; from the spine's dissever'd joints
 The marrow flow'd, as stretch'd in dust he lay. 550
 The noble son of Peireus next he slew,
 Rigmus, who came from Thracia's fertile plains;
 Him through the waist he struck, the brazen spear
 Plung'd in his bowels; from the car he fell;
 And as Areithöus, his charioteer,
 His horses turn'd, Achilles through the neck
 His sharp spear thrusting, hurl'd him to the ground,
 The startled steeds in wild confusion thrown.
 As rage the fires amid the wooded glen
 Of some parch'd mountain's side, and fiercely burns 560
 The copse-wood dry, while eddying here and there
 The flames are whirl'd before the gusty wind;
 So fierce Achilles rag'd, on ev'ry side
 Pursuing, slaught'ring; reek'd the earth with blood.
 As when upon a well-roll'd threshing floor,
 Two sturdy-fronted steers, together yok'd,
 Tread the white barley out; beneath their feet
 Fast flies the grain out-trodden from the husk;
 So by Achilles driv'n, his flying steeds
 His chariot bore, o'er bodies of the slain 570
 And broken bucklers trampling; all beneath
 Was splash'd with blood the axle, and the rails
 Around the car, as from the horses' feet
 And from the fellows of the wheels were thrown
 The bloody gouts; and onward still he press'd,
 Panting for added triumphs, deeply dyed
 With gore and carnage his unconquer'd hands.

BOOK XXI

ARGUMENT

ACHILLES having separated the Trojans, and driven one part of them to the city and the other into the Scamander, takes twelve young men alive, his intended victims to the manes of Patroclus. The river overflowing his banks with purpose to overwhelm him, is opposed by Vulcan, and gladly relinquishes the attempt. The battle of the Gods ensues. Apollo, in the form of Agenor, decoys Achilles from the town, which in the meantime the Trojans enter and shut the gates against him.

BUT when they came to eddying Xanthus' ford,
Fair-flowing stream, born of immortal Jove,
Achilles cut in twain the flying host;
Part driving tow'rd the city, o'er the plain,
Where on the former day the routed Greeks,
When Hector rag'd victorious, fled amain.
On, terror-struck, they rush'd; but Juno spread,
To baffle their retreat, before their path,
Clouds and thick darkness: half the fugitives
In the deep river's silv'ry eddies plung'd: 10
With clamour loud they fell; the torrent roar'd;
The banks around re-echoed; here and there,
They, with the eddies wildly struggling, swam.
As when, pursued by fire, a hov'ring swarm
Of locusts riverward direct their flight,
And, as th' insatiate flames advance, they cow'r
Amid the waters; so a mingled mass
Of men and horses, by Achilles driv'n,
The deeply-whirling stream of Xanthus chok'd.
His spear amid the tamarisks on the bank 20
The hero left; on savage deeds intent,
Arm'd with his sword alone, a God in pow'r,
He sprang amid the torrent; right and left
He smote; then fearful rose the groans of men
Slain with the sword; the stream ran red with blood.
As fishes, flying from a dolphin, crowd
The shoal recesses of some open bay,
In fear, for whom he catches he devours;

So crouch'd the Trojans in the mighty stream
 Beneath the banks; and when at length his hand 30
 Wearied of slaughter, from the stream, alive,
 He dragg'd twelve youths, whose forfeit lives should be
 The bloody fine for slain Patroclus paid.

Helpless from fear, as fawns, he brought them forth;
 Their hands secur'd behind them with the belts
 Which o'er their shirts of twisted mail they wore,
 And bade his comrades lead them to the ships.

Then on again he dash'd, athirst for blood;
 And first encounter'd, flying from the stream,
 Lycaon, Priam's son; him once before 40
 He by a nightly onslaught had surpris'd,
 And from his father's vineyard captive borne:
 Where, as he cut, to form his chariot rail,
 A fig-tree's tender shoots, unlook'd-for ill
 O'ertook him in the form of Peleus' son.

Thence in his ship to Lemnos' thriving isle
 He bore him, ransom'd there by Jason's son.

His Imbrian host, Eëtion, set him free
 With lib'ral gifts, and to Arisba sent:

Escaping thence, he reach'd his native home. 50
 Twelve days save one, rejoicing, with his friends
 He spent, return'd from Lemnos: fate, the twelfth,
 Again consign'd him to Achilles' hands,
 From him, reluctant, to receive his death.

Him when Achilles, swift of foot, beheld,
 No spear in hand, of helm and shield bereft,
 All flung in haste away, as from the stream,
 Reeking with sweat, and faint with toil, he fled,
 He commun'd, wrathful, with his mighty heart:

“Ye Gods, what marvel do mine eyes behold! 60
 Methinks the valiant Trojans slain by me
 Ere long will from the realms of darkness rise;
 Since, death escaping, but to slav'ry sold
 In Lemnos' isle, this fellow hath return'd,
 Despite the hoary sea's impediment,
 Which many a man against his will hath stay'd:
 Now shall he taste my spear, that I may see
 If thence too he return, or if the earth
 May keep him safe, which ev'n the strongest holds.”

Thus, as he stood, he mus'd; but all aghast 70
 Approach'd Lycaon; and would fain have clasp'd

The Hero's knees; for longingly he sought
 Escape from bitter death and evil fate.
 Achilles rais'd his spear, in act to strike;
 He, stooping, ran beneath, and clasp'd his knees;
 Above his back the murd'rous weapon pass'd,
 And in the earth was fix'd: one suppliant hand
 Achilles' knees embrac'd; the other held,
 With unrelaxing grasp, the pointed spear;
 As he with wingèd words, imploring, spoke: 80
 " I clasp thy knees, Achilles! look then down
 With pity on my woes; and recognise,
 Illustrious chief, a suppliant's sacred claim:
 For in thy tent I first broke bread, that day,
 When, in my father's fruitful vineyard seiz'd,
 I was thy captive, and to slav'ry sold,
 Far from my sire and friends, in Lemnos' isle.
 A hundred oxen were my ransom then;
 At thrice so much I now would buy my life.
 This day is but the twelfth, since, sorely tried 90
 By lengthen'd suffering, back to Troy I came.
 Now to thy hands once more my cruel fate
 Consigns me; surely by the wrath of Jove
 Pursued, who gives me to thy pow'r again.
 Me, doom'd to early death, my mother bore,
 Old Altes' daughter, fair Læothœ;
 Altes, who rul'd the warlike Leleges,
 In lofty Pedasus, by Satnõis' stream.
 His child of Priam's many wives was one;
 Two sons she bore, and both by thee must die. 100
 Already one, the godlike Polydore,
 Amid the foremost ranks thy spear hath slain;
 And now my doom is near; from thee to fly,
 Since evil fate hath plac'd me in thy hands,
 I may not hope; yet thus much let me say,
 And weigh it in thy mind, to spare my life:
 I come not of that womb which Hector bore,
 Who slew thy comrade, gentle, kind, and brave."
 Thus Priam's noble son, imploring, spoke;
 But stern the answer fell upon his ear: 110
 " Thou fool! no more to me of ransom prate!
 Before Patroclus met the doom of death,
 To spare the Trojans still my soul inclin'd;
 And many captives, ta'en alive, I sold;

But from henceforth, before the walls of Troy,
 Not one of all the Trojans, whom the Gods
 May to my hands deliver, least of all
 A son of Priam, shall escape the death.
 Thou too, my friend, must die: why vainly wail?
 Dead is Patroclus too, thy better far. 120
 Me too thou see'st, how stalwart, tall, and fair,
 Of noble sire, and Goddess-mother born:
 Yet must I yield to death and stubborn fate,
 Whene'er, at morn, or noon, or eve, the spear
 Or arrow from the bow may reach my life."

He said; and sank Lycaon's limbs and heart;
 He loos'd the spear, and sat, with both his hands
 Uprais'd, imploring; but Achilles drew,
 And on his neck beside the collar-bone
 Let fall his trenchant sword; the two-edg'd blade 130
 Was buried deep; prone on the earth he lay;
 Forth gush'd the crimson blood, and dyed the ground.

Him, dragging by the feet, Achilles threw
 In the mid stream, and thus with vaunting speech:

"Lie there amid the fishes, who shall cleanse,
 But not with kindly thought, thy gory wounds:
 O'er thee, extended on thy bier, shall rise
 No mother's wail; Scamander's eddying stream
 Shall to the sea's broad bosom roll thee down;
 And, springing through the darkly rippling wave, 140
 Fishes shall rise, and banquet on thy flesh.
 On now the work of death! till, flying ye,
 And slaught'ring I, we reach the city wall.
 Nor this fair-flowing, silver-eddying stream,
 Shall aught avail ye, though to him ye pay
 In sacrifice the blood of countless bulls,
 And living horses in his waters sink.
 Ye all shall perish, till Patroclus' death
 Be fully aveng'd, and slaughter of the Greeks,
 Whom, in my absence, by the ships ye slew." 150
 He said: the mighty River at his words
 Indignant chaf'd, and ponder'd in his mind
 How best to check Achilles' warlike toil,
 And from destruction guard the Trojan host.

Meantime Achilles with his pond'rous spear
 Asteropæus, son of Pelegon,
 Assail'd with deadly purpose; Pelegon

To broadly-flowing Axius ow'd his birth,
 The River-God commingling with the blood
 Of Peribœa, daughter eldest born 160

Of Accessamenus: on him he sprang;
 He, from the river rising, stood oppos'd,
 Two lances in his hand; his courage rous'd
 By Xanthus, who, indignant, saw his stream
 Polluted by the blood of slaughter'd youths,
 By fierce Achilles' hand, unpitying, slain.
 When near the warriors, each to other, came,
 Achilles, swift of foot, took up the word:

“What man, and whence art thou, who dar'st to stand
 Oppos'd to me? of most unhappy sires 170
 The children they, who my encounter meet!”

To whom th' illustrious son of Pelegon:
 “Great son of Peleus, why enquire my race?
 From far Pæonia's fertile fields I come,
 The leader of the long-spear'd Pæon host.
 Ten days have pass'd since I to Ilium came.
 From widely-flowing Axius my descent,
 Axius, the purest stream on earth that flows,
 He Pelegon begot, the spear-renown'd;
 Of Pelegon I boast me sprung; and now 180
 Address thee, brave Achilles, to the fight.”

Threat'ning he spoke: Achilles rais'd on high
 The Pelian spear; but, ambidexter, he
 From either hand at once a jav'lin launch'd.
 One struck, but pierc'd not through, the mighty shield,
 Stay'd by the golden plate, the gift of Heav'n:
 Achilles' right fore-arm the other graz'd:
 Forth gush'd the crimson blood; but, glancing by,
 And vainly longing for the taste of flesh,
 The point behind him in the earth was fix'd. 190

Then at Asteropæus in his turn
 With deadly intent the son of Peleus threw
 His straight-directed spear; his mark he miss'd
 But struck the lofty bank, where, deep infix'd
 To half its length, the Pelian ash remain'd.
 Then from beside his thigh Achilles drew
 His trenchant blade, and, furious, onward rush'd;
 While from the cliff Asteropæus strove
 In vain, with stalwart hand, to wrench the spear.
 Three times he shook it with impetuous force, 200

Three times relax'd his grasp; a fourth attempt
 He made to bend and break the sturdy shaft;
 But him, preventing, Peleus' godlike son
 With deadly stroke across the belly smote,
 And gush'd his bowels forth; upon the ground
 Gasping he lay, and darkness seal'd his eyes.
 Then on his breast Achilles sprang, and stripp'd
 His armour off, and thus with vaunting speech:
 "So lie thou there! 'tis hard for thee to fight,
 Though river-born, against the progeny 210
 Of mighty Jove; a widely-flowing stream
 Thou claim'st as author of thy parentage;
 My high descent from Jove himself I boast.
 My father Peleus, son of Æacus,
 Reigns o'er the num'rous race of Myrmidons;
 The son of Jove himself was Æacus.
 High o'er all rivers, that to th' ocean flow,
 Is Jove exalted; and in like degree
 Superior is his race in pow'r to theirs.
 A mighty River hast thou here at hand, 220
 If that might aught avail thee; but his pow'r
 Is impotent to strive with Saturn's son.
 With him, not Achelöus, King of streams,
 Presumes to vie; nor ev'n the mighty strength
 Of deeply-flowing, wide Oceanus;
 From whom all rivers, all the boundless sea,
 All fountains, all deep wells derive their source,
 Yet him appals the lightning bolt of Jove,
 And thunder, pealing from the vault of Heav'n."
 He said, and from the cliff withdrew his spear. 230
 Him left he lifeless there upon the sand
 Extended; o'er him the dark waters wash'd,
 And eels and fishes, thronging, gnaw'd his flesh.
 Then 'mid the Pæons' plumèd host he rush'd,
 Who fled along the eddy stream, when him,
 Their bravest in the stubborn fight, they saw
 Slain by the sword and arm of Peleus' son.
 Thersilochus and Mydon then he slew,
 Mnesus and Thrasius and Astypylus,
 Ænius and Ophelestes; and yet more 240
 Had been the slaughter by Achilles wrought,
 But from his eddy depths, in human form,
 With wrathful tone the mighty River spoke:

" In strength, Achilles, and in deeds of arms,
 All mortals thou surpassest; for the Gods
 Themselves attend thee, and protect from harm;
 If Saturn's son have giv'n thee utterly
 The Trojans to destroy, yet, ere thou slay,
 Far from my waters drive them o'er the plain;
 For now my lovely stream is fill'd with dead; 250
 Nor can I pour my current to the sea,
 With floating corpses chok'd, whilst thou pursuest
 The work of death, insatiate: stay thy hand!
 With horror I behold thee, mighty chief! "

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot:
 " Be it as thou wilt, Scamander, Heav'n-born stream;
 Yet cease I not to slay until I drive
 These vaunting Trojans to their walls, and prove
 The force of Hector, if, in single fight,
 I be by him, or he by me, subdued." 260

He said, and fiercely on the Trojans rush'd,
 A God in might! to Phœbus then his speech
 The deeply-eddying River thus address'd:

" God of the silver bow, great son of Jove,
 Obey'st thou thus the will of Saturn's son,
 Who charg'd thee by the Trojans still to stand,
 And aid their cause, till ev'ning's late approach
 Should cast its shadows o'er the fertile earth? "

Thus as he spoke, from off the lofty bank
 Achilles springing in mid current plung'd; 270
 Then high the swelling stream, tumultuous, rose
 In all its angry flood; and with a roar
 As of a bellowing bull, cast forth to land
 The num'rous corpses by Achilles slain;
 And many living, in his cavern'd bed,
 Conceal'd behind the whirling waters sav'd.
 Fierce, round Achilles, rose the boiling wave,
 And on his shield descending, drove him down;
 Nor might he keep his foothold; but he grasp'd
 A lofty elm, well-grown, which from the cliff 280
 Uprooted, all the bank had torn away,
 And with its tangled branches check'd the flow
 Of the fair river, which with all its length
 It bridg'd across; then, springing from the deep,
 Swiftly he fled in terror o'er the plain.
 Nor ceas'd the mighty River, but pursued,

With darkly-ruffling crest, intent to stay
 Achilles' course, and save the Trojan host.
 Far as a jav'lin's flight he rush'd, in speed
 Like the dark hunter eagle, strongest deem'd, 290
 And swiftest wing'd of all the feather'd race.
 So on he sped; loud rattled on his breast
 His brazen armour, as before the God,
 Cow'ring, he fled; the God behind him still
 With thund'ring sound pursued. As when a man
 From some dark-water'd spring through trenches leads,
 'Mid plants and gardens, th' irrigating stream,
 And, spade in hand, th' appointed channel clears:
 Down flows the stream anon, its pebbly bed
 Disturbing; fast it flows with bubbling sound, 300
 Down the steep slope, o'ertaking him who leads.
 Achilles so th' advancing wave o'ertook,
 Though great his speed; but man must yield to Gods.
 Oft as Achilles, swift of foot, essay'd
 To turn and stand, and know if all the Gods,
 Who dwell in Heav'n, were leagued to daunt his soul;
 So oft the Heav'n-born River's mighty wave
 Above his shoulders dash'd; in deep distress
 He sprang on high; then rush'd the flood below,
 And bore him off his legs, and wore away 310
 The soil beneath his feet; then, groaning, thus,
 As up to Heav'n he look'd, Achilles cried:
 "O Father Jove, will none of all the Gods
 In pity save me from this angry flood?
 Content, thereafter, would I meet my fate.
 Of all the pow'rs of Heav'n, my mother most
 Hath wrong'd me, who hath buoy'd me up with hope
 Delusive, that, before the walls of Troy,
 I should by Phœbus' swift-wing'd arrows fall.
 Would that by Hector's hand 'twere mine to die, 320
 The bravest of their brave! a warrior so
 Were by a warrior slain! now am I doom'd
 Ignobly here to sink, the mighty flood
 O'erwhelming me, like some poor shepherd lad,
 Borne down in crossing by a wintry brook."
 He said; and quickly, cloth'd in mortal form,
 Neptune and Pallas at his side appear'd;
 With cheering words they took him by the hand,
 And thus th' Earth-shaking God his speech began:

" Achilles, fear not thou, nor be dismay'd; 33°
 Such pow'rful aid, by Jove's consent, we bring,
 Pallas and I, from Heav'n; 'tis not decreed
 That thou shouldst by the River be o'erwhelm'd;
 He shall retire ere long, and thou shalt see;
 And more, if thou wilt hear, we undertake
 That from the war thine arm shall not be stay'd,
 Till thou shalt drive beneath the walls of Troy
 The crowd of flying Trojans; thou thyself
 Shalt Hector slay, and safe regain the ships:
 Such high renown we give thee to achieve." 34°

They to the other Gods, this said, return'd;
 He, greatly strengthen'd by the voice divine,
 Press'd onwards to the plain; the plain he found
 All flooded o'er; and, floating, armour fair,
 And many a corpse of men in battle slain;
 Yet onward, lifting high his feet, he press'd
 Right tow'rd the stream; nor could the mighty stream
 Check his advance, such vigour Pallas gave;
 Nor did Scamander yet his fury stay,
 But fiercer rose his rage; and rearing high 35°
 His crested wave, to Simöis thus he cried:

" Dear brother, aid me with united force
 This mortal's course to check; he, unrestrain'd,
 Will royal Priam's city soon destroy,
 Nor will the Trojans his assault endure.
 Haste to the rescue then, and from their source
 Fill all thy stream, and all thy channels swell;
 Rouse thy big waves, and roll a torrent down
 Of logs and stones, to whelm this man of might,
 Who triumphs now, and bears him as a God. 36°
 Nought shall his strength or beauty then avail,
 Or gallant arms, beneath the waters sunk,
 Deep buried in the mud: himself will I
 In sand imbed, and o'er his corpse a pile
 Of shingly gravel heap; nor shall the Greeks
 Be able to collect his bones, encas'd
 By me so deep in slime. His monument
 They here may raise; but when they celebrate
 His fun'ral rites, no mound will he require."

He said; and on Achilles, from on high 37°
 Came boiling, rushing down, with thund'ring roar,
 With foam and blood and corpses intermix'd.

High rose the Heav'n-born River's darkling wave,
 And bore Achilles downward; then in fear
 Lest the broad waters of the eddying stream
 Should quite o'erwhelm him, Juno cried aloud,
 And Vulcan thus, her son, in haste address'd:

“Up, Vulcan; up, my son; for we had deem'd
 That eddying Xanthus stood to thee oppos'd:
 Haste thee to aid; thy fiery strength display;
 While from the sea I call the stormy blast
 Of Zephyr and brisk Notus, who shall drive
 The raging flames ahead, and burn alike
 The Trojans and their arms: do thou the while
 Burn down the trees on Xanthus' banks; himself
 Assail with fire, nor by his honey'd words
 Nor by his menaces be turn'd aside;
 Nor, till thou hear my voice, restrain thy pow'r;
 Then stay the raging flames' unwearied course.”

380

Thus Juno spoke; and Vulcan straight prepar'd
 The heav'nly fire; and first upon the plain
 The flames he kindled, and the dead consum'd,
 Who lay, promiscuous, by Achilles slain:
 The plain was dried, and stay'd the wat'ry flood,
 As when the breath of Boreas quickly dries
 In Autumn-time a newly-water'd field,
 The tiller's heart rejoicing: so was dried
 The spacious plain; then he, the dead consum'd,
 Against the river turn'd the fiery glare:

390

Burnt were the willows, elms, and tamarisk shrubs,
 The lotus, and the reeds, and galingal,
 Which by the lovely river grew profuse.

400

The eels and fishes, 'mid the eddying whirl,
 'Mid the clear wave were hurrying here and there,
 In dire distress from Vulcan's fiery breath:
 Scorch'd by the flames, the mighty River spoke:

“Vulcan, no God against thy pow'r can stand,
 Nor with thy fiery flames will I contend;
 Restrain thy wrath; though Peleus' godlike son
 Should from their city drive the Trojans straight,
 With rival parties what concern have I?”

410

All scorch'd he spoke; his fair stream bubbling up,
 As when a caldron, on a blazing fire,
 Fill'd with the melting fat of well-fed swine,
 Boils up within, and bubbles all around,

With well-dried wood beneath, so bubbling up
 The waters of the lovely River boil'd:
 Nor onward would he flow, but check'd his course,
 By the hot blast o'er-borne, and fiery strength
 Of skilful Vulcan; and to Juno thus, 420
 Imploring, he his wingèd words address'd:

“Juno, what cause impels thy son, my stream,
 O'er all the rest, to visit with his wrath?
 Ev'n less than others who the Trojans aid,
 Have I offended; yet at thy command
 Will I withdraw; but bid that he too cease;
 And this I swear, no Trojan more to save,
 Though to devouring flames a prey, all Troy
 Were blazing, kindled by the valiant Greeks.”

This when the white-arm'd Goddess Juno heard, 430
 To Vulcan straight she thus address'd her speech:
 “Vulcan, my glorious son, restrain thy hand:
 In mortal men's behalf, it is not meet
 To press thus hardly an Immortal God.”

She said, and Vulcan stay'd his fiery strength,
 And, back returning, in his wonted bed
 Flow'd the fair River. Xanthus thus subdued,
 These two their warfare ceas'd, by Juno check'd,
 Despite her wrath; but 'mid the other Gods
 Arose contention fierce, and discord dire, 440
 Their warring passions rous'd on either side.
 With fearful crash they met: the broad Earth groan'd;
 Loud rang the Heav'n as with a trumpet's sound:
 Jove, on Olympus' height, the tumult heard,
 And in his heart he laugh'd a joyous laugh,
 To see the Gods in angry battle met.

Not long they stood aloof, led on by Mars
 The buckler-breaker, who to Pallas first,
 Poising his spear, his bitter speech address'd:

“What dost thou here, thou saucy jade, to war 450
 The Gods exciting, over-bold of mood,
 Led by thy haughty spirit? dost thou forget
 How thou the son of Tydeus, Diomed,
 Didst urge against me, and with visible spear
 Direct his aim, and aid to wound my flesh?
 For all I suffer'd then, thou now shalt pay.”

Thus as he spoke, he struck the tassell'd shield,
 Awful to view, which not the lightning bolt

Of Jove himself could pierce: the blood-stain'd Mars
Against it thrust in vain his pond'rous spear. 460

The Goddess stoop'd, and in her ample hand
Took up a stone, that lay upon the plain,
Dark, rugged, vast, which men of elder days
Had set to mark the limits of their land.

Full on the neck of Mars she hurl'd the mass,
His limbs relaxing: o'er sev'n hundred feet
Prostrate he lay, his hair defil'd with dust:
Loud rang his armour; and with scornful smile
Pallas address'd him thus with vaunting speech:

“ Fool, hast thou yet to learn how mightier far 470
My strength than thine, that me thou dar'st to meet?
Bear thus the burthen of thy mother's curse,
Who works thee harm, in wrath that thou the Greeks
Deserting, aid'st the haughty Trojans' cause.”

She said, and turn'd away her piercing glance:
Him, deeply groaning, scarce to life restor'd,
Jove's daughter Venus taking by the hand,
Led from the field; which when the white-arm'd Queen
Beheld, in haste to Pallas thus she cried:

“ O Heav'n, brave child of ægis-bearing Jove, 480
Undaunted! lo, again this saucy jade
Amid the press, the bane of mortals, Mars
Leads from the field; but haste thee in pursuit.”

Thus Juno: Pallas hasten'd in pursuit
Well pleas'd; and Venus with her pow'rful hand
Assailing, struck upon the breast; at once
The Goddess' courage and her limbs gave way.
There on the ground the two together lay,
While Pallas o'er them thus with vaunting speech:

“ Would all were such, who aid the Trojan cause, 490
As valiant and as stout as Venus proves,
Who brings her aid to Mars, confronting me;
Then had our warlike labours long been o'er,
And Ilium's strong-built citadel o'erthrown.”

Thus Pallas spoke: the white-arm'd Goddess smil'd,
And to Apollo thus th' Earth-shaker spake:

“ Phœbus, why stand we idly thus aloof?
The war begun by others, 'tis not met;
And shame it were, that to Olympus height
And to the brazen-floor'd abode of Jove 500
We two without a contest should return.

Thou then begin, as younger: 'twere not well
 For me, in age and practice more advanc'd.
 Feeble of soul, how senseless is thy heart!
 Hast thou forgotten all the cruel wrongs
 We two, alone of all th' Immortals, bore,
 When here, in Ilium, for a year, we serv'd,
 By Jove's command, the proud Laomedon,
 For promis'd hire; and he our tasks assign'd?
 His fortress, and a wall both broad and fair 510
 I built, the town's impregnable defence;
 While thou didst on his plodding herds attend,
 In many-crested Ida's woody glens.

But when the joyous seasons, in their course,
 Had brought our labour's term, the haughty King
 Denied our guerdon, and with threats dismiss'd.
 Bound hand and foot, he threaten'd thee to send
 And sell to slav'ry in the distant isles,
 And with the sword cut off the ears of both.
 So in indignant sorrow we return'd, 520
 Robb'd of the hire he promis'd, but denied.
 For this thy favour dost thou show to Troy;
 And dost not rather join thy force to ours,
 That down upon their knees the Trojans all
 Should perish, with their babes and matrons chaste."

Whom answer'd thus the far-destroying King:
 "Earth-shaking God, I should not gain with thee
 Th' esteem of wise, if I with thee should fight
 For mortal men; poor wretches, who like leaves
 Flourish awhile, and eat the fruits of earth, 530
 But, sapless, soon decay: from combat then
 Refrain we, and to others leave the strife."

He turn'd, thus saying: for he deem'd it shame
 His father's brother to assail in arms;
 But him his sister, Goddess of the chase,
 Rebuk'd, and thus with scornful speech address'd:
 "Fliest thou, Apollo? and to Neptune leav'st
 The triumph and the fruitless victory?
 Why o'er thy shoulder hangs thine idle bow?
 Ne'er in our father's halls again, as erst 540
 Among th' Immortals, let me hear thee boast
 How thou with Neptune wouldst in arms contend."

Thus she; Apollo answer'd not a word;
 But Jove's imperial consort, fill'd with wrath,

Assail'd with bitter words the Archer-Queen.

“ How canst thou dare, thou saucy minx,¹ to stand
Oppos'd to me, too great for thine assault,
Despite thy bow? though Jove hath giv'n thee pow'r
O'er feeble women, whom thou wilt, to slay,
Ev'n as a lion; better were't for thee 550
To chase the mountain beasts and flying hinds,
Than thy superiors thus to meet in arms.
But since thou dar'st confront me, thou shalt know
And feel how far my might surpasses thine.”

She said; and with the left hand both the wrists
Of Dian grasping, with her ample right
The bow and quiver from her shoulders tore;
And with them, as she turn'd away her head,
With scornful laughter buffeted her ears:
The arrows keen were scatter'd on the ground: 560
Weeping, the Goddess fled; as flies a dove
The hawk's pursuit, and in a hollow rock
Finds refuge, doom'd not yet to fall a prey;
So, weeping, Dian fled, and left her bow.

Then Hermes to Latona thus: “ With thee
I strive not; shame it were to meet in fight
A consort of the cloud-compelling Jove.
Freely amid th' Immortals make thy boast,
That by thy prowess thou hast vanquish'd me.”

Thus he: Latona gather'd up the bow, 570
And fallen arrows, scatter'd here and there
Amid the whirling dust; then, these regain'd,
Following her daughter, from the field withdrew.
Meanwhile to high Olympus fled the Maid,
And to the brazen-floor'd abode of Jove.
There, weeping, on her father's knees she sat,
While quiver'd round her form th' ambrosial robe.
The son of Saturn tow'rds him drew his child,
And thus, with gracious smile, enquiry made:
“ Which of the heav'nly pow'rs hath wrong'd thee thus, 580
My child, as guilty of some open shame? ”

¹ L. 546. The terms made use of in this line, and in 481, may appear somewhat coarse, as addressed by one Goddess to another: but I assure the English reader that in this passage especially I have greatly softened down the expression of the original; a literal translation of which, however forcible, would shock even the least fastidious critic. It must, indeed, be admitted that the mode in which “ the white-arm'd Goddess ” proceeds to execute her threat is hardly more dignified than the language, in which it is conveyed, is refined.

To whom the bright-crown'd Goddess of the chase:
 "Thy wife, my father, white-arm'd Juno; she
 Hath dealt thus rudely with me; she, from whom
 All jars and strife among the Gods proceed."

Such converse while they held, the gates of Troy
 Apollo enter'd, for the well-built wall
 Alarm'd, lest ev'n against the will of fate
 The Greeks that day should raze it to the ground.

590

The other Gods were to Olympus gone,
 Triumphant these, and those in angry mood,
 And took their seats before the cloud-girt Sire.
 But on the Trojans pressing, Peleus' son
 Horses and men alike, promiscuous, slew.
 As in a city, which the Gods in wrath
 Have fir'd, whose volleying smoke ascends to Heav'n,
 On all her people grievous toil is cast,
 On many, harm and loss; such toil, such loss
 Achilles wrought amid the Trojan host.

600

Upon a lofty tow'r, the work of Gods,
 The aged Priam stood, and thence beheld
 Achilles raging with resistless might;
 The Trojans too he saw in fearful rout
 Before him driv'n, their courage quite subdued:
 And, groaning, from the tow'r he hasten'd down,
 And to the warders cried along the wall:

"Stand to the gates, and hold them open'd wide,
 That in the crowd of fugitives may pour,
 And refuge find; for close upon their flight
 Achilles hangs; disaster now is near.
 But while our friends, receiv'd within the walls,
 Find time to breathe again, replace in haste
 The closely-fitting portals; for I fear
 That man of blood may ev'n the city storm."

610

He said; the gates they open'd, and drew back
 The solid bars; the portals, op'ning wide,
 Let in the light; but in the vacant space
 Apollo stood, the Trojan host to save.
 The flyers, parch'd with thirst and dust-begrin'd,
 Straight for the city and the lofty wall
 Made from the plain; Achilles, spear in hand,
 Press'd hotly on the rearmost; for his soul
 With rage was fill'd, and madd'ning lust of fame.
 And now the lofty-gated city of Troy

620

The sons of Greece had won; but Phœbus rous'd
 Agenor's spirit, a valiant youth and strong,
 Son of Antenor; he his bosom fill'd
 With dauntless courage, and beside him stood
 To turn aside the heavy hand of death,
 As, veil'd in cloud, against the oak he lean'd. 630
 He, when Achilles' awful form he knew,
 Yet firmly stood, though much perplex'd in mind,
 As thus he commun'd with his mighty heart:

“ Oh woe is me! should I attempt to fly
 Before Achilles' might, where fly the rest
 Across the plain, disorder'd, he would soon
 O'ertake me, and in flight ignoble slay.
 Or should I leave the others to their fate,
 Scatter'd by Peleus' son; and from the wall
 And o'er the plain of Troy direct my flight, 640
 Far as the foot of Ida's hill, and there
 Lie hid in thickest covert; and at eve,
 Refresh'd by bathing in the cooling stream,
 And purg'd the sweat, retrace my steps to Troy?
 Yet why, my soul, admit such thoughts as these?
 For should he mark me flying from the town,
 And overtake me by his speed of foot,
 No hope were left me of escape from death,
 So far his strength exceeds the strength of man,
 But how if boldly I await him here 650
 Before the wall? his flesh is not to wounds
 Impervious: but a single life is his,
 Nor is he more, they say, than mortal man,
 Though Jove assists him, and his triumph wills.”

He said, and stood collected, to await
 Achilles' onset; and his manly heart,
 With courage fill'd, was eager for the fray.
 As when a panther from the thicket's depth
 Comes forth to meet the hunter, undismay'd,
 Nor turn'd to flight by baying of the hounds; 660
 Nor, wounded or by jav'lin or by sword,
 Or by the spear transfix'd, remits her rage,
 But fights, until she reach her foe, or die;
 Agenor so, Antenor's godlike son,
 Disdain'd to fly, ere prove Achilles' might.
 Before his breast his shield's broad orb he bore,
 And pois'd his spear, as thus he call'd aloud:

"Thy hope, renown'd Achilles, was this day
 The valiant Trojans' city to destroy;
 Unconscious of the toils, the woes, that yet
 Around her walls await ye! for within
 Are warriors brave and num'rous, who will fight
 In her defence, for parents, children, wives.
 Thou too, Achilles, here shalt meet thy doom,
 All-pow'rful as thou art, and warrior bold."

670

He said, and threw with stalwart hand the spear;
 Achilles' leg he struck, below the knee,
 Nor miss'd his aim; and loudly rang the greaves
 Of new-wrought tin; but back the brazen point
 Rebounded, nor the heav'nly armour pierc'd.

680

In turn Achilles on Agenor sprang:
 But Phœbus robb'd him of his hop'd-for prize,
 Who, veil'd in thickest cloud, convey'd away
 Antenor's son, and from the battle bore
 To rest in peace; while he by guile withdrew
 The son of Peleus from the flying crowd:
 For in Agenor's very likeness clad,
 Before him stood the far-destroying King:
 Then fled, Achilles hast'ning in pursuit.
 He o'er the fertile plain with flying foot
 Pursu'd; beside Scamander's eddying stream
 Apollo turn'd, and still but little space
 Before him flying, subtly lur'd him on,
 Each moment hoping to attain his prize.
 Meantime the gen'ral crowd, in panic flight,
 With eager haste the city's refuge sought,
 And all the town with fugitives was fill'd.
 Nor did they dare without the walls to stand
 For mutual aid; nor halt to know what friends
 Were safe, who left upon the battle-field;
 But through the gates pour'd in the hurrying mass
 Who to their active limbs their safety ow'd.

690

700

BOOK XXII

ARGUMENT

ACHILLES slays Hector.

THE fugitives, who thus, like tim'rous fawns,
Sought refuge in the city, dried their sweat,
And drank, and quench'd their thirst, reclining safe
On the fair battlements; but nearer drew,
With slanted shields, the Greeks; yet Hector still
In front of Ilium and the Scæan gate,
Stay'd by his evil doom, remain'd without.
Then Phœbus thus to Peleus' godlike son:

“ Achilles, why with active feet pursue,
Thou mortal, me Immortal? know'st thou not 10
My Godhead, that so hot thy fury burns?
Or heed'st thou not that all the Trojan host
Whom thou hast scar'd, while thou art here withdrawn,
Within the walls a refuge safe have found?
On me thy sword is vain! I know not death!”

Enrag'd, Achilles, swift of foot, replied:
“ Deep is the injury, far-darting King,
Most hostile of the Gods, that at thy hand
I bear, who here hast lur'd me from the walls,
Which many a Trojan else had fail'd to reach, 20
Ere by my hand they bit the bloody dust.
Me of immortal honour thou hast robb'd,
And them, thyself from vengeance safe, hast sav'd:
Had I the pow'r, that vengeance thou shouldst feel.”

Thus saying, and on mightiest deeds intent,
He turn'd him city-ward, with fiery speed;
As when a horse, contending for the prize,
Whirls the swift car, and stretches o'er the plain,
Ev'n so, with active limbs, Achilles rac'd.

Him first the aged Priam's eyes discern'd, 30
Scouring the plain, in arms all dazzling bright,
Like to th' autumnal star, whose brilliant ray
Shines eminent amid the depth of night,

Whom men the dog-star of Orion call;
 The brightest he, but sign to mortal man
 Of evil augury, and fiery heat:
 So shone the brass upon the warrior's breast.

The old man groan'd aloud, and lifting high
 His hands, he beat his head, and with loud voice
 Call'd on his son, imploring; he, unmov'd, 40
 Held post before the gates, awaiting there
 Achilles' fierce encounter; him his sire,
 With hands outstretch'd and piteous tone, address'd:

"Hector, my son, await not here alone
 That warrior's charge, lest thou to fate succumb,
 Beneath Pelides' arm, thy better far!
 Accurs'd be he! would that th' immortal Gods
 So favour'd him as I! then should his corpse
 Soon to the vultures and the dogs be giv'n!
 (So should my heart a load of anguish lose) 50

By whom I am of many sons bereav'd,
 Many and brave, whom he has slain, or sold
 To distant isles in slav'ry; and e'en now,
 Within the city walls I look in vain
 For two, Lycaon brave, and Polydore,
 My gallant sons, by fair Læothœ:
 If haply yet they live, with brass and gold
 Their ransom shall be paid; good store of these
 We can command; for with his daughter fair
 A wealthy dow'ry aged Altes gave. 60

But to the viewless shades should they have gone,
 Deep were their mother's sorrow and my own;
 But of the gen'ral public, well I know
 Far lighter were the grief, than if they heard
 That thou hadst fall'n beneath Achilles' hand.
 Then enter now, my son, the city gates,
 And of the women and the men of Troy
 Be still the guardian; nor to Peleus' son,
 With thine own life, immortal glory give.
 Look too on me with pity; me, on whom, 70
 Ev'n on the threshold of mine age, hath Jove
 A bitter burthen cast, condemn'd to see
 My sons struck down, my daughters dragg'd away
 In servile bonds; our chambers' sanctity
 Invaded; and our babes by hostile hands
 Dash'd to the ground; and by ferocious Greeks

Enslav'd the widows of my slaughter'd sons.
 On me at last the rav'ning dogs shall feed,
 When by some foeman's hand, by sword or lance,
 My soul shall from my body be divorc'd; 80
 Those very dogs which I myself have bred,
 Fed at my table, guardians of my gate,
 Shall lap my blood, and over-gorg'd shall lie
 Ev'n on my threshold. That a youth should fall
 Victim to Mars, beneath a foeman's spear,
 May well beseem his years; and if he fall
 With honour, though he die, yet glorious he!
 But when the hoary head and hoary beard,
 And naked corpse to rav'ning dogs are giv'n,
 No sadder sight can wretched mortals see." 90

The old man spoke, and from his head he tore
 The hoary hair; yet Hector firm remain'd.
 Then to the front his mother rush'd, in tears,
 Her bosom bare, with either hand her breast
 Sustaining, and with tears address'd him thus:
 "Hector, my child, thy mother's breast revere;
 And on this bosom if thine infant woes
 Have e'er been hush'd, bear now in mind, dear child,
 The debt thou ow'st; and from within the walls
 Ward off this fearful man, nor in the field 100
 Encounter; curs'd be he! should he prevail,
 And slay thee, not upon the fun'ral bed,
 My child, my own, the offspring of my womb,
 Shall I deplore thee, nor thy widow'd wife,
 But far away, beside the Grecian ships,
 Thy corpse shall to the rav'ning dogs be giv'n."

Thus they, with tears and earnest pray'rs imploring,
 Address'd their son; yet Hector firm remain'd,
 Waiting th' approach of Peleus' godlike son.
 As when a snake upon the mountain side, 110
 With deadly venom charg'd, beside his hole
 Awaits the traveller, and fill'd with rage,
 Coil'd round his hole, his baleful glances darts;
 So fill'd with dauntless courage Hector stood,
 Scorning retreat, his gleaming buckler propp'd
 Against the jutting tow'r; then, deeply mov'd,
 Thus with his warlike soul communion held:

"Oh woe is me! if I should enter now
 The city gates, I should the just reproach

Encounter of Polydamas, who first 120
 His counsel gave within the walls to lead
 The Trojan forces, on that fatal night
 When great Achilles in the field appear'd.
 I heeded not his counsel; would I had!
 Now, since my folly hath the people slain,
 I well might blush to meet the Trojan men,
 And long-rob'd dames of Troy, lest some might say,
 To me inferior far, ' This woful loss
 To Hector's blind self-confidence we owe.'
 Thus shall they say; for me, 'twere better far, 130
 Or from Achilles, slain in open fight,
 Back to return in triumph, or myself
 To perish nobly in my country's cause.
 What if my bossy shield I lay aside,
 And stubborn helmet, and my pond'rous spear
 Propping against the wall, go forth to meet
 Th' unmatched Achilles? What if I engage
 That Helen's self, and with her all the spoil,
 And all that Paris in his hollow ships
 Brought here to Troy, whence first this war arose, 140
 Should be restor'd; and to the Greeks be paid
 An ample tribute from the city's stores,
 Her secret treasures; by a solemn oath
 Binding the Trojans nothing to conceal,
 But fairly to the distribution bring
 Whate'er of wealth our much-lov'd city holds?
 But wherefore entertain such thoughts, my soul?
 Should I so meet him, what if he should show
 Nor pity nor remorse, but slay me there,
 Defenceless as a woman, and unarm'd? 150
 Not this the time, nor he the man, with whom
 By forest oak or rock, like youth and maid,
 To hold light talk, as youth and maid might hold.
 Better to dare the fight, and know at once
 To whom the vict'ry is decreed by Heav'n."
 Thus, as he stood, he mus'd; but near approach'd
 Achilles, terrible as plumèd Mars;
 From his right shoulder brandishing aloft
 The ashen spear of Peleus, while around
 Flash'd his bright armour, dazzling as the glare 160
 Of burning fire, or of the rising sun.
 Fear at the sight on valiant Hector seiz'd;

Nor dar'd he there await th' attack, but left
 The gates behind, and, terror-stricken, fled.
 Forward, with eager step, Pelides rush'd.
 As when a falcon, bird of swiftest flight,
 From some high mountain-top, on tim'rous dove
 Swoops fiercely down; she, from beneath, in fear,
 Evades the stroke; he, dashing through the brake,
 Shrill-shrieking, pounces on his destin'd prey; 170
 So, wing'd with desp'rate hate, Achilles flew,
 So Hector, flying from his keen pursuit,
 Beneath the walls his active sinews plied.
 They by the watch-tow'r, and beneath the wall
 Where stood the wind-beat fig-tree, rac'd amain
 Along the public road, until they reach'd
 The fairly-flowing fount whence issued forth,
 From double source, Scamander's eddying streams.
 One with hot current flows, and from beneath,
 As from a furnace, clouds of steam arise; 180
 'Mid summer's heat the other rises cold
 As hail, or snow, or water crystallis'd;
 Beside the fountains stood the washing-troughs
 Of well-wrought stone, where erst the wives of Troy
 And daughters fair their choicest garments wash'd,
 In peaceful times, ere came the sons of Greece.
 There rac'd they, one in flight, and one pursuing;
 Good he who fled, but better who pursu'd,
 With fiery speed; for on that race was stak'd
 No common victim, no ignoble ox: 190
 The prize at stake was mighty Hector's life.
 As when the solid-footed horses fly
 Around the course, contending for the prize,
 Tripod, or woman of her lord bereft;
 So rac'd they thrice around the walls of Troy
 With active feet; and all the Gods beheld.
 Then thus began the Sire of Gods and men:
 "A woful sight mine eyes behold; a man
 I love in flight around the walls! my heart
 For Hector grieves, who, now upon the crown 200
 Of deeply-furrow'd Ida, now again
 On Ilium's heights, with fat of choicest bulls
 Hath pil'd mine altar; whom around the walls,
 With flying speed, Achilles now pursues.
 Give me your counsel, Gods, and say, from death

If we shall rescue him, or must he die,
Brave as he is, beneath Pelides' hand?"

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess, Pallas, thus:
"O Father, lightning-flashing, cloud-girt King,
What words are these? wouldst thou a mortal man, 210
Long doom'd by fate, again from death preserve?
Do as thou wilt, but not with our consent."

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
"Be of good cheer, my child! unwillingly
I speak, yet loth thy wishes to oppose:
Have then thy will, and draw not back thy hand."

His words fresh impulse gave to Pallas' zeal,
And from Olympus' heights in haste she sped.

Meanwhile on Hector, with untiring hate,
The swift Achilles press'd: as when a hound, 220
Through glen and tangled brake, pursues a fawn,
Rous'd from its lair upon the mountain side;
And if awhile it should evade pursuit,
Low crouching in the copse, yet quests he back,
Searching unwearied, till he find the trace;

So Hector sought to baffle, but in vain,
The keen pursuit of Peleus' active son.
Oft as he sought the shelter of the gates
Beneath the well-built tow'rs, if haply thence
His comrades' weapons might some aid afford; 230
So oft his foeman, with superior speed,
Would cut him off, and turn him to the plain.
He tow'rd the city still essay'd his flight;
And as in dreams, when one pursues in vain,
One seeks in vain to fly, the other seeks
As vainly to pursue; so could not now
Achilles reach, nor Hector quit, his foe.

Yet how should Hector now the doom of death
Have 'scap'd, had not Apollo once again
And for the last time, to his rescue come, 240
And giv'n him strength and suppleness of limb?

Then to the crowd Achilles with his head
Made sign that none at Hector should presume
To cast a spear, lest one might wound, and so
The greater glory obtain, while he himself
Must be contented with the second place.
But when the fourth time in their rapid course
The founts were reach'd, th' Eternal Father hung

His golden scales aloft, and plac'd in each
 The lots of doom, for great Achilles one, 250
 For Hector one, and held them by the midst:
 Down sank the scale, weighted with Hector's death,
 Down to the shades, and Phœbus left his side.

Then to Pelides came the blue-ey'd Maid,
 And stood beside him, and bespoke him thus:
 "Achilles, lov'd of Heav'n, I trust that now
 To thee and me great glory shall accrue
 In Hector's fall, insatiate of the fight.
 Escape he cannot now, though at the feet
 Of ægis-bearing Jove, on his behalf, 260
 With earnest pray'r Apollo prostrate fall.
 But stay thou here and take thy breath, while I
 Persuade him to return and dare the fight."

So Pallas spoke; and he with joy obeying,
 Stood leaning on his brass-barb'd ashen spear.
 The Goddess left him there, and went (the form
 And voice assuming of Deiphobus)
 In search of godlike Hector; him she found,
 And standing near, with wingèd words address'd:
 "Sorely, good brother, hast thou been bested 270
 By fierce Achilles, who around the walls
 Hath chas'd thee with swift foot; now stand we both
 For mutual succour, and his onset wait."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
 "Deiphobus, of all my brothers, sons
 Of Hecuba and Priam, thou hast been
 Still dearest to my heart; and now the more
 I honour thee who dar'st on my behalf,
 Seeing my peril, from within the walls
 To sally forth, while others skulk behind." 280

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess thus replied:
 "With many pray'rs, good brother, both our sire
 And honour'd mother, and our comrades all
 Successively implored me to remain;
 Such fear is fall'n on all; but in my soul
 On thine account too deep a grief I felt.
 Now, forward boldly! spare we not our spears;
 Make trial if Achilles to the ships
 From both of us our bloody spoils can bear,
 Or by thine arm himself may be subdued." 290

Thus Pallas lur'd him on with treach'rous wile;

But when the two were met, and close at hand,
First spoke great Hector of the glancing helm:

“No more before thee, Peleus' son, I fly:
Thrice have I fled around the walls, nor dar'd
Await thine onset; now my spirit is rous'd
To stand before thee, to be slain, or slay.
But let us first th' immortal Gods invoke;
The surest witnesses and guardians they
Of compacts: at my hand no foul disgrace
Shalt thou sustain, if Jove with victory
Shall crown my firm endurance, and thy life
To me be forfeit; of thine armour stripp'd
I promise thee, Achilles, to the Greeks
Thy body to restore; do thou the like.”

300

With fierce regard Achilles answer'd thus:

“Hector, thou object of my deadly hate,
Talk not to me of compacts; as 'tween men
And lions no firm concord can exist,

Nor wolves and lambs in harmony unite,
But ceaseless enmity between them dwells:
So not in friendly terms, nor compact firm,
Can thou and I unite, till one of us

310

Glut with his blood the mail-clad warrior Mars.
Mind thee of all thy fence; behoves thee now
To prove a spearman skill'd, and warrior brave.
For thee escape is none; now, by my spear,
Hath Pallas doom'd thy death; my comrades' blood,
Which thou hast shed, shall all be now aveng'd.”

He said, and poising, hurl'd his weighty spear;
But Hector saw, and shunn'd the blow; he stoop'd,
And o'er his shoulder flew the brass-tipp'd spear,
And in the ground was fix'd; but Pallas drew
The weapon forth, and to Achilles' hand,
All unobserv'd of Hector, gave it back.
Then Hector thus to Peleus' matchless son:

320

“Thine aim has fail'd; nor truly has my fate,
Immortal son of Peleus, been to thee
From Heav'n reveal'd; such was indeed thy boast;
But now it seems that flippant was thy speech,
And cunningly devis'd, in hopes that I
Might by thy vaunts be terrified, and so
Forgetful of my fame and prowess prove.
Not in my back will I receive thy spear,

330

But through my breast, confronting thee, if Jove
 Have to thine arm indeed such triumph giv'n.
 Now, if thou canst, my spear in turn elude;
 May it be deeply buried in thy flesh!
 For lighter were to Troy the load of war,
 If thou, the greatest of her foes, wert slain." 340

He said, and poising, hurl'd his pond'rous spear;
 Nor miss'd his aim; full in the midst he struck
 Pelides' shield; but glancing from the shield
 The weapon bounded off. Hector was griev'd,
 That thus his spear had bootless left his hand.
 He stood aghast; no second spear was nigh:
 And loudly on Deiphobus he call'd
 A spear to bring; but he was far away.
 Then Hector knew that he was dup'd, and cried,
 " Oh Heav'ns! the Gods above have doom'd my death!
 I deem'd indeed that brave Deiphobus 351
 Was near at hand; but he within the walls
 Is safe, and I by Pallas am betray'd.
 Now is my death at hand, nor far away:
 Escape is none; since so hath Jove decreed,
 And Jove's far-darting son, who heretofore
 Have been my guards; my fate hath found me now.
 Yet not without a struggle let me die,
 Nor all inglorious; but let some great act,
 Which future days may hear of, mark my fall." 360

Thus as he spoke, his trenchant sword he drew,
 Pond'rous and vast, suspended at his side;
 Collected for the spring, and forward dash'd:
 As when an eagle, bird of loftiest flight,
 Through the dark clouds swoops downward on the plain,
 To seize some tender lamb, or cow'ring hare;
 So Hector rush'd, and wav'd his sharp-edg'd sword.
 Achilles' wrath was rous'd: with fury wild
 His soul was fill'd: before his breast he bore
 His well-wrought shield; and fiercely on his brow 370
 Nodded the four-plum'd helm, as on the breeze
 Floated the golden hairs, with which the crest
 By Vulcan's hand was thickly interlac'd;
 And as amid the stars' unnumber'd host,
 When twilight yields to night, one star appears,
 Hesper, the brightest star that shines in Heav'n,
 Gleam'd the sharp-pointed lance, which in his right

Achilles pois'd, on godlike Hector's doom
 Intent, and scanning eagerly to see
 Where from attack his body least was fenc'd. 380
 All else the glitt'ring armour guarded well,
 Which Hector from Patroclus' corpse had stripp'd;
 One chink appear'd, just where the collar-bone
 The neck and shoulder parts, beside the throat,
 Where lies expos'd the swiftest road of death.
 There levell'd he, as Hector onward rush'd;
 Right through the yielding neck the lance was driv'n,
 But sever'd not the windpipe, nor destroy'd
 His pow'r of speech; prone in the dust he fell;
 And o'er him, vaunting, thus Achilles spoke: 390

“Hector, Patroclus stripping of his arms,
 Thy hope was that thyself wast safe; and I,
 Not present, brought no terror to thy soul:
 Fool! in the hollow ships I yet remain'd,
 I, his avenger, mightier far than he;
 I, who am now thy conqu'ror. By the dogs
 And vultures shall thy corpse be foully torn,
 While him the Greeks with fun'ral rites shall grace.”

Whom answer'd Hector of the glancing helm,
 Prostrate and helpless: “By thy soul, thy knees, 400
 Thy parents' heads, Achilles, I beseech,
 Let not my corpse by Grecian dogs be torn.
 Accept the ample stores of brass and gold,
 Which as my ransom by my honour'd sire
 And mother shall be paid thee; but my corpse
 Restore, that so the men and wives of Troy
 May deck with honours due my fun'ral pyre.”

To whom, with fierce aspect, Achilles thus:
 “Knee me no knees, vile hound! nor prate to me
 Of parents! such my hatred, that almost 410
 I could persuade myself to tear and eat
 Thy mangled flesh; such wrongs I have to avenge.
 He lives not, who can save thee from the dogs;
 Not though with ransom ten and twenty fold
 He here should stand, and yet should promise more;
 No, not though Praim's royal self should sue
 To be allow'd for gold to ransom thee;
 No, not ev'n so, thy mother shall obtain
 To lay thee out upon the couch, and mourn
 O'er thee, her offspring; but on all thy limbs 420

Shall dogs and carrion vultures make their feast."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm,
Dying: "I know thee well; nor did I hope
To change thy purpose; iron is thy soul.
But see that on thy head I bring not down
The wrath of Heav'n, when by the Scæan gate
The hand of Paris, with Apollo's aid,
Brave warrior as thou art, shall strike thee down."

Ev'n as he spoke, his eyes were clos'd in death;
And to the viewless shades his spirit fled, 430
Mourning his fate, his youth and vigour lost.

To him, though dead, Achilles thus replied:
"Die thou! my fate I then shall meet, whene'er
Jove and th' immortal Gods shall so decree."

He said, and from the corpse his spear withdrew,
And laid aside; then stripp'd the armour off,
With blood besmear'd; the Greeks around him throng'd,
Gazing on Hector's noble form and face,
And none approach'd that did not add a wound:
And one to other look'd, and said, "Good faith, 440
Hector is easier far to handle now,
Than when erewhile he wrapp'd our ships in fire."
Thus would they say, then stab the dead anew.

But when the son of Peleus, swift of foot,
Had stripp'd the armour from the corpse, he rose,
And, standing, thus th' assembled Greeks address'd:
"O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Since Heav'n hath granted us this man to slay,
Whose single arm hath wrought us more of ill
Than all the rest combin'd, advance we now 450
Before the city in arms, and trial make
What is the mind of Troy; if, Hector slain,
They from the citadel intend retreat,
Or still, despite their loss, their ground maintain.
But wherefore entertain such thoughts, my soul?
Beside the ships, unwept, unburied, lies
Patroclus; whom I never can forget,
While number'd with the living, and my limbs
Have pow'r to move; in Hades though the dead
May be forgotten, yet ev'n there will I 460
The mem'ry of my lov'd companion keep.
Now to the ships return we, sons of Greece,
Glad pæans singing! with us he shall go;

Great glory is ours, the godlike Hector slain,
The pride of Troy, and as a God rever'd."

He said, and foully Hector's corpse misus'd;
Of either foot he pierc'd the tendon through,
That from the ankle passes to the heel,
And to his chariot bound with leathern thongs,
Leaving the head to trail along the ground;
Then mounted, with the captur'd arms, his car,
And urg'd his horses; nothing loth, they flew.

470

A cloud of dust the trailing body rais'd:
Loose hung his glossy hair; and in the dust
Was laid that noble head, so graceful once;
Now to foul insult doom'd by Jove's decree,
In his own country, at a foeman's hand.
So lay the head of Hector; at the sight
His aged mother tore her hair, and far
From off her head the glitt'ring veil she threw,
And with loud cries her slaughter'd son bewail'd.

480

Piteous, his father groan'd; and all around
Was heard the voice of wailing and of woe.
Such was the cry, as if the beetling height
Of Ilium all were smould'ring in the fire.
Scarce was the old man by the crowd restrain'd
From issuing forth beyond the Dardan gates;
Low in the dust he roll'd, imploring all,
Entreating by his name each sev'ral man:

"Forbear, my friends; though sorrowing, stay me not; 490
Leave me to reach alone the Grecian ships,
And there implore this man of violence,
This haughty chief, if haply he my years
May rev'rence, and have pity on my age.
For he too has a father, like to me;
Peleus, by whom he was begot, and bred,
The bane of Troy; and, most of all, to me
The cause of endless grief, who by his hand
Have been of many stalwart sons bereft.

Yet all, though griev'd for all, I less lament,
Than one, whose loss will sink me to the grave.

500

Hector! oh would to Heav'n that in mine arms
He could have died; with mourning then and tears
We might have satisfied our grief, both she
Who bore him, hapless mother, and myself."

Weeping, he spoke; and with him wept the crowd:

Then, 'mid the women, Hecuba pour'd forth
 Her vehement grief: " My child, oh whither now,
 Heart-stricken, shall I go, of thee bereft,
 Of thee, who wast to me by night and day 510
 A glory and a boast; the strength of all
 The men of Troy, and women? as a God
 They worshipp'd thee: for, living, thou on all
 Great glory shedd'st; but fate hath found thee now."

Weeping, she spoke; but nought as yet was known
 To Hector's wife; to her no messenger
 Had brought the tidings, that without the walls
 Remain'd her husband; in her house withdrawn
 A web she wove, all purple, double woof,
 With varied flow'rs in rich embroidery, 520
 And to her neat-hair'd maids she gave command
 To place the largest caldrons on the fire,
 That with warm baths, returning from the fight,
 Hector might be refresh'd; unconscious she,
 That by Achilles' hand, with Pallas' aid,
 Far from the bath, was godlike Hector slain.
 The sounds of wailing reach'd her from the tow'r;
 Totter'd her limbs, the distaff left her hand,
 And to her neat-hair'd maidens thus she spoke:
 " Haste, follow me, some two, that I may know 530
 What means these sounds; my honour'd mother's voice
 I hear; and in my breast my beating heart
 Leaps to my mouth; my limbs refuse to move;
 Some evil, sure, on Priam's house impends.
 Be unfulfill'd my words! yet much I fear
 Lest my brave Hector be cut off alone,
 By great Achilles, from the walls of Troy,
 Chas'd to the plain, the desp'rate courage quench'd,
 Which ever led him from the gen'ral ranks
 Far in advance, and bade him yield to none." 540

Then from the house she rush'd, like one distract,
 With beating heart; and with her went her maids.
 But when the tow'r she reach'd, where stood the crowd,
 And mounted on the wall, and look'd around,
 And saw the body trailing in the dust,
 Which the fleet steeds were dragging to the ships,
 A sudden darkness overspread her eyes;
 Backward she fell, and gasp'd her spirit away.
 Far off were flung th' adornments of her head,

The net, the fillet, and the woven bands; 550
 The nuptial veil by golden Venus giv'n,
 That day when Hector of the glancing helm
 Led from Eëtion's house his wealthy bride.
 The sisters of her husband round her press'd,
 And held, as in the deadly swoon she lay.
 But when her breath and spirit return'd again,
 With sudden burst of anguish thus she cried:
 "Hector, oh woe is me! to misery
 We both were born alike; thou here in Troy
 In Priam's royal palace; I in Thebes, 560
 By wooded Placos, in Eëtion's house,
 Who nurs'd my infancy; unhappy he,
 Unhappier I! would I had ne'er been born!
 Now thou beneath the depths of earth art gone,
 Gone to the viewless shades; and me hast left
 A widow in thy house, in deepest woe;
 Our child, an infant still, thy child and mine,
 Ill-fated parents both! nor thou to him,
 Hector, shalt be a guard, nor he to thee:
 For though he 'scape this tearful war with Greece, 570
 Yet nought for him remains but ceaseless woe,
 And strangers on his heritage shall seize.
 No young companions own the orphan boy:
 With downcast eyes, and cheeks bedew'd with tears,
 His father's friends approaching, pinch'd with want,
 He hangs upon the skirt of one, of one
 He plucks the cloak; perchance in pity some
 May at their tables let him sip the cup,
 Moisten his lips, but scarce his palate touch;
 While youths, with both surviving parents bless'd, 580
 May drive him from their feast with blows and taunts,
 'Begone! thy father sits not at our board:'
 Then weeping, to his widow'd mother's arms
 He flies, that orphan boy, Astyanax,
 Who on his father's knees erewhile was fed
 On choicest marrow, and the fat of lambs;
 And, when in sleep his childish play was hush'd,
 Was lull'd to slumber in his nurse's arms
 On softest couch, by all delights surrounded.
 But grief, his father lost, awaits him now, 590
 Astyanax, of Trojans so surnam'd,
 Since thou alone wast Troy's defence and guard.

But now on thee, beside the beakèd ships,
Far from thy parents, when the rav'ning dogs
Have had their fill, the wriggling worms shall feed;
On thee, all naked; while within thy house
Lies store of raiment, rich and rare, the work
Of women's hands; these will I burn with fire;
Not for thy need—thou ne'er shalt wear them more,—
But for thine honour in the sight of Troy.” 600
Weeping she spoke; the women join'd her wail.

BOOK XXIII

ARGUMENT

THE body of Patroclus is burned, and the funeral games ensue.

THUS they throughout the city made their moan;
But when the Greeks had come where lay their ships
By the broad Hellespont, their sev'ral ways
They each pursued, dispersing; yet not so
Achilles let his Myrmidons disperse,
But thus his warlike comrades he address'd:

“ My faithful comrades, valiant Myrmidons,
Loose we not yet our horses from the cars;
But for Patroclus mourn, approaching near,
With horse and car; such tribute claim the dead; 10
Then, free indulgence to our sorrows giv'n,
Loose we the steeds, and share the ev'ning meal.”

He said; and they with mingled voices rais'd
The solemn dirge; Achilles led the strain;
Thrice round the dead they drove their sleek-skinn'd steeds
Mourning, with hearts by Thetis grief-inspir'd;
With tears the sands, with tears the warriors' arms,
Were wet; so mighty was the chief they mourn'd.
Then on his comrade's breast Achilles laid
His blood-stain'd hands, and thus began the wail: 20

“ All hail, Patroclus, though in Pluto's realm;
All that I promis'd, lo! I now perform;
That on the corpse of Hector, hither dragg'd,
Our dogs should feed; and that twelve noble youths,
The sons of Troy, before thy fun'ral pyre,
My hand, in vengeance for thy death, should slay.”

He said, and foully Hector's corpse misus'd,
Flung prostrate in the dust, beside the couch
Where lay Menœtius' son. His comrades then
Their glitt'ring armour doff'd, of polish'd brass, 30
And loos'd their neighing steeds; then round the ship
Of Peleus' son in countless numbers sat,
While he th' abundant fun'ral feast dispens'd.

There many a steer lay stretch'd beneath the knife.
 And many a sheep, and many a bleating goat,
 And many a white-tusk'd porker, rich in fat,
 There lay extended, singeing o'er the fire;
 And blood, in torrents, flow'd around the corpse.

To Agamemnon then the Kings of Greece
 The royal son of Peleus, swift of foot, 40

Conducted; yet with him they scarce prevail'd;
 So fierce his anger for his comrade's death.

But when to Agamemnon's tent they came,
 He to the clear-voic'd heralds gave command

An ample tripod on the fire to place;

If haply Peleus' son he might persuade

To wash away the bloody stains of war:

But sternly he, and with an oath refus'd.

“No, by great Jove I swear, of all the Gods
 Highest and mightiest, water shall not touch 50

This head of mine, till on the fun'ral pyre

I see the body of Patroclus laid,

And build his tomb, and cut my votive hair;

For while I live and move 'mid mortal men,

No second grief like this can pierce my soul.

Observe we now the mournful fun'ral feast;

But thou, great Agamemnon, King of men,

Send forth at early dawn, and to the camp

Bring store of fuel, and all else prepare,

That with provision meet the dead may pass 60

Down to the realms of night; so shall the fire

From out our sight consume our mighty dead,

And to their wonted tasks the troops return.”

He said; they listen'd, and his words obey'd;

Then busily the ev'ning meal prepar'd,

And shar'd the social feast; nor lack'd there aught.

The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,

Each to their sev'ral tents the rest repair'd;

But on the many-dashing ocean's shore

Pelides lay, amid his Myrmidons, 70

With bitter groans; in a clear space he lay,

Where broke the waves, continuous, on the beach.

There, circumfus'd around him, gentle sleep,

Lulling the sorrows of his heart to rest,

O'ercame his senses; for the hot pursuit

Of Hector round the breezy heights of Troy

His active limbs had wearied: as he slept,
 Sudden appear'd Patroclus' mournful shade,
 His very self; his height, and beauteous eyes,
 And voice; the very garb he wont to wear: 80
 Above his head it stood, and thus it spoke:

“ Sleep'st thou, Achilles, mindless of thy friend,
 Neglecting, not the living, but the dead?
 Hasten my fun'ral rites, that I may pass
 Through Hades' gloomy gates; ere those be done,
 The spirits and spectres of departed men
 Drive me far from them, nor allow to cross
 Th' abhorrèd river; but forlorn and sad
 I wander through the wide-spread realms of night.
 And give me now thy hand, whereon to weep; 90
 For never more, when laid upon the pyre,
 Shall I return from Hades; never more,
 Apart from all our comrades, shall we two,
 As friends, sweet counsel take; for me, stern Death,
 The common lot of man, has op'd his mouth;
 Thou too, Achilles, rival of the Gods,
 Art destin'd here beneath the walls of Troy
 To meet thy doom; yet one thing must I add,
 And make, if thou wilt grant it, one request.
 Let not my bones be laid apart from thine, 100
 Achilles, but together, as our youth
 Was spent together in thy father's house,
 Since first my sire Menœtius me a boy
 From Opus brought, a luckless homicide,
 Who of Amphidamas, by evil chance,
 Had slain the son, disputing o'er the dice:
 Me noble Peleus in his house receiv'd,
 And kindly nurs'd, and thine attendant nam'd;
 So in one urn be now our bones enclos'd,
 The golden vase, thy Goddess-mother's gift.” 110

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot:
 “ Why art thou here, lov'd being? why on me
 These sev'ral charges lay? whate'er thou bidd'st
 Will I perform, and all thy mind fulfil;
 But draw thou near; and in one short embrace,
 Let us, while yet we may, our grief indulge.”

Thus as he spoke, he spread his longing arms,
 But nought he clasp'd; and with a wailing cry,
 Vanish'd, like smoke, the spirit beneath the earth.

Up sprang Achilles, all amaz'd, and smote 120
 His hands together, and lamenting cried:

“O Heav'n, there are then, in the realms below,
 Spirits and spectres, unsubstantial all;
 For through the night Patroclus' shade hath stood,
 Weeping and wailing, at my side, and told
 His bidding; th' image of himself it seem'd.”

He said; his words the gen'ral grief arous'd:
 To them, as round the piteous dead they mourn'd,
 Appear'd the rosy-finger'd morn; and straight,
 From all the camp, by Agamemnon sent, 130
 Went forth, in search of fuel, men and mules,
 Led by a valiant chief, Meriones,
 The follower of renown'd Idomeneus.

Their felling axes in their hands they bore,
 And twisted ropes; their mules before them driv'n;
 Now up, now down, now sideways, now aslope,
 They journey'd on; but when they reach'd the foot
 Of spring-abounding Ida, they began
 With axes keen to hew the lofty oaks;
 They, loudly crashing, fell: the wood they clove, 140
 And bound it to the mules; these took their way
 Through the thick brushwood, hurrying to the plain.

The axe-men too, so bade Meriones,
 The follower of renown'd Idomeneus,
 Were laden all with logs, which on the beach
 They laid in order, where a lofty mound,
 In mem'ry of Patroclus and himself,
 Achilles had design'd. When all the store
 Of wood was duly laid, the rest remain'd
 In masses seated; but Achilles bade 150

The warlike Myrmidons their armour don,
 And harness each his horses to his car;
 They rose and donn'd their arms, and on the cars
 Warriors and charioteers their places took:
 First came the horse, and then a cloud of foot,
 Unnumber'd; in the midst Patroclus came,
 Borne by his comrades; all the corpse with hair
 They cover'd o'er, which from their heads they shore.
 Behind, Achilles held his head, and mourn'd
 The noble friend whom to the tomb he bore. 160
 Then on the spot by Peleus' son assign'd,
 They laid him down, and pil'd the wood on high.

Then a fresh thought Achilles' mind conceiv'd:
 Standing apart, the yellow locks he shore,
 Which as an off'ring to Sperchius' stream,
 He nurs'd in rich profusion; sorrowing then
 Look'd o'er the dark-blue sea, as thus he spoke:

“Sperchius, all in vain to thee his pray'r
 My father Peleus made, and vow'd that I,
 Return'd in safety to my native land,
 To thee should dedicate my hair, and pay
 A solemn hecatomb, with sacrifice
 Of fifty rams, unblemish'd, to the springs
 Where on thy consecrated soil is plac'd
 Thine incense-honour'd altar; so he vow'd;
 But thou the boon withhold'st; since I no more
 My native land may see, the hair he vow'd,
 To brave Patroclus thus I dedicate.”

170

He said, and on his comrade's hand he laid
 The locks; his act the gen'ral grief arous'd;
 And now the setting sun had found them still
 Indulging in their grief; but Peleus' son
 Approaching, thus to Agamemnon spoke:

180

“Atrides, for to thee the people pay
 Radiest obedience, mourning too prolong'd
 May weary; thou then from the pyre the rest
 Disperse, and bid prepare the morning meal;
 Ours be the farther charge, to whom the dead
 Was chiefly dear; yet let the chiefs remain.”

The monarch Agamemnon heard, and straight
 Dispers'd the crowd amid their sev'ral ships.
 Th' appointed band remain'd, and pil'd the wood.
 A hundred feet each way they built the pyre,
 And on the summit, sorrowing, laid the dead.
 Then many a sheep and many a slow-pac'd ox
 They flay'd and dress'd around the fun'ral pyre;
 Of all the beasts Achilles took the fat,
 And cover'd o'er the dead from head to foot,
 And heap'd the slaughter'd carcasses around;
 Then jars of honey plac'd, and fragrant oils,
 Resting upon the couch; next, groaning loud,
 Four pow'rful horses on the pyre he threw;
 Then, of nine dogs that at their master's board
 Had fed, he slaughter'd two upon his pyre;
 Last, with the sword, by evil counsel sway'd,

190

200

Twelve noble youths he slew, the sons of Troy.
The fire's devouring might he then applied,
And, groaning, on his lov'd companion call'd:

“ All hail, Patroclus, though in Pluto's realm!
All that I promis'd, lo! I now perform: 210
On twelve brave sons of Trojan sires, with thee,
The flames shall feed; but Hector, Priam's son,
Not to the fire, but to the dogs I give.”

Such was Achilles' threat, but him the dogs
Molested not; for Venus, night and day,
Daughter of Jove, the rav'ning dogs restrain'd;
And all the corpse o'erlaid with roseate oil,
Ambrosial, that though dragg'd along the earth,
The noble dead might not receive a wound.
Apollo too a cloudy veil from Heav'n 220
Spread o'er the plain, and cover'd all the space
Where lay the dead, nor let the blazing sun
The flesh upon his limbs and muscles parch.

Yet burnt not up Patroclus' fun'ral pyre;
Then a fresh thought Achilles' mind conceiv'd:
Standing apart, on both the Winds he call'd,
Boreas and Zephyrus, and added vows
Of costly sacrifice; and pouring forth
Libations from a golden goblet, pray'd
Their presence, that the wood might haste to burn, 230
And with the fire consume the dead; his pray'r
Swift Iris heard, and bore it to the Winds.

They in the hall of gusty Zephyrus
Were gather'd round the feast; in haste appearing,
Swift Iris on the stony threshold stood.
They saw, and rising all, besought her each
To sit beside him; she with their requests
Refus'd compliance, and address'd them thus:

“ No seat for me; for I o'er th' ocean stream
From hence am bound to Æthiopia's shore, 240
To share the sacred feast, and hecatombs,
Which there they offer to th' immortal Gods;
But, Boreas, thee, and loud-voic'd Zephyrus,
With vows of sacrifice, Achilles calls
To fan the fun'ral pyre, whereon is laid
Patroclus, mourn'd by all the host of Greece.”

She said, and vanish'd; they, with rushing sound,
Rose, and before them drove the hurrying clouds:

Soon o'er the sea they swept; the stirring breeze
 Ruffled the waves; the fertile shores of Troy 250
 They reach'd, and falling on the fun'ral pyre,
 Loud roar'd the crackling flames; they all night long
 With current brisk together fann'd the fire.

All night Achilles from a golden bowl
 Drew forth, and, in his hand a double cup,
 The wine outpouring, moisten'd all the earth,
 Still calling on his lost Patroclus' shade.
 As mourns a father o'er a youthful son,
 Whose early death hath wrung his parents' hearts;
 So mourn'd Achilles o'er his friend's remains, 260
 Prostrate beside the pyre, and groan'd aloud.

But when the star of Lucifer appear'd,
 The harbinger of light, whom following close
 Spreads o'er the sea the saffron-robèd morn,
 Then pal'd the smould'ring fire, and sank the flame;
 And o'er the Thracian sea, that groan'd and heav'd
 Beneath their passage, home the Winds return'd;
 And weary, from the pyre a space withdrawn,
 Achilles lay, o'ercome by gentle sleep.

Anon, awaken'd by the tramp and din 270
 Of crowds that follow'd Atreus' royal son,
 He sat upright, and thus address'd his speech:

“Thou son of Atreus, and ye chiefs of Greece,
 Far as the flames extended, quench we first
 With ruddy wine the embers of the pyre;
 And of Menœtius' son, Patroclus, next
 With care distinguishing, collect the bones;
 Nor are they hard to know; for in the midst
 He lay, while round the edges of the pyre,
 Horses and men commix'd, the rest were burnt. 280

Let these, between a double layer of fat
 Enclos'd, and in a golden urn remain,
 Till I myself shall in the tomb be laid;
 And o'er them build a mound, not over-large,
 But of proportions meet; in days to come,
 Ye Greeks, who after me shall here remain,
 Complete the work, and build it broad and high.”

Thus spoke Achilles; they his words obey'd:
 Far as the flames had reach'd, and thickly strown
 The embers lay, they quench'd with ruddy wine; 290
 Then tearfully their gentle comrade's bones

Collected, and with double layers of fat
 Enclos'd, and in a golden urn encas'd;
 Then in the tent they laid them, overspread
 With veil of linen fair; then meting out
 Th' allotted space, the deep foundations laid
 Around the pyre, and o'er them heap'd the earth.
 Their task accomplish'd, all had now withdrawn;
 But Peleus' son the vast assembly stay'd,
 And bade them sit; then, prizes of the games, 300
 Tripods and caldrons from the tents he brought,
 And noble steeds, and mules, and sturdy steers,
 And women fair of form, and iron hoar.

First, for the contest of the flying cars
 The prizes he display'd: a woman fair,
 Well skill'd in household cares; a tripod vast,
 Two-handled, two and twenty measures round;
 These both were for the victor: for the next,
 A mare, unbroken, six years old, in foal
 Of a mule colt; the third, a caldron bright, 310
 Capacious of four measures, white and pure,
 By fire as yet untarnish'd; for the fourth,
 Of gold two talents; for the fifth, a vase
 With double cup, untouch'd by fire, he gave.
 Then, standing up, he thus address'd the Greeks:

“Thou son of Atreus, and ye well-greav'd Greeks,
 Before ye are the prizes, which await
 The contest of the cars; but if, ye Greeks,
 For any other cause these games were held,
 I to my tent should bear the foremost prize; 320
 For well ye know how far my steeds excel,
 Steeds of immortal race, which Neptune gave
 To Peleus, he to me, his son, transferr'd.
 But from the present strife we stand aloof,
 My horses and myself; they now have lost
 The daring courage and the gentle hand
 Of him who drove them, and with water pure
 Wash'd oft their manes, and bath'd with fragrant oil.
 For him they stand and mourn, with drooping heads
 Down to the ground, their hearts with sorrow fill'd; 330
 But ye in order range yourselves, who boast
 Your well-built chariots and your horses' speed.”

He said: up sprang the eager charioteers;
 The first of all, Eumelus, King of men,

Admetus' son, unmatch'd in horsemanship;
 Next, Tydeus' son, the valiant Diomed,
 With Trojan horses, from Æneas won,
 When by Apollo's aid himself escap'd;
 Then Heav'n-born Menelæus, Atreus' son,
 Two flying coursers harness'd to his car; 34°
 His own, Podargus, had for yokefellow
 Æthe, a mare by Agamemnon lent:

Her, Echepolus to Atrides gave,
 Anchises' son, that to the wars of Troy
 He might not be compell'd, but safe at home
 Enjoy his ease; for Jove had bless'd his store
 With ample wealth, in Sicyon's wide domain.
 Her now he yok'd, impatient for the course.
 The fourth, Antilochus, the gallant son
 Of Nestor, mighty monarch, Neleus' son, 35°
 Harness'd his sleek-skin'd steeds; of Pylian race
 Were they who bore his car; to him, his sire
 Sage counsel pour'd in understanding ears:

“ Antilochus, though young in years thou art,
 Yet Jove and Neptune love thee, and have well
 Instructed thee in horsemanship; of me
 Thou need'st no counsel; skill'd around the goal
 To whirl the chariot; but thou hast, of all,
 The slowest horses: whence I augur ill.
 But though their horses have the speed of thine, 36°
 In skill not one of them surpasses thee.

Then thou, dear boy, exert thine ev'ry art,
 That so thou mayst not fail to gain a prize.
 By skill, far more than strength, the woodman fells
 The sturdy oak; by skill the steersman guides
 His flying ship across the dark-blue sea,
 Though shatter'd by the blast; 'twixt charioteer
 And charioteer 'tis skill that draws the line.
 One, vainly trusting to his coursers' speed,
 Drives reckless here and there; o'er all the course, 37°
 His horses, unrestrain'd, at random run.

Another, with inferior horses far,
 But better skill'd, still fixing on the goal
 His eye, turns closely round, nor overlooks
 The moment when to draw the rein; but holds
 His steady course, and on the leader waits.
 A mark I give thee now, thou canst not miss:

There stands a wither'd trunk, some six feet high,
 Of oak, or pine, unrotted by the rain;
 On either side have two white stones been plac'd, 380
 Where meet two roads; and all around there lies
 A smooth and level course; here stood perchance
 The tomb of one who died long years ago;
 Or former generations here have plac'd,
 As now Achilles hath decreed, a goal.
 There drive, as only not to graze the post;
 And leaning o'er the wicker body, leave
 Close on the left the stones; thine offside horse
 Then urge with voice and whip, and slack his rein,
 And let the nearside horse so closely graze, 390
 As that thy nave may seem to touch, the goal:
 But yet beware, lest, striking on the stone,
 Thy steeds thou injure, and thy chariot break,
 A source of triumph to thy rivals all,
 Of shame to thee; but thou sage caution use;
 For, following, if thou make the turn the first,
 Not one of all shall pass thee, or o'ertake;
 Not though Arion's self were in the car,
 Adrastus' flying steed, of heav'nly race,
 Nor those which here Laomedon possess'd." 400

This said, and to his son his counsels giv'n,
 The aged Nestor to his seat withdrew.
 Fifth in the lists Meriones appear'd.
 They mounted on their cars, and cast their lots:
 Achilles shook the helmet; first leap'd forth
 The lot of Nestor's son, Antilochus;
 Next came the King Eumelus; after whom
 The valiant Meneläus, Atreus' son;
 The fourth, Meriones; and last of all,
 But ablest far, Tydides drew his place. 410

They stood in line; Achilles pointed out,
 Far on the level plain, the distant goal;
 And there in charge the godlike Phoenix plac'd,
 His father's ancient follower, to observe
 The course assign'd, and true report to make.
 Then all at once their whips they rais'd, and urg'd
 By rein, and hand, and voice, their eager steeds.
 They from the ships pursued their rapid course
 Athwart the distant plain; beneath their chests
 Rose like a cloud, or hurricane, the dust; 420

Loose floated on the breeze their ample manes;
 The cars now skimm'd along the fertile ground,
 Now bounded high in air; the charioteers
 Stood up aloft, and ev'ry bosom beat
 With hope of vict'ry; each with eager shout
 Cheering his steeds, that scour'd the dusty plain.
 But when, the farthest limits of the course
 Attain'd, they turn'd beside the hoary sea,
 Strain'd to their utmost speed, were plainly seen
 The qualities of each; then in the front 430
 Appear'd Eumelus' flying mares, and next
 The Trojan horses of Tydides came:
 Nor these were far behind, but following close
 They seem'd in act to leap upon the car.
 Eumelus, on his neck and shoulders broad,
 Felt their warm breath; for o'er him, as they flew,
 Their heads were downward bent; and now, perchance,
 Had he or pass'd, or made an even race,
 But that, incens'd with valiant Diomed,
 Apollo wrested from his hands the whip. 440
 Then tears of anger from his eyelids fell,
 As gaining more and more the mares he saw,
 While, urg'd no more, his horses slack'd their speed.
 But Pallas mark'd Apollo's treach'rous wile;
 And hasting to the chief, restor'd his whip,
 And to his horses strength and courage gave.
 The Goddess then Admetus' son pursued,
 And snapp'd his chariot yoke; the mares, releas'd,
 Swerv'd from the track; the pole upon the ground
 Lay loosen'd from the car; and he himself 450
 Beside the wheel was from the chariot hurl'd.
 From elbows, mouth, and nose, the skin was torn;
 His forehead crush'd and batter'd in; his eyes
 Were fill'd with tears, and lost his pow'r of speech.
 Tydides turn'd aside, and far ahead
 Of all the rest, pass'd on; for Pallas gave
 His horses courage, and his triumph will'd.
 Next him, the fair-hair'd Meneläus came,
 The son of Atreus; but Antilochus
 Thus to his father's horses call'd aloud: 460
 "Forward, and stretch ye to your utmost speed;
 I ask you not with those of Diomed
 In vain to strive, whom Pallas hath endued

With added swiftness, and his triumph will'd;
 But haste ye, and o'ertake Atrides' car,
 Nor be by Æthe, by a mare, disgrac'd.
 Why, my brave horses, why be left behind?
 This too I warn ye, and will make it good:
 No more at Nestor's hand shall ye receive
 Your provender, but with the sword be slain, 470
 If by your faults a lower prize be ours;
 Then rouse ye now, and put forth all your speed,
 And I will so contrive, as not to fail
 Of slipping past them in the narrow way."

He said; the horses, of his voice in awe,
 Put forth their pow'rs awhile; before them soon
 Antilochus the narrow pass espied.
 It was a gully, where the winter's rain
 Had lain collected, and had broken through
 A length of road, and hollow'd out the ground: 480
 There Meneläus held his cautious course,
 Fearing collision; but Antilochus,
 Drawing his steeds a little from the track,
 Bore down upon him sideways: then in fear,
 The son of Atreus to Antilochus
 Shouted aloud, "Antilochus, thou driv'st
 Like one insane; hold in awhile thy steeds;
 Here is no space; where wider grows the road,
 There thou mayst pass; but here, thou wilt but cause
 Our cars to clash, and bring us both to harm." 490

He said; but madlier drove Antilochus,
 Plying the goad, as though he heard him not.
 Far as a discus' flight, by some stout youth,
 That tests his vigour, from the shoulder hurl'd,
 So far they ran together, side by side:
 Then dropp'd Atrides' horses to the rear,
 For he himself forbore to urge their speed,
 Lest, meeting in the narrow pass, the cars
 Should be o'erthrown, and they themselves, in haste
 To gain the vict'ry, in the dust be roll'd. 500
 Then thus, reproachful, to Antilochus:

"Antilochus, thou most perverse of men!
 Beshrew thy heart! we Greeks are much deceiv'd
 Who give thee fame for wisdom! yet ev'n now
 Thou shalt not gain, but on thine oath, the prize."

He said, and to his horses call'd aloud: