THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

DONE INTO ENGLISH VERSE

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ODYSSEUS IS CARRIED OVER TO ITHACA BY THE PHÆACIANS, AND LAID SLEEPING IN HIS OWN LAND AMIDST HIS GIFTS: AWAKING HE KNOWS NOT THE COUNTRY, TILL ATHENE, AT FIRST IN THE LIKENESS OF A SHEPHERD AND THEN AS A WOMAN, COMETH TO HIM: SHE BIDDETH HIM SEEK OUT EUMÆUS HIS SWINEHERD, AND CHANGETH HIS ASPECT TO THE SIMILITUDE OF AN OLD GANGREL MAN SO THAT HE MAY NOT BE KNOWN.

So he spake, and all those people they sat in silence there,
For the tale's delight bound all men through the shadowy halls and But at last Alcinois answered and spake to him and said: [fair.

"Ye, now thou art come, Odysseus, to my house high-roofed o'erhead,
And brazen-floored, I deem not that thou shalt wander more
And stray from thy returning for all thy troubles sore.
But for you, a thing I tell you, and on each a charge I lay,
All ye, who in my feast-hall are wont from day to day
To drink the dark wine of worship, and hearken the minstrel's song.
Lo now for the guest the garments in the smooth chest lie along,
And the gold all deftly fashioned, and the other gifts dear-bought:
That the wise Phæacian chieftains already here have brought;
But a tripod and a caldron now give we every man,
And thereafter mid the people shall we gather that we can
In boot thereof; for 'tis heavy for free gifts on one to fall."

In suchwise spake Alcinoüs, and his word seemed good to all,
And therewith they departed and home they went each one.

But when the Mother of Morning, Rose-fingered Day-dawn, shone,
Then adown to the ship they hastened with the man-delighting brass,
And Alcinoüs holy in might about through the ship did pass
And neath the thwarts in order laid all, lest when they drave
The ship with oars a-speeding some hurt a man might have.

Then they went to Alcinoüs' house, and a fair feast there they dight,
And for them an ox he hallowed, Alcinoüs holy in might,
To Zeus the Son of Cronos, Black-cloudy, all men's King:
And they burned up the thighs and were merry in their noble banqueting;
And amidst them the holy minstrel Demodocus sang out,
Beloved of the folk. But Odysseus would ever turn about
His head to the Sun to behold him, as he shone on all and o'er,
As one who desired his setting, for he longed for his homefare sore
—Like a man who longeth for supper for whom daylong by now
Through the fallow two dark oxen have dragged the jointed plough,
And fain is he of the sunset and the ending of the day
That speedeth him home to his supper; and his knees are stiff on the way:
—E'en so fain was now Odysseus of the waning of the light,
And unto those Phaeacians oar-fain he spake outright;
And chief unto Alcinoüs he let the word fly forth:

"O lord and king Alcinoüs, of the people most of worth!
Pour now, and send me homeward in peace, and hail be ye!
For now are all things ready that my dear heart longed to be,
The speeders and gifts of well-wishers; and thereof may the Gods of the
Give me all good! and at home may this to me be given, [heaven
That there I may find my helpmate and my loved friends safe and sound!
But may joy with you here abiding with your wedded wives abound,
And with your children also! God give you health and might,
And may no kind of evil on the folk of this land alight!"

So he spake; and all yea-said him, and bade the thing to be,
That the guest on his way be speeded since he spake so righteously;
And straightway unto the herald thus spake Alcinoüs' might:

"Now blend the bowl Pontonoüs, and deal the wine aright
To all folk in the feast-hall, that to father Zeus we may pray,
And unto the land of his fathers we may speed the guest away."

He spake, and Pontonoüs straightway the wine heart-soothing filled,
And dealt it about to all men, and drink-offering then they spilled
To the happy Gods of the Heavens, the widespread place and fair,
From where they sat in the high-seat; but Odysseus stood up there,
And unto the hand of Arete the double cup did he take,
And speeding speech unto her, this winged word he spake:

"Hail thou, O Queen, henceforward until eld come on thee,
And death at last and at latest which unto all must be!
I go, but be thou happy abiding in thine house
With thy children and thy people and the King Alcinoüs!"

So saying over the threshold divine Odysseus went,
And withal the herald before him the King Alcinoüs sent,
And down to the ship the speedy, and the side of the sea he led,
And the servants of the women Arete with him sped:
Whereof one bore a mantle and a frock well-washed and fair;
And the weight of the strong-made coffer another woman bare;
And yet there went another, and red wine and bread bore she.
But when they came unto the ship and down to the side of the sea
Therewith the noble speeders took all the gear aboard,
And adown in the hollow ship the meat and drink they stored;
And then they spread for Odysseus a rug and a linen sheet
On the hollow black ship’s aft-deck, to sleep on soft and sweet.
So then he went a-shipboard and lay down silently,
And they sat adown on the benches, each in order as should be.
And so they loosed the hawser from the hole of the stone on shore.

But as they cast them abackward and tossed up the brine with the oar,
E’en then upon his eyelids did sleep and slumber speed,
Sweetest, and most unbroken, most like to death indeed;
But she, as over the plain the stallions’ fourfold yoke
Rush, driven on together by the whip-lash and the stroke,
And rear aloft and speed them, and easy way they make,
So rose her stern on the sea waves, and following on her wake
Rolled on the dark-blue billow of the tumble of the sea:
So all unscathed and steady she sped, nor swift as she
Might fly the stark gerfalcon, the swiftest of all fowl,
As swiftly running onward she cleft the sea-flood’s roll,
Bearing a man most like to the Gods for his wisdom and guile,
Who many a sorrow had suffered, and was soul-tossed on a while
As he went through the warfare of men and the terrible deeds of the deep;
But slept there now unfearful, and forgot all woes in sleep.

But when that star was arising, the brightest that cometh his way,
With the tidings of the Day-dawn and the light of the Mother of Day,
The ship on the sea-waves flitting drew nigh the island then.
Know now that there lieth an haven in the land of the Ithacan men,
Of Phorcys the salt-sea’s elder, and therein two nesses stand,
Shear cliffs thrust toward the haven drawn down on either hand,
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That ward the swell that ariseth 'neath the great winds' mastery,
So that the keels, the well-decked, unmoored within may lie,
When unto the goal of the roadstead at last they have gotten to be.
But there at the head of the haven is a long-leaved olive-tree,
And nigh to the tree a rock-den, lovely and shaded all,
Unto the Nymphs made holy whom men the Naiads call.
And therewithin are wine-bowls and wine-jars all of stone;
And there the bees hive honey, and therewithal are done
Long looms of stone, whereinto the very Nymphs do weave
Sea-purple webs more wondrous than eyes may well believe;
And therein are the waters welling: But two ingates are to the den;
The one to the north-side facing is meet for the going of men,
But that to the south more holy, and no gate for men is this,
That they thereby should enter, but the road of the Deathless it is.

Thereto the ship were they driving, for they knew the place of yore;
And therewithal swift speeding she ran half-length on the shore,
So well forsooth was she driven by oarsmen deef of hand:
But they from the decked ship going fared up upon the land;
And first from the hollow ship Odysseus' self they bare,
And he lying on the linen and the blanket glossy-fair,
And there on the sand they laid him in slumber bound as yet.

Then that gear from the ship they carried which he erewhile did get
From Phœacian lords on his homefare through Athene's mighty soul;
And all that in a heap together they laid by an olive bole
And out of the road; lest some one of the land's wayfaring men
Should pass ere Odysseus wakened and spoil it there and then.

Then home again they hied them, nor yet did the Shaker of Earth
Forget his threats 'gainst Odysseus, the peer of the Gods in worth,
Wherewith erewhile he threatened; so the rede of Zeus he sought:
"Zeus Father, well may my worship midst the Deathless come to nought
When now midst men that perish no more they worship me;
Nay not those men Phaeacian though of my blood they be.

Lo now! I meant that Odysseus should come home safe on a day
Through many a woe; nor his homefare would I utterly take away
Since thou hadst first yea-said it, and promised it to be.
But him in a swift ship sleeping have they ferried o'er the sea,
And in Ithaca set him adown with goodly gifts and rare,
Yea, gold and brass abundant, and raiment woven fair,
So much that no such a deal had Odysseus borne away
Had he come from Troy-town scathless with his own allotted prey."

Then Zeus, the Cloud-pack's Herder, he answered again and said:

"Hah, Shaker of Earth, far swaying, what a word hereof hast thou made!
The Gods mar not thy worship; yea, this indeed were hard
If thou, our best and our eldest, by our own hands were marred;
But if one of mankind yield him to his might and mastery
And mar thine honour henceforward, with thee doth the wreaking lie.
Do thy will then, and accomplish the thing that thy soul deems dear."

Then Poseidon the Earth's Shaker, he spake and answered there:

"Nay, I had not tarried to do it, Black-cloudy, after thy word;
But thy wrath have I ever dreaded, and fain would I shun it, lord;
But now the lovely ship of that Phaeacian folk
As she cometh aback from the ferry would I shatter with my stroke
Mid the darkling deep, that henceforward they ferry men no more,
And with a mighty mountain their burg will I shadow o'er."

Then Zeus, the Cloud-pack's Herder, thus answered thereupon:

"O friend, thuswise I deem it the meetest to be done:
When all the folk of the city behold her hard at hand
Swift speeding, smite her straightway to a rock anigh the land,  
And yet a swift ship's image, that all men may wonder sore;  
And with a mighty mountain shalt thou shade their city o'er."

But when Poseidon had heard him, then the Shaker of the Earth  
Went on his ways to Scheria, whence Phaeacians have their birth;  
And there abode: and the sea-swift, the ship, came close anigh  
Swift speeding; then Earth Shaker drew near and stood thereby,  
And into stone he turned her, and rooted her below,  
With the stroke of his hand laid flatting, and thence away did he go.

But unto one another winged words they uttered then,  
Those long-oar-wont Phaeacians, the ship-renowned men;  
And thus unto his neighbour some one of them would say:  
"O me! who then on the sea-flood hath made our ship to stay,  
E'en as she sped her homeward clear seen of every one?"

Thuswise would they be speaking, nor knew they how 'twas done.  
But Alcinoois spake unto them, and thuswise spake he out:  
"Hah! how the old foretelling of my father cometh about!  
Whereas he said that Poseidon would be wroth with us one day  
Because we ferry all men all scathless on their way.  
And that once on a while he would ruin a fair ship of Phaeacian men  
On the darkling deep, as she hied her from the ferrying back again,  
And that he would o'ershadow our city with the mound of a mighty hill.  
Such things would the elder give out, and all this doth God fulfil:  
So do ye after my bidding, and let us all obey:  
Cease we from the ferrying of menfolk whoever cometh his way  
And entereth this our city; and twelve bulls of the best ye may get  
To Poseidon let us hallow, that he may pity us yet,  
Nor with the hill high-reaching may hide our burg outright."
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So he spake, and sore they dreaded, and the bulls for the hallowing night.

But while unto King Poseidon these men in suchwise prayed,
And the lords of those Phaeacians, and they who the people swayed
Stood round about the altar, from his sleep Odysseus awoke
In the very land of his fathers; yet knew not the place of his folk,
So long had he been absent: and round about him there
Zeus' Daughter, Pallas Athene, spread a mist amid the air,
That all things she might tell him while yet he was unknown,
Ere either his wife should know him or his friends or the folk of his town,
Before on the Wooers he wreaked him of their prideful mastery.
Therefore all things about him the King as strange did see,
The uncrooked ways far-reaching, the all-safe haven there,
The steep high rocks and the trees, well growing, leafy-fair.

So he rose and stood on his feet, and looked on his father-land,
And groaned therewith, and smiting his thigh with the flat of his hand
He spake a word as he stood there amidst of his weary woe:
"O me! to what land of men-folk that die am I gotten now?"
Wild men of no dooms wotting, and masterful of mood,
Or godly men of counsel, guest-loving men and good?
This stuff, whither now do I bear it, and myself whereto do I stray?
Would God that mid the Phaeacians I had bided many a day,
Then had I come to some other of the Kings that are of might,
Who belike had cherished me kindly and sped me home aright.
And now forsooth I wot not where these things I shall lay;
For here I will not leave them lest to men they fall a prey.
Out on it! not in all things were they wise and righteous then,
The captains and the elders of those Phaeacian men,
Who unto an alien land have brought me; they who said
They would flit me to Ithaca clear-seen, nor good their word have made.
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May Zeus of the Suppliants wreak me, who of all men warden is,
And avengeth him of each man who against him doeth amiss!
But now these goods will I look to, and tell them o'er, lest they
In their hollow ship have taken thereof when they went on their way."

So saying the goodly tripods and bowls he numbered and told,
And the goodly woven raiment and all the store of gold,
And thereof no whit was lacking: but his father-land he bewept
As along the shore of the wallow of the washing seas he crept
Lamenting all. But thither now Athene drew anear,
And the semblance of a youngling, a shepherd of sheep, did she wear,
A delicate swain of suchlike as the sons of kings may be:
A cloak about her shoulders two-fold well-wrought had she,
And shoes on her sleek-skinned feet, and in her hand a spear.
But Odysseus was glad when he saw her and came and stood anear,
And therewith he spake unto her in winged words and fleet:

"Hail friend! since in this country thou art the first I meet,
And I bid thee with no evil do thou withstand my way,
But save me, my goods and me also, since unto thee I pray
As unto a God: beseeching I come to thy dear knees.
So tell me truly of matters, since well thou wittest of these;
What land is this, and what people, and what men dwell hereby?
Is it one of the manifest islands, or doth the land here lie
Sloped downlong on the salt-sea, the fruitful land of the main?"

But the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, thus spake and answered again:
"Witless art thou, O Stranger, or from far across the sea,
Whereas of the land thou askest; for never shall it be
A nought and nameless country; there knoweth it many an one,
Both of the men abiding toward the eastward and the sun,
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And of those that are over against it down toward the darkling west.
Forsooth 'tis a craggy country, nor yet for horse-draught best;
Yet not a land so sorry, though nothing wide it be,
For it beareth corn past telling, and wine abundantly;
Since ever the shower hath it and the all-abounding dew;
A goat-land good, and a neat-land, and all kinds of wood thereto;
And therein are watering-places unfailing through the year.
Yea to Troy-town, O Stranger, would the name of Ithaca fare,
For as far as men say that it lieth from the lands of Achæan men."

So she spake, but the goodly Odysseus toll-stout was glad as then,
In his father-land rejoicing when she spake unto him thus,
E'en Pallas Athene the Daughter of the great shield-bearing Zeus.
And he sent his voice unto her, and wingèd words he said;
Yet the very truth he told not, but the word aback he stayed;
For ever was he holding in his heart a gainful wit:

"Of Ithaca know I; yea, even in wide Crete I heard of it
Far over the sea, and as now am I come thereto, both I
And these my goods; but as many I left with my children to lie
When I fled because I had slain Idomeneus' son most dear,
E'en Orsilochnus swift-footed, who in wide Crete dwelt, and there
All men gainseeking vanquished with his feet the swift on the way.
Now he indeed would have spoiled me of all my Troy-won prey
For the which my soul had suffered so many a misery,
And worn through the wars of manfolk and the dreadful waves of the sea
Because I would not serve him, nor please his father's will
Amid the folk of the Trojans, but led mine own folk still.
So him from the field a-wending I smote with the brazen spear
As I with a fellow lay lurking the highway-side anear;
And black night hid the heavens, and no man as we lay
Might note us there; so in secret I took his life away.  
But when with the brass sharp-whetted I had slain him there and then  
I went to a ship, and besought them, the proud Phœnicián men,  
And gave to them of the plunder what their souls might satisfy,  
And bade them bear me to Pylos and set me down thereby,  
Or unto the holy Eleus where Epeian men bear sway.  
But forsooth the might of the wind it drave them thence away,  
Sore 'gainst their will; nor would they have beguiled me with unright.  
So then from our course a-straying, hither we came a night  
And in haste thrust into the haven; nor of supper had we heed,  
No one of us, though soothly thereof we had sore need;  
But e'en so from our ship we gat us, and lay down one and all,  
And over me sore wearied sweet sleep failed not to fail.  
Then from out of the hollow ship they bore my goods aland,  
And laid them adown beside me as I slept upon the sand;  
And they went aboard, and departed for Sidon builded fair,  
But me with heart sore grieving they left behind them here."

So he spake; but the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, smiled and now  
She stroked him down with her hand and like to a woman did grow  
Comely and great of body, and dext fine things to make;  
So she sent her voice out toward him, and wingèd words she spake:  

"Ah, cunning were he and shifty, who thee should overbear  
In guilefulness of all kinds, yea e'en if a god he were!  
Thou hard one, shifty of rede, guile-greedy, nought wouldst thou  
From thy guilefulness refrain thee, nay not in thine own land now,  
And thy words of sly devising which thou lov'st from the root of thine heart.  
But speak we no more of such things; for we twain know each for our part  
All guile; since thou amidst menfolk art far the best of all  
In counsel and in speech-words; and on me mid the Gods doth fall"
The glory of redes and of sleight.—And thou knewest not me, the Maid, 300
The Daughter of Zeus, e’en Pallas Athene, ever thine aid,
Who stand beside thee and ward thee in all toil through which ye wear?
Who unto all Phaecians have made thee lief and dear?
And hither to thee am I come, that we may devise, we twain,
How to hide away thy treasure, the Phaecians’ gift and gain, 310
Which they gave thee on thy homeware by my counsel and device.
And now of the fateful troubles would I tell thee in likewise
In thy builded house that abide thee: now forbear, and bear thou the
Nor unto any tell it how thou comest wandering home, [doom,
Neither of men nor of women, but in silence suffer all
Thy many griefs, and the mastery that from men shall thee befall.”

Then the many-willed Odysseus, he answered presently:

“O Goddess, ’tis hard for a mortal, though wise of wit he be,
To know thee when he meets thee, for shapes many dost thou on.
But this I know full surely, thou wert kind a while agone
While we sons of the Achaeans by Troy-town fought the fight;
But when the steep city of Priam we had overthrown outright
And went up on our ships, and God scattered the Achaeans wide abroad,
I saw thee not thenceforward, nor yet my ship aboard
Did I note thee, O Daughter of Zeus, for the putting away of my woe;
But ever with heart sore burdened a wandering did I go
Till the day when the Gods unbound me and the spell of evil broke,
And there midst the men Phaecian and the very wealthy folk
With words then didst thou cheer me, and me to the city didst lead,
But now by the Father I pray thee,—for I deem not yet indeed
That to Ithaca the clear-seen I am come, but am turned away
To some other land; and for thee, these words that thou dost say
Thou speakest but in jesting to mock and cheat my mind.—
In very sooth, am I gotten to my father-land the kind?”
Then answered the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, and thus spake she:

"Yea, and such a thought for ever within thy breast must be! Yet here I may not leave thee amidst thy grief of heart, Soft-spoken, and keen-witted, and wise to forbear as thou art. For another man returning from the straying and the strife Would be eager to look on his homestead and his children and his wife; But thou in nowise willest to seek out what hath been Ere thy wife thou hast tried yet further; who still as erst, I ween, Within her halls abideth and mourneth thee always, And ever in weeping weareth the night-tide and the days; But this I never doubted but in my mind held fast, That thou having lost thy fellows shouldst come home at the last: But look you, I had no mind against Poseidon to fight, My father's very brother, who had thee in despite, For wrath because of thy blinding of his well-beloved son. Now the Ithacan land will I show thee, that assured thou may' st look For this is the haven of Phorcys the Elder of the sea; And lo, at the head of the haven a long-leaved olive-tree, And anigh the same a rock-den full lovely, shaded withal; The holy place of the Nymphs whom men the Naiads call. Lo, this is the roofed-in rock-den where to the Nymphs of old Full many a thing didst thou hallow and good gifts an hundredfold; And lo thou, Neritos yonder in woody raiment clad!"

So she spake, and the mist she scattered, and sight of the land he had; And the toil-stout goodly Odysseus was glad, and in joy and mirth Beheld the land that was his; and he kissed the corn-kind earth; And unto the Nymphs thereafter he lifted his hands and prayed:

"O Naiad Nymphs, Zeus' Daughters, a while ago I said That never more should I see you: now hail with my kindly prayers!"
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And gifts withal shall I give you as it was in the other years,
If the Daughter of Zeus, Spoil-driver, be kind that I may live,
And that my son beloved hereafter wax and thrive."

But the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, spake to him for her part:
"Be bold and of good courage, nor with these things vex thine heart!
But as now lay we thy chattels within the holy den,
That there they may bide thy coming all safe from other men.
And then let us fall to counsel how all may best be done."

Therewith she went down to the rock-den, shadowed over from the sun,
And searched out its hiding-places, while Odysseus brought all there,
The gold and the long-lived brass and the raiment woven fair,
Which those folk of the Pheacians to him e'en now had given;
But Pallas Athene, the Daughter of the shielded Zeus of heaven,
Stored all things well and duly, and a stone to the door did roll.
Then they sat them adown together by the holy olive bole;
And there for the masterful Woerers they devise the doom and the death;
And Pallas Athene beginneth, and the word she taketh and saith:

"O Zeus-bred son of Laertes, Odysseus of many a guile,
[while, Think how on the shameless Woerers thou mayst lay thine hands in a
Who now these three years over have been masters in thine hall,
Wooing thy godlike helpmate and the wooing gifts giving withal;
While she, for ever lamenting thy late return in her heart,
Unto all of them giveth a hope, and to each man a promise apart, 380
Sending them many a message, while her mind means another thing."

Therewith the shifty Odysseus thus spake in his answering:
"Hah! e'en as Agamemnon, the son of Atreus, hath died,
Another such bane as baleful in my halls had I come to abide,
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But if thou, O Goddess, had told me of those things in their verity ;
But I prithee weave and devise it how of these avenged I may be ;
And stand by me thyself and set in me that heart for the battle-joy
As wherewith we loosed aforetime the shining coif of Troy.
If thou stand beside me, O Grey-eyed, as battle-glad as then,
Forsooth would I hold the battle 'gainst thrice an hundred men, 390
With thee, O worshipped Goddess, so kind to bear me aid."

But the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, she answered him and said :
"Yea, surely shall I be with thee, nor my presence shalt thou miss
When we fall to work hereover : and hereof my deeming is
That some one of those, the Wooers who eat thy livelihood,
Shall besoul the widespread hall-floor with the splash of brains and blood.
But come now, unknown shall I make thee to all of human kin ;
On thy limbs, the round and lissome, will I wither thy fair skin,
And the yellow locks on thine head will I waste, and do on thee a clout,
Which any man beholding shall loathe him that it wrappeth about; 400
And thine eyen will I blear over, that are now so fair and bright;
And so shalt thou seem but loathly unto the Wooers' sight, [a day.
Yea, and unto thy wife and thy child, whom thou leftest in thine hall on
But first unto the swineherd do thou come upon thy way,
Who o'er all thy swine is master, and forgets not his kindness for thee,
And loveth thy son moreover and the wise Penelope.
Amidst his swine is he sitting, ye shall find them pasturing
Along by the rock of Corax and Arethusa the spring.
There eat they abundant acorns and drink of the water black,
Whereby are the swine so nourished that rich lard they nowise lack. 410
There bide thou, and be asking of all things as thou sittest there,
While I get me gone unto Sparta, the nurse of women fair,
That Telemachus I may summon, yea, him thy very son,
Who to wide-field Lacedaemon and Menelaüs has gone
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

To seek of thy fame and thy rumour, if yet alive ye be."

Spake the many-wiled Odysseus, and answered presently:
"Why then didst thou not tell him since thy mind all things doth know?
Wouldst thou have him also wandering and suffering grief and woe
On the sea that hath no harvest, while men eat his store away?"

But the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, she fell to answer and say:
"Nay, let not thy mind, I bid thee, o'ermuch on him be set;
For I myself, I sent him, that fair fame he might get
Going elsewhere; and no labour he hath, but sitteth in peace
In the house of Menelaüs, wherein is all increase.
Forsooth in their black ship biding those youths do him waylay;
For him ere aback he cometh to his land they desire to slay.
But I do not think it shall be so, till the earth hold some of those
Among the men of the Wooers, who eat thy store so close."

So spake Athene, and touched him with the staff that she did bear,
And on his round limbs withered the skin that was fresh and fair,
And she wasted the yellow locks on his head; and his every limb,
The skin of an old man ancient she did it over him,
And bleared his eyen moreover that were so bright erstwhile,
And she cast a foul clout on him, and a kirtle very vile,
All tattered and torn, and sullied with the smoke of the feasting-hall,
And a great bald skin of a stag swift-foot she cast o'er all,
And a staff therewith she gave him, and a scrip, an unseemly thing,
All tattered it was and foul, and slung by a twisted string.

So after the Council they parted, and She her way sped on
To Lacedæmon the holy to fetch Odysseus' son.
BOOK XIV.

ARGUMENT.

ODYSSEUS COMETH TO THE HOUSE OF EUMÆUS THE SWINEHERD IN
THE SHAPE OF AN OLD STAFF-CARLE, AND IS KINDLY ENTERTAINED
OF HIM; HE TELLETH EUMÆUS OF THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS, BUT
HATH NO CREDENCE OF HIM; THEREWITH HE TELLETH HIM A
FEIGNED TALE OF HIMSELF: AND SO TO SupPer AND Bed IN THE
HOUSE OF EUMÆUS.

THEREWITH he went up from the haven along by the rocky way
Of the fells and the woody places, whereby did Athene say
He should find the noble swineherd, who heeded his goods and his gear
Above all the thralls he had got him and all those of his house that were.
So, sitting in the doorway of the garth the man he found,
Where high aloft it was builded, well seen on a rising ground,
Great, fair, with a clear space round it: but the swineherd's very hand
Had builded the wall for the swine of his master aloof from the land,
And nought thereof his mistress or the old Laertes had known: [Stone:
With great dragged stones had he built it, and with thorns had coped the
He had cleft the black of an oak-tree, and on every side all round
Stout stakes set close together he had driven into the ground;
And within the garth moreover twelve swine-styes had he done,
Good swine-beds near to each other, and there in every one
Were a fifty of earth-wallowers, the fruitful brood-sows, kept; [Slept;
But the boars of the herd, withoutward from those sow-swine styes they
And fair fewer they were; for the Wooers, the god-great, evermore,
Would minish them by eating, and the swineherd sent of the store
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

The fattest and the likeliest of all the hog-kind there.
Three hundred to wit, and sixty, of these same beasts there were; 30
And four hounds like wild beasts of the woodland beside them ever slept,
Which the swineherd, leader of menfolk, for that cause nourished and
kept.

Now he himself fair sandals to his feet was fitting as then,
That were cut from a good sound oxhide, but as for the other men,
There were three that this and that way with the pasturing swine were gone;
But the fourth, perforce he had sent him his ways unto the town
To take a swine to the Wooers, that they the lordly great
Might hallow the beast, their souls with his flesh to satiate.

But the baying dogs on a sudden of Odysseus now caught sight
And ran upon him yelping; and he with practised sleight 30
Straight sat him down on the earth, and dropped his staff from his hand,
Yet ugly hurt had he suffered in this stead of his very land,
But thereupon the swineherd, with swift feet following on,
Straight gat him out through the entry and dropped the skin adown,
And chid the hounds, and thencefrom drave them this way and that
With plenteous stones cast quickly: and he spake to the King thereat:

"Old man, it lacked but a little that the dogs had thee undone
In sudden wise; and thereafter of thee a shame had I won.
And forsooth of woe and wailing God giveth me now,
Since in grief for a godlike master do I abide in woe, 40
While his fatted swine I nourish for other men to eat,
And he belike sore craving for e'en a morsel of meat,
Strays through the alien cities and the far folk many an one,
If yet indeed he liveth and looketh on the sun.
But come thou home to the booth, old man, that thou in the stead,
Having quenched thine own heart's longing for the meal of wine and bread,
BOOK XIV.

May'st tell us whence thou comest and what woe thou bearest withal."

So spake the goodly swineherd and led him home to the hall,
And brought him and set him adown, and leaved twigs 'neath him spread,
And the skin of a shaggy wild-goat thereover, which he for a bed
Did use for its hairy bigness; and glad was Odysseus at heart
That suchwise he gave him guesting, and therewith spake on his part:

"May Zeus and the other Deathless, O Stranger, give to thee
All that which thou most desirest, since so kind thou takest me."

But therewith Eumæus the Swineherd, he answered him and said:
"O guest, it were not rightful, though e'en worser than thou he were sped,
To put shame upon a stranger; since guests and bedesmen all,
From Zeus they are; and our giving, although it be but small,
Is dear; for the wont 'tis of thrall-folk to be timorous day by day
When young men are their masters and over them bear sway.

Ah verily that man's homefare the Gods perforce have stayed
Who would have cherished me dearly, and given me gear to aid,
An acre and an homestead, and a wife that many woo;
Such gifts as a king beloved his man will give unto,
Who hath toiled and earned good increase by the labour of his hand;
As forsooth has this my toiling wherein I stoutly stand.
Yea much had my king availed me, had he waxen old in his place.
—He is gone; and would that Helen had gone with all her race!
Since for many a man and many wrought she loosening of the knees,
And for Agamemnon's glory went this man across the seas,
Unto Ilios rich in horses with the men of Troy to fight."

So saying, with a girdle he girt himself aright,
And went unto the swine-styes where penned were the piglings' crew,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Whence he took and brought out twain, and both he hallowed and slew,
And scalded, and sheared them piece-meal, and spitted all the meat,
And roasted all and bore it, and set forth for Odysseus to eat,
All hot from the very spits, with the barley white besprent.
And therewith in a cup of ivy heart-gladdening wine he blent,
And sat down over against him, and bade to the meat and spake:

"Eat now, O guest, of the piglings, which are for the thralls to take; so
For of the hogs well fatted eat the Wooers day by day,
With no thought in their hearts of the vengeance; nor any pity have they.
Yet the happy Gods, they love not such headlong frowardness,
But the righteous dooms of menfolk and their seemly deeds they bless.
Yea the foemen of the aliens, when they fall upon the land,
And Zeus to them is giving the prey unto their hand,
And they fill their ships for departing that they may get them home,—
'Mid the hearts of e'en these there falleth strong fear of the wrath to come.
But somewhat these Wooers are wetting, or have heard some God maybe
Tell of his piteous ending; so nowise righteously
Will they woo, or get them homewards; but ever in peace they sit
And eat up the wealth in their pride, and spare not any Whit.
For as many as are the nights and the days that of Zeus are won
No day but one beast do they hallow, nor ever but two alone:
And his wine will they waste in their riot; in their mastery is it poured;
For indeed was his treasure boundless, nor the like hath any lord
Of the black fields of the mainland, nor yet in Ithaca here;
Nay not twenty men together have such abundant gear.
And to thee will I now be telling what wealth the man doth keep:
He hath twelve herds on the mainland, and as many flocks of sheep,
And of droves of swine as many, and of goat-flocks scattering wide,
'E'en such as strangers look to and his own house-carles beside,
But here at the island's outmost, wide-wandering goat-flocks feed,
BOOK XIV.

Eleven in all, and herdsman of the best their pasture heed;
And daily adown to the Wooers by each man thereof is sped
Of the fatted goats whichever may seem the likeliest head.
But watch and ward am I keeping o’er these same swine ye see,
And ever I cull and send them the fattest that there be.”

So he spake; but Odysseus in silence ate greedily and drank,
While still in his heart for the Wooers the evil sprouted rank;
But when he had supped and his soul with the meat was lustier grown,
Eumæus filled and handed the cup that was his own,
And he took it filled with the wine, and his heart rejoiced at the thing;
And therewith he spake to the other, and set a word on the wing:

“O friend, and what man was it with his chattels bought thee then,
This man of whom thou tellest so rich amidst of men?
And for Agamemnon’s glory as thou say’st his bane he got.
Tell me, because it may be that of such a man I wot;
Zeus knoweth alone and the others, the Gods that deathless abide.
But I may have seen him to tell of, since I wander far and wide.”

But the swineherd, the leader of folk, thuswise did he answer and say:
“Old man, no wanderer’s story of the man shall now make way
Unto the hope of his helpmate, or his well-belovéd son:
For wandering men, men needy of victuals, many an one,
Would be lying hereof, nought wishful the very sooth to say;
And every gangrel body that to Ithaca chanceth to stray,
Unto the Queen he cometh, and a false tale telleth withal;
And she taketh him in with all kindness, and searcheth into it all;
And she mourneth, and down from her eyelids ever the tear-drops run,
As women will do for a husband in far lands dead and gone.
And thou too belike, old man, might fashion a tale indeed
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

If any should give thee raiment, a coat and a cloak to thy need.
But the dogs, and the fowl swift-fleeting, this long while now have rest
The skin from the bones of this man, and his soul the body hath left.
Or the fish of the sea have devoured him, and his bones cast up aitland,
High up on the shore are lying rolled round in plenteous sand.
There then he died, and thenceforward for his friends who are left behind
Breeds sorrow, and chiefly for me; for nevermore shall I find
Another so kindly a master, wherever I go or may come;
Nay, not if I got me again to my father and mother and home,
And the house wherein I was born, and the folk that cherished me.
Nor so much for them do I sorrow, though fain were I to be
Once more in the land of my fathers, and behold them with mine eyes,
As I long for Odysseus departed; and anigh to my soul it lies.
Yea, for awe I scarce may name him, O guest, though he be not here;
For me in his heart he cherished, and held me lief and dear.
My lord beworshipped I call him, though far away he be."

But the toil-stout goodly Odysseus in thiswise answered he:
"Since utterly thou gainsayest, O friend, nor will have it so
That ever the man shall come back, and thy soul no trust doth know,
So now no longer I say it, but with an oath I swear
That e’en now Odysseus cometh; so give me a guerdon dear
For my tidings then when he cometh aback to his house and his hall,
And do on me goodly raiment, a cloak and a kirtle withal.
But ere then I would not take it for as needy as I be;
For that man is no less loathsome than the Gates of Hell to me,
Who ’neath the pinch of lacking babbleth a lying word.
Bear witness, Zeus the Arch-god, and this guest-loving board,
And the hearth of the glorious Odysseus whereunto I have come,
That all this that I have told of, the days shall bring it home.
Hither shall come Odysseus ere yet this year be sped;
BOOK XIV.

Yea with this moon's last waning, when the new moon stands in its stead,
Then home shall he be gotten, and shall wreak him on each one
Who now befoulth the honour of his wife and his noble son."

Then didst thou, O Swineherd Eumæus, thereto make answer and say:
"Old man, thy need of good tidings God wot I shall never pay,
Nor ever shall come Odysseus: so drink thy wine in peace
And mind we other matters: mind we no more of these.
For grieved is the heart within me nor merrv is my mood
When any man is telling of my trusty king and good.

So now let the oath go by us—Yet might but Odysseus be,
And home as my heart would have it and the heart of Penelope,
And Laertes the Elder of days, and Telemachus godlike and fair!
—Yet ah! for the child that Odysseus begot, in my sorrow I wear.

For the Gods Telemachus nourished as a blossoming shoot of the earth,
And I said to myself that midst men he should be no worser of worth
Than erst was his father belov'd, of body so marvellous made.

But now some one of the Deathless his wit once evenly weighed
Hath marred, or some one of menfolk: he hath gone some tidings to get
Of his father to Pylos the Holy; and the masterful Wooers beset

His homeward way with an ambush, that from Ithaca root and rod
May the stock of Arceius perish, and his name that was great as a God.
Let-a-be! whether he be taken, or escape from these men may get!
And may the Son of Cronos his hand hold over him yet!

But now, old man, I bid thee of thine own trouble to tell;
And give out all things soothly that I may know it well.

Whence art thou then of menfolk? what thy city and thy kin?

In what fashion of keel cam'st thou hither, by what way did the shipmen
That unto Ithaca brought thee, and for what did they give themselves out?
For that thou camest not hither afoot I may not doubt."
So the many counselled Odysseus now fell to answer and say:
"Yes, of all these things will I tell thee as straightly as I may:
If now for a while were with us both meat and honey-sweet wine,
And we in peace a-feasting within this booth of thine,
While other men fall to it the deeds afield to do,
Then lightly might I be telling my tale the whole year through,
Nor yet an end be making of the story of the ill
And the heart-grief laid upon me, worn through by God's own will.

"Of the kin do I declare me of the men of Crete the wide,
The son of a man that was wealthy: but many sons beside
Gotten in lawful wedlock in his house were born and bred,
While a bought thrall was my mother and bore me all unwed.
Yet e'en as his sons begotten in wedlock he honoured me,
Castor, the son of Hylax, of whose blood I boast me to be.
Amidst the folk of the Cretans as a God was he honoured by all
For his happy wife and his riches, and his noble sons and tall:
But the Fates of Death fell on him, and him away they bare
Unto the House of Hades, and his sons straight fell to share
His livelihood amongst them, and the lots thereover threw.
But to me they gave but a little, and gave me a house thereto,
And a wife I wedded besitting wide-landed men and high;
And that because of my valour, for indeed no dastard was I,
And no blancher from the battle—all now has departed and gone,
And yet when ye look on the straw ye may deem of the harvest won;
But sorrow in all plenty hath long encompassed my ways.
Well; Ares and Athene gave me boldness in those days,
And the might to break the battle, and when for the ambush I chose
The best of the men, and was sowing great bale against the foes,
Nought then my noble spirit forbode the death anear,
But leaping out the foremost, I would smite down with the spear.
BOOK XIV.

Such men of the foe as in swiftness of foot to me must yield.
Such was I then in the battle: but I loved no work afield,
Nor yet the thrift of the household that noble race doth rear;
But the ships well dight with oars to me were ever dear,
And shafts of war well shaven, and darts, and the battle-play;
Things baleful, wherefrom others would shrink and shudder away.
But these things God set in my soul, and to me were they goodly gain,
For one man in this delighteth, and of that is another fain.

"Now ere we sons of Achaens went up to the Trojan land,
Nine times the ships swift-faring, and the men I had in hand
To lead 'gainst the alien menfolk, and much good I happed on there;
And thereof I took what liked me, and thereafter had my share
By lot; and my house was holpen and waxed great there and then,
And mighty I waxed and beworshipped amidst the Cretan men.
But when to that way so loathly doomed us far-seeing Zeus
Whereby the knees of a many and a many men grew loose,
Men bade me and Idomeneus the noble and renowned
To lead the ships unto Ilios, nor might a means be found
Whereby we might gainsay it; for the folks' voice pressed us hard.
So then we sons of Achaens thereby for nine years warred,
But the tenth the city of Priam with war we wasted out
And went home with our ships, and God the Achaens scattered about,
But wise Zeus for me the hapless devised the bale and the bane.

"For one month only I bided at home of my children fain,
And my wealth and my wife; and thereafter my heart pressed hard on me
Unto the land of Egypt to sail across the sea,
In ships dight well and goodly with my godlike company.
Nine ships I arrayed, and in haste the people gathered thereby.
Six days my trusty fellows sat with me there at the feast,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And therewithal I gave them full many a slaughter-beast
Wherewith the Gods to worship, and wherewith to dight the board,
But the seventh day we departed on our way from Crete the broad.
We sailed on swift and softly with a north wind fresh and fair,
As though down stream we were dropping, and no ship of mine that was
Took hurt, and so all scathless and hale we sat at ease,
And the wind and the helmsmen bore us the right way o'er the seas.

"So to Egypt the sweet-flowing we came on the fifth fair day,
And in that river of Egypt my bowed ships did I lay;
Then I charged my trusty fellows and gave them strait command
That they by the ships should be biding and draw them high aland; 260
And the watchers I bade betake them to the watching steads and the height,
But they yielded to fierce folly and went after the lusts of their might.
The fair fields of the men of Egypt they fell to plunder and spoil,
And bore off the women and children and slew the men in the broil.
So speedily unto the city came the rumour and the cry,
And men heard the shout and gathered when dawn was in the sky,
And the horsemen and the footmen were over all the plain,
And the light of brass a-flashing; yea, and Zeus the Thunder-fain
Cast ill fear amidst my fellows, and no hardy heart was found
To face the play and abide it; for stark bale stood around.
So there with the whetted brass a many they slew in the stead,
And a many to live in thraldom away from the field they led.

"But for me did Zeus in my mind a rede and a counsel raise
—Though would that there I had perished and met the fate of my days
In Egypt-land, for more sorrow the time to come waylaid.—
Well, there on the field from my head I doth the helm well made,
And put off the shield from my shoulders, and the spear adown did I fling,
And I went and stood over against them, the horses of the king,
And took his knees and kissed them, and he pitied and saved me from doom,
And set me in his chariot and brought me weeping home,
Though many an one made at me with the ashen-shafted spear,
All eager for my slaying, for exceeding wroth they were;
But he warded them off, for he dreaded the wrath of the Stranger’s Speed,
Guest-aiding Zeus, who of all Gods is wroth with the evil deed.

"There seven years I abided and gat me plenteous gear
At the hands of the men of Egypt, for all men gave to me there.
But when the eighth year’s circle came on in its due while
I met a man Phoenician, well-learned in lying guile,
A huckster, who for menfolk a many evils wrought;
And he by his wit wrought on me, and me from thence he brought
Until we came to Phoenicia, where lay his house and gear.
So there with him I abided for the full space of a year,
But when the time was fulfilled by the wane of the months and the days,
And the year came round in order, and the seasons came their ways,
For Libya then he shipped me in a keel that plied the sea,
Under colour of lies, that I with him a shipper of wares should be;
But thither would he fit me for a great price me to sell:
So with him on the ship must I get me, though I deemed all was not well.
So she ran on under the North wind that blew fresh over the main,
And the midmost sea of the Cretans: but Zeus did their end ordain,
For when Crete was left behind us we opened no new land,
And nought but the sea and the heavens there was on either hand.
Then over our hollow ship the Son of Cronos drew
A coal-blue cloud, and beneath it all black the sea-waves grew.
And therewithal Zeus thundered o’er the ship with a thunder-stroke,
And by his bolt sore smitten through all her frame she shook,
And filled was she of brimstone, and outboard the men were thrown,
And like unto the seamews round the black ship were they strown
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

In the wash of the waves; and their homefare did the God for all undo.

"But the very Zeus gave to me amidst my weary woe

The great mast, stout, unyielding, which had served the black-bowed ship;
Yea, unto my hands he gave it, that through the toils I might slip.
So thereto I clung, and drifted with the winds in their baleful might.
Nine days o'er the sea I drifted, but on the tenth black night
A mighty billow rolled me high on the Thesprotian strand;
Where Pheidon, king of Thesprotians, the hero of the land,
Did unbought guesting give me: for his dear son happed on me
Foredone with cold and labour, and brought me home from the sea.
For he lifted me up with his hand to go to his father's hall,
And raiment he did upon me, a cloak and a kirtle withal.

"And there did I hear of Odysseus: for he gave me to understand
That him had he guested and cherished on his way to his fatherland.
And the heap of wealth he showed me that Odysseus thatither had brought,
Of brass, and of gold, and of iron most fine, and deftly wrought;
Yea, unto his tenth generation would it serve for livelihood.
So heaped in the halls of King Pheidon lay that treasure great and good.
He had gone, they said, to Dodona, the counsel of Zeus to hear,
From the oak-tree of the Godhead that aloft his boughs doth bear,
As to how he might win returning, who had been so long away
From the Ithacan land the wealthy, close hid, or in face of the day.
But the King, as he poured to the Gods in his house, made oath unto me
That the ship was drawn down to the strand, and the shipmen all ready
That should ferry over Odysseus to his well-loved fatherland. [for sea,
But ere that therefrom he sped me, for a keel there came to hand
Of Thesprotian men a-wending to Dulichium's wheat-land fair,
And he charged them strictly to bring me to King Acastus there.
But their hearts of an evil counsel were fain concerning me,
BOOK XIV.

That on my grief abiding might be heaped mere misery.

"For when the ship seafaring from the land was gotten far out,
Then straight the day of my thraldom they devised to bring about: 340
For they stripped me of my raiment, my cloak and kirtle fair,
And did a foul clout on me, and a kirtle ill to wear;
These loathly rags which e'en now beneath thine eyes have been.
So at last they came to the acres of Ithaca clear-seen,
And there in the ship the well-decked they bound me strait and hard
With well-laid ropes; and outboard they gat them afterward,
And made haste to get their supper adown by the side of the sea.

"But meanwhile the Gods themselves undid my bonds for me
Full easily: then wrapping my head in a clout of a hood
Down the steering-oar well shaven I got me and breasted the flood, 350
And swimming on thenceforward I rowed with either hand,
And right soon afar was I gotten from those, and out a land;
And, coming ashore by a thicket of leafy trees well-grown,
I lay there close while they wandered about and made their moan;
But whenas they deemed it availed not to seek me further there,
To the hollow ship did they get them and thereon again did fare.
And the Gods themselves thenceforward did lightly hide me still,
And then brought me away to the homestead of a man of all goodwill,
Because forsooth it is fated that I yet shall live my day."

Then thou, O Swineherd Eumæus, thuswise didst answer and say: 360
"O hapless guest, thou hast moved me and stirred my heart with thy tale
Of all the ways thou hast wandered, and all thou hast borne of bale.
But the word thou say'st of Odysseus 'tis wrong and said athwart,
Nor wilt thou make me trow it: and thou being as thou art,
Why wilt thou lie so vainly? since for my part well I know
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Of the homefare of my master, that the Gods begrudge him so,
That they brought him not to his bane down there on the Trojan ground,
Nor yet mid the hands of his fellows when the spindle of war he had
When all the host of Acheans the tomb for him had done, [wound,
And fame he had got, and great glory had left behind for his son. 370
But now without fame or glory have the Snatchers whirl'd him away.
But for me aloof with the swine I abide, nor any day
Do I get me adown to the city, save the wise Penelope
Should stir me up to go thither when to hand some tidings may be.
Then the folk there sit about him and will have out all his say;
Both those that are grieved that the master so long abideth away,
And those that rejoice all bootless to eat up his livelihood.
But for me, to ask and to question I hold it nothing good,
Since the time when a man of Aetolia came here with a tale in hand,
And befooled me: a man had he slain, and traversed a deal of land,
And hither he came to the homestead, and I dealt with him lovingly.
Who said that amidst the Cretans with Idomeneus did he see 382
Odysseus mending his ships by the tempest broken and tried;
And he said that he would be coming in the spring or the harvest tide,
And with him his godlike fellows, and he bringing abundant gear.
But thou Eelder of many sorrows, since the God hath brought thee here
Take not delight in lying, nor flatter me thus one whit;
For I give thee not compassion, nor cherish thee for it,
But in awe of Zeus the Guest-friend, and for very pity of thee."

Then spake the shift Odyseus, and thuswise answered he: 390
"Well, well! the heart within thee is slack indeed to tow,
Since mine oath will nowise win thee, nor wilt thou trust me now.
But strike we here a bargain! For yet I say again,
Let the Gods who hold Olympus bear witness of us twain!
If yet thy King returneth, in his house and his home to be,
BOOK XIV.

Thou shalt give me a cloak and a kirtle, and withal shalt further me
Unto Dulichium island, wherein I fain would dwell.
But if thy King return not e'en as the tale I tell,
Set on thine homemen to cast me adown from an hill-rock high,
That gangrel men henceforward look to it not to lie.”

But therewith the goodly swineherd he answered him and spake:
"Yea verily, guest, my fair fame for honour and kindness’ sake
Should be holpen among menfolk, both now and in time to come,
If, when to the stead I had brought thee and guested thee at home,
I should turn again and slay thee, and thy dear life take away!
Unto Zeus the Son of Cronos full heartily then should I pray!
But now ‘tis the time for supper; soon now shall my folk come in,
That in the booth fair supper and dainty we may win.”

But while about such matters each unto each they spoke,
Lo near at hand were the swine-droves, and withal the herding-folk:
So therewithal they penned them where they were wont to abide,
And huge rose the din and the routing of the swine as they were styed.

But now the goodly swineherd fell to bid his men and say:
"The best of the swine bring hither for me to hallow and slay
For my far-come guest; and we also will make good cheer indeed,
Since for long have we been toiling the white-toothed swine to feed,
And others eat our labour, nor cometh atonement to pass.”

So he spake, and fell to cleaving the logs with the ruthless brass,
And a boar they brought withinward, a five-year-old full fat,
And on the hearth they stood him, and the swineherd nought forgot
The Deathless Gods, for his heart in righteous ways was fast.
So he fell to, and into the fire the forelock first he cast
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Of the white-toothed boar, and fell praying to the Godfolk one and all
For the wise Odysseus' homefare in the end to his house and his hall.
Then with an oak-log that lay there, once cleft by his hand he smote
The boar, and life went from him; and therewith they sheared his throat,
And singed, and cut him piece-meal; and the swineherd laid the raw
On the rich fat, which in gobbets from each limb did he draw;
And some they cast into the fire besprent with barley-meal,
And the rest they sheared into gobbets and spitted every deal,
And roasted it very deftly, and then they drew off all,
And cast it heaped on the trenchers. Then rose up the swineherd withal
To carve the meat, for he wotted in his heart what was fair and fit,
And into seven portions he dealt the whole of it,
And one thereof to the Nymphs and to Hermes, Maia's Son,
He set by with a prayer, and the others he dealt to every one.
But the long-drawn chine of the boar white-toothed for the worshipful part
He gave unto Odysseus, and the King grew glad at heart,
And the many-wiled Odysseus he spake, and thus said he:

"Eumeus, to Zeus the Father may'st thou be e'en as dear as to me, 440
Since with goodly cheer dost thou honour e'en such as I am today!"

Then thou, O Swineherd Eumeus, thereto didst answer and say:
"Eat then, O hapless of strangers! in such as is here delight!
For God to one man giveth, and another gainsayeth outright,
In such wise as he will have it; for all things he doth and he may."

So he spake, and burned the firstlings to the Gods of the deathless day,
And poured the dark wine in offering and gave it furthermore
To the hands of the City-waster, as his portion he sat before.  [alone
And the bread was Mesiulos' dealing, whom the swineherd had bought
What time the King his master was aloof and a long while gone:  450
And neither the Queen nor Laertes the Elder were wotting of this, 
But he bought the man from the Taphians with the gear that was verily his. 
So they stretched out their hands to the victual that ready before them lay. 
But when the longing for meat and for drink they had done away, 
Mesaulios bore off the victual, and fulfilled of meat and of bread they were. 
They were gotten fain of slumber, and longed for lying abed. 
But the night came foul and moonless, with Zeus to raining set, 
And a mighty west wind blowing, that ever bringeth wet; 
So to them then spake Odysseus the herder of swine to try 
If the cloak from his back he would give him, or of his folk thereby.
Would egg on one to give it, since of him he had a care:

"Now hearken ye, Eumæus, and all our fellows here, And a boasting word will I say; for befooling wine is strong within me: he who eggeth e'en the wise to raise the song, yea, will he. And laugh out softly, and dance for very lusthead, And to say the word, it may be, that were better left unsaid, Yet since I have shouted already, the speech I will not hide. But O for the days of my youth when with me did the might abide hand. When we arrayed an ambush up under Troy-town wall, and so leaving on And Memelaüs Atrides, and Odysseus led, and withal The third was I of the captains, for that charge on me they laid. Now when round the burg high-built and the wall our watch we made, Then we lay about the city and adown in the thicker there, Among the reeds of the marish, close crouching under our gear. But the north-wind dropped and the night-tide came, a foul and an evil time, Frosty, with snow a-falling, as bitter as the rime, And into ice was it setting upon our shields of war. And now for all the others, both kirtle and cloak they bore, As we lay. And with their shoulders shielded all close at ease they lay: But I, when I went with my fellows, had left my cloak by the way, 
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Like a fool; for I had no deeming of such a bitter night,
And I went with nought but my target, and my war-coat gleaming bright.
So in the third hour of the night-tide, when the stars were shifting their
I spake unto Odysseus, who close beside me lay,
And jogged him with my elbow, and lightly gave he heed:

"'O many-wiled Odysseus, Zeus-bred, Laertes' seed,
Not long shall I be with the living, for I perish with the cold,
Whereas no cloak I have gotten, for the God hath me befooled
To go all bare in my kirtle, and now no rede may I find.'

"So I spake, but therewith straightway grew up a rede in his mind;
Such an one as he was for counsel and for fighting in the fray!
So speaking very softly this word to me did he say:
'Be silent, lest some other of Acheans may have heard!'
Then he raised up his head on his elbow, and therewith spake a word:

"'Friends, hearken! a boding vision in my sleep hath come to me;
And far away from the ships are we gotten: might some one be
To go tell to the People's Shepherd, Agamemnon Atreus' son,
That he push on the men from the ships to gather and speed us on!'

"Then Thoas, son of Androemon, at his word rose speedily,
And cast away from off him his cloak of purple dye,
And off to the ships ran swiftly, and I his cloak did on,
And fain therein was I lying till the Gold-throned Day-dawn shone.
Ah, would that I yet were as young, and of might untouched and stout!
Then would one of the homestead's swineherds soon give me a cloak, no
Both for kindness and for compassion of a very man maybe.  [doubt,
But now foul-clad is my body, and men think shame of me."
Then thou, O swineherd Eumeus, didst answer and speak forth:
"Old man, the tale thou tellest forsooth is one of worth;
Nor speak'st thou out of measure a vain and empty tale.
As now shalt thou lack not a garment, nor aught else that may avail,
A poor and hapless bedesman wandering from stead to town.
But to-morn shalt thou shake upon thee the rags that are thine own,
For nowise cloaks a many or change of coats to wear.
Have we, but just one kirtle for every man to bear.
But when at last he cometh, Odysseus' well-loved son,
A kirtle and cloak shall he give thee, that fair raiment thou may'st don,
And shall speed thy ways wherever thy heart and soul desire."

So he spake and arose, and strewed him a bed beside the fire,
And the fell of sheep and the goat-kind withal he heaped thereto,
And there Odysseus laid him; and a cloak o'er him he threw,
Shaggy and great, that stood him in stead for a change of gear.
When raging wind and weather rose up against them there.

There then Odysseus slumbered, and him withal beside
The young men lay; but the swineherd it liked not to abide
And slumber on that bed-place, and aloof from his swine to be:
So he armed him, and went outdoors; and Odysseus joyed to see
The man of his goods so heedful, when far away was his lord.
First then o'er his sturdy shoulders he slung the whetted sword,
And then in a thick cloak clad him from the wind to ward him well.
And the skin of a goat well-nourished caught up, a shaggy fell.
And withal a whetted javelin 'gainst men and dogs he bare,
And went his ways to slumber where his swine the white-toothed were,
All sleeping 'neath a rock-den in a north-wind-warded lair.
BOOK XV.

ARGUMENT.

TELEMACHUS, EGGED ON BY ATHENE, DEPARTETH HOMEWARDS FROM LACEDÆMON; HE FALLETH IN WITH THEOCYLMENUS THE SEER ON THE WAY, AND COMETH SAFELY TO ITHACA, WHERE HE GOETH A-LAND BY HIMSELF IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE, AND SENDETH THE SHIP HOME TO THE TOWN WITH HIS FELLOWS. MEANWHILE EUMÆUS TELLETH HIS TALE TO ODYSSEUS OF HOW HE WAS STOLEN FROM HOME WHEN HE WAS LITTLE, AND SOLD INTO THRÄLDOM.

BUT to wide-field Lacedæmon did Pallas Athene speed,
Unto the noble youngling, great-souled Odysseus' seed,
To mind him of his homefare, and urge him to be gone.
And there Telemachus found she and Nestor's noble son
Both lying in the forefront of Menelaüs the great.
Forsooth the Son of Nestor lay bound by slumber's weight,
But sweet sleep held not the other, for his heart as there he lay
Was stirred by care and trouble for his father far away:
So to him spake the Grey-eyed Athene as nigh to him she stood:

"Telemachus, thy straying from thine house is nothing good,
And thy leaving aloof thy havings and those men within the hall
So masterful past measure, lest of thee they eat up all,
And share out all thy living, and nought be the end of thy way.
Up! urge on Menelaüs, loud-voiced in the battle-play,
To speed thee off; that thy mother at home ye yet may find—
—For now her father and mother, they bid her heed their mind
And with Eurymachus wed she; for he outgoes all of these,
The Wooers, in his giving, and the gifts doth he still increase—
Lest against thy will she be flitting from thine house some deal of thy gear.
Since indeed thou wottest of women what minds in their bodies they bear,
She is fain to be good to the household of the man that her hath wed;
But of her offspring aforetime and of her husband dead

She nothing now remembers, and seeketh of him not.
So do thou thyself go thither, and give all that thou hast got
To be kept by one of the handmaids who seemeth the best to be,
Till a noble wife and a fitting the Gods shall show to thee.
Now another word will I tell thee, and lay it well to heart;
Men wilfully waylay thee, the best of the Wooers' part,
Where the Ithacan firth hath Samé the craggy on one hand,
Desiring there to slay thee ere thou come to thy fatherland.

Yet I deem it shall not happen ere the earth hold some of those,
The Wooers, that devour thy livelihood so close.
But hold aloof from the islands thy ship well-wrought for the sea,
And sail by night as by day time, and fair wind abaft shall there be,
Sent from that one of the Deathless who keeps thee evermore.
But when to the ness thou comest, the first ness of the Ithacan shore,
Then thy ship and all the shipmen to the city do thou send,
But thyself the first of all things unto the swineherd wend,
Who wardeth thy swine, and all kindness as erst for thee doth show.
There night-long be thou abiding, but let him to the city go,

To Penelope the prudent, a tiding word to tell,
How thou art come from Pylos and at home alive and well."

So she spake, and thus departed for Olympus high aloft:
But he roused the son of Nestor from his slumber sweet and soft;
For with his heel he stirred him and thuswise there he spoke:
"Awake, thou Son of Nestor! arise, that we may yoke
To the car the whole-hoofed horses, and wear the way amain."

But Pisistratus, son of Nestor, to him made answer again:
"Telemachus, now in nowise, as sore as we long for the way,
May we drive through the dusky night-tide; but soon will come the day:
Abide till the hero Atrides, the glory of the spear,
Shall come, and in our twi-car shall lay the gifts and the gear,
And with kindly word shall bespeak us, and speed us on our ways,
Since forsooth the guest remembereth that man for all his days
Who giveth him good guesting in friendly wise and dear."

And even with his speaking was the Gold-throned Dawning there,
And anear drew Menelaüs, loud-voiced in the battle-play,
E'en now from the bed arisen where the fair-haired Helen lay;
But when the loved son of Odysseus of Atreus' son had sight,
He hasted and did on his body a kirtle gleaming bright;
Yea, Telemachus the hero, godlike Odysseus' son,
Over his sturdy shoulders a great cloak then did on,
And therewith went without doors, and stood nigh and spake the word:

"Menelaüs, Son of Atreus, thou Zeus-bred people's lord,
Now speed me forth, I prithee, to my fatherland and home;
For now my soul desireth that thither I should come."

Then answered Menelaüs, loud-voiced in the battle-play:
"Telemachus, no long season would I hold thee aback from the way,
Desiring so thine homefare; yea, wroth were I with such
As who, when men he guesteth, shall cherish his guest o'ermuch,
Or loath him out of measure: for in all things measure is best.
And good is neither fashion, to thrust out the willing guest
BOOK XV. 269

Who is fain to abide, or to stay him who longeth to be on the road;
But to cherish the guest that abideth and to speed the departer is good.
But abide till I bring to thy twi-car the gifts that are lovely and fair, [here,
That thou with thine eyes may'st behold them, and speak with the women
And bid them dight thee the dinner from the plentiful store of the hall.
For a worshipful thing it is, and befitting and gainful withal,
For you to depart full-feasted o'er the wide land having no end;
But would ye turn up through Hellas, or through Mid-Argos wend, 80
So far with you would I wend me, and the steeds for you would yoke;
And would lead you through men's cities; nor would any one of the folk
Send us empty away, but would give us some thing that were good to bear;
Some bowl maybe, or a caldron three-footed, brazen and fair,
Or else a golden beaker, or a yoke of mules maybe."

But Telemachus the heedful made answer, and thus spake he:
"Menelaüs, lord of the people, thou Atreus' son Zeus-bred,
To mine own would I now be wending, for when we left our stead
No guard I left behind me to heed my wealth and gear;
Nor would I die in my seeking my father lief and dear, 90
Or lose some one of the heirlooms within mine house that lie."

So when Menelaüs heard him, the good at the battle-cry,
He bade his wife and the women the work at once to win,
And to dight in the hall a dinner from the plenteous store within,
And Boethus' son Eteoneus, he drew anigh them withal,
Having risen from bed; for his dwelling was no great way from the hall.
So Menelaüs the war-loud straight bade him kindle the fire,
And roast the flesh, and he hearten him nor gaiensaid his desire.
Then wended the King adown to his chamber sweet of scent,
And not alone, for with him Megapentes and Helen went; 100
And when they came where the treasure was lying garnered up,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Then took the son of Atreus a twofold-fashioned cup,  
And he bade his son Megapenthes a silver bowl to bear.  
But for Helen, she stood by the coffers that hid away the gear,  
The many-coloured kirtles which she herself had made.  
One then took that Glory of Women from the store together laid,  
The fairest of its broidery and the biggest and the best,  
And it shone aloof as a star shines, and lay under all the rest.  
Then forth through the house they wended till they came to Telemachus,  
And the yellow Menelais he spake unto him thus:

"Telemachus, thine homéfare, as thou wouldst have it be,  
May Zeus the Lord of Here, Loud-Thunderer, give it thee!  
But of gifts whatso of treasure within mine house there lies  
I will give thee now the goodliest and the very most of price.  
Lo, I give thee a bowl fair-fashioned withinward and without  
Of silver; but his wine-lip with gold is done about.  
It was fashioned by Hephaestus, and Phaedimus the King  
Of Sidonians gave it unto me, whom his house was covering,  
When I was about departing; and this for thee have I brought."

Then the hero, the Seed of Atreus, the beaker double-wrought  
Gave into his hands, and the wine-bowl of silver glorious fair  
Brought the mighty Megapenthes and gave it to him there.  
And withal the fair-cheeked Helen before him there did stand,  
And spake the word unto him with the garment in her hand.

"And I withal will give thee a gift, O youngling dear,  
Of Helen's hands a memory, this weed for thy wife to wear  
In the hour of thy longed-for wedding: but meanwhile until that day  
Let it lie in the house by thy mother. Hail now upon thy way  
To thine house the goodly-builied, and the land that thy fathers had!"
So in his hands she laid it, and he took it and was glad; And Pisistratus the hero stowed all away with care. In the coffer of the twi-car, and well noted what they were. But yellow-haired Menelaüs to the house led one and all, And they sat them adown on the benches and the high-seats of the hall, And in a goodly ewer of gold a handmaid bore. The water for washing the hands o'er a silver bowl to pour, And therewithal beside them the polished bowl she spread, And thereto the reverence goodwife bore in and laid the bread, And rejoiced their hearts with the dainties a many that happened there; And there the son of Boethus dight the flesh and dealt the share. But the pourer of wine was the son of Menelaüs renowned, So they reached out their hands to the meat that ready before them they But when the longings for meat and for drink they had quite foredone, Then Telemachus the heedful and Nestor's noble son Fell to yoking of their horses, and went up on the painted car, And they drove from out of the forecourt and the cloister echoing far, And with them went fair Menelaüs, son of Atreus, holding up Heart-soothing wine in his right hand in a goodly golden cup, That those on their way might wend them with due drink-offering poured, And he stood before the horses, and hailed them with the word:

"Hail, younglings! and to Nestor the folk-herd let it pass My greeting, for e'en as a father full kind to me he was, While under Troy we battled, we sons of Achaen men."

But Telemachus the heedful thus spake and answered again: "Yea surely, O Zeus-nourished, of all these things will we tell, And thy tale to the man when we meet him: and would that I as well Unto Ithaca returning might meet Odysseus yet. And in his house might tell him what love from thee I met
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

When hither I came; and my going with so many gifts and fair."

But amidst his words came flying on his right a fowle of the air,
An erne, that bore in his talons a great goose white and tame
From out the garth, and behind him shouting aloud there came
A crowd of men and women; but anigh them to the right
He swept athwart the horses; and all they that saw the sight
Were glad, and in their bosoms their hearts waxed warm withal.
But Pisistratus, son of Nestor, first unto speech did fall:

"Say now, Zeus-bred Menelaüs, folk-leader, how it may be,
Hath Zeus shewn forth this token for us, or rather for thee?"

So he spake, but Menelaüs the loved of Ares weighed
His thought, how best and rightly his answer might be made,
But him long-kirtled Helen forewent, and thus spake she:

"Hearken while I foretell it how in the soul of me
The Deathless set foreseeing; and I think it shall come to pass, [was,
As this fowl hath come from the mountain where his folk and his father
And hath ravished the goose that was cherished in the house in tenderwise:
So Odysseus, though wide wandering through many miseries,
Shall come back to his house and avenge him—yes, is he home by now,
And bale for all those Wooers is nourishing to grow."

Then Telemachus the heedful spake out the answering word:
"So grant it Zeus, the Holy, Here's Loud-thundering Lord!"
Then forsooth as a very God e'en there would I worship thee."

So he cast the whip on the horses, and as swiftly as may be
Afield they sped through the city, and eager way they made,
And all day long were they swaying the yoke about them laid,
And so the sun sank under and dark grew every road,
And therewith they came to Phere and Diocles' abode,
Of Orsilochus begotten, Alpheus' offspring dear.
And there nightlong they abided, and he gave them guesting-cheer.
But when the Mother of Morning, Rose-fingered Day-dawn, shone,
They yoked their steeds and their places in the painted chariot won,
And drave forth out of the forecourt, and the echoing pillared stead,
And smote the steeds to be going, and nothing loth they sped,
And soon to the burg of Pylos well-built the way was done.
Then Telemachus the heedful thus spake to Nestor's son:

“What thing, O Son of Nestor, wouldst thou promise and do for me
According unto mine asking? Since friends we boast us to be
From the kindness of our fathers, and we of one age withal,
And unto our better liking this our journey shall befall.
Now lead me not past my ship, but leave me here on the way,
Lest me unwilling the elder in his house and hall should stay
All eager to befriend me; and need is that I haste to begone.”

So he spake, but rede and counsel of his mind took Nestor's son,
What wise he might promise and duly accomplish his behest;
And unto him so thinking this seemed to be the best.
To the swift ship and the sea-shore he turned the steeds away,
And the goodly gifts bore out in the ship's stern-part to lay,
E'en the gold and the raiment given by Menelaus the King;
And then with speech he urged him and set these words on the wing:

“Now haste thee up a-shipboard, and bid all thy fellows as well
Before I get me homeward the tale to the elder to tell:
For well in my heart and my mind of the mood of my father I know
How masterful is he of spirit: he will not let thee go,
But himself will come hither to bid thee, and I deem indeed by my troth
That he will not go back empty, he shall be so exceeding wroth."

So he spake, and fell to driving the steeds of the fair-tressed mane
Back again to the burg of Pylos; and the house did they speedily gain;
But Telemachus egged on his fellows, and fell to bidding there:

"To the black ship, O my fellows, and order well the gear!
And go ye up a-shipboard that we our way may speed."

So spake he forth, and lightly they hearkened and gave heed,
And straight they went a-shipboard, and sat down on the thwarts a-low.
But while he was toiling and praying, and unto Athene as now
Hard by the stern made offering, a certain man drew nigh,
An outland man, and from Argos for manslaying did he fly.
A seer, and by blood and getting of old Melampus' stock,
Who dwelt erewhile in Pylos, the mother of many a flock.
Now wealthy amid the Pylians a full rich house had he,
Till he went to another people, since his land he needs must flee,
And Neleus the mighty of mood, the proudest living on earth,
Who held for a full year's circle perforce his wealth and worth,
While he himself, Melampus, in bitter bonds and sore
In Phylacus' halls lay bounden, and stark were the griefs he bore
Because of Neleus' daughter, and the sin that on him weighed,
Which she, the fearful Goddess, the Wreaker, on him laid.
Yet he 'scape his bane, and the oxen loud-lowing did he lead
From Phylace unto Pylos, and of the evil deed
On the godlike Neleus wreaked him; and then for his brother's hand
To the house he led a woman, and so went to another land,
To Argos, feeder of horses; for there was he doomed to abide,
And there should he lord it over the Argives far and wide.
There a high-roofed house he builded, and a wife he wedded then,
And Antiphates and Mantius begat, both mighty men.
But Antiphates after him gat Oicles, mighty of mood,
And Oicles Amphiaraius the folk's upraiser good:
Beloved of Zeus the Shielded, beloved of Apollo he was
With manifold love; yet never the threshold of eld did he pass:
Because of the gifts of a woman in Thebes he had his bane,
But Amphilochoth and Alcmæon were the sons that his getting did gain.
Then Mantius gat Polyphæides and Cleitus; him on a day
Did the Gold-enthroned Dawning wrap from the earth away.
To dwell amid the Deathless because of his fairness' sake.
But the high-souled Polyphæides a seer did Apollo make,
By far the best of menfolk since Amphiaraius was dead;
Who departed, wroth with his father, to Hyperesia's stead,
And dwelling there, unto all men foretold what surely came.

Now his son was this new-comer, Theoclymenus by name,
Who anigh Telemachus standing where he found him midst his prayer
And pouring of drink-offerings, by the black ship swift to fare,
Sent winged words towards him, and bespake him face to face:

"O friend, since now I find thee with thine offerings in this place,
By the gifts and the God I beseech thee, and furthermore indeed
By thy very head and the shipmen that follow as ye lead,
Tell truth to me the seeker, nor the hidden story win:
What art thou, whence of menfolk, and thy city and thy kin?"

Then Telemachus the heedful to him made answer and said:
"Yea, plain to thee, O Stranger, shall all the tale be made;
Of Ithaca is my kindred, and I am Odysseus' son"
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

If ever he were; for in these days he is evilly dead and gone;
Wherefore I took these fellows and the black ship that ye see
To seek some tidings of him so long aloof from me." 270

But the godlike Theoclymenus thus answered him again:
Like thee I am put from my country because a man I have slain;
A man of my folk; and a many do his brethren and his kin
In horse-rich Argos ruling mid the Achaeans worship win;
And the death from them am I shunning, and their black doom do I flee,
Since now is my fate amid menfolk a wandering man to be.
So take me up a-shipboard, since I flee and make my prayer,
Lest they hew me down in slaughter; for yet following me they fare.”

Then Telemachus the heedful thuswise he answered and said:
“1 will not thrust thee craving from the ship the shapely-made;  s80
Come on then, and of such things as we have shall we make thee cheer.”

Thus spake he, and took from him his brazen-headed spear,
And laid it along on the deck of the swelling ship of the sea,
Then on to that sea-farer, and up aboard went he,
And sat him down in the stern, and there beside him close
This Theoclymenus set he; then men cast the hawsers loose.
Then Telemachus egged on his fellows, and a word upon them laid
To dight the tackling duly, and full waryly they obeyed.
They raised the mast of pine-tree, they stepped it well and fair
Within the mid-thwart’s hollow, and with forestays stayed it there,  s90
And with ox-hide ropes well-twisted hauled up the sails milk-white.
But Grey-eyed Athene sent them a wind that blew aright
Through the lift on-rushing fiercely, that as swiftly as might be
The fleeting ship might win her through the salt wave of the sea.
And by Cronus was she running, and the well-brooked Chalcis’ shore;
BOOK XV.

But now the sun sank under, and all ways were darkened o'er;
And she made the land of Phœe by the wind of Zeus sped on,
And way by the holy Elis, where Epeians rule, she won.
Thence on to the Tapering Islands his ship the youngling drove,
Still pondering should he be taken, or his soul from the death-day save. 300

Meanwhile in the booth Odysseus and the goodly swineherd sat
At supper, and beside them the other herdsmen ate;
But when the longing for meat and drink they had done away
Odysseus spake; for a trial on the swineherd would he lay,
Whether yet he would cherish him closely, and bid him abide in the place,
Or would egg him on to be wending and townward turn his face:

"Now hearken to me, Eumæus, and ye other fellows here,
Tomorn would I to the city that begging I may fare,
That thee and these thy fellows I may not quite undo;
Give me good rede, I prithee, and a good guide thereunto. 310
For townward must I wander, and thither need doth drive,
If perchance a cup and a morsel some man to me may give.
So to the house Odysseus the glorious may I come,
To Penelope the wiseheart to bear my message home;
And with those masterful Wooers would I mingle furthermore,
That a meal's meat they might give me from out their endless store.
And lightly as they willed me, for them would I play my part;
For this I tell thee, and hearken and lay it well to heart,
By the grace of Hermes the Flitter, who unto all doth give
The glory and worship of doing the works whereby they live, 320
No mortal man in serving like to me is deft and good,
In feeding of the fire, or in cleaving the dry wood,
Or in pouring the wine, or in carving, or dighting the roast and the broil—
The tasks wherein for the rich ones the poor are wont to toil."
Then thou spak'st, O swineherd Eumaeus, whereas thine heart did grieve:
"O me, my guest, what a counsel thy mind doth now conceive!
For certes thou desir'st to meet thy death in the town,
If unto the throng of the Woers thou willest now go down,
Whose pride and high-hand outrage goeth up to the iron sky.
Forsooth none such as thou art they have to serve thereby;
But young men well apparelled in cloaks and kirtles fair,
And lovely are their faces and gleaming-soft their hair.
E'en such are they that serve them, and the polished tables shine,
For ever heavy-laden with bread and meat and wine.
Bide here; for of thy biding no man here grudgeth thee,
Neither I nor these my fellows, nor whoso here may be.
But when the dear son of Odysseus here cometh, he indeed
Shall give thee a cloak and a kirtle, a gift of goodly weed,
And shall fitt thee whithersoever thy soul would have thee go."

Then the toil-stout goodly Odysseus made answer even so:
"Unto Father Zeus, Eumæus, may'st thou be e'en as lief
As thou art to me! since thou endest my wandering and fierce grief.
For nought is worse than wandering of every mortal ill.
But because of the baleful belly must men bear sorrow still,
And straying them befalleth, and pain and misery.
But since thou wouldst have me abide him, and biddest me here to be,
Of the mother of godlike Odysseus now somewhat do thou say,
And his father left on the threshold of eld when he went on his way,
If yet they abide with the living beneath the beams of the sun
Or unto the House of Hades have parted dead, undone?"

But him the swineherd answered, the leader of the men:
"Yea, the thing whereof thou seest I will tell thee clearly then;
For as yet Laertes liveth, yet beseeching Zeus withal
That the soul may waste out of his body e’en there in his very hall;
So sore his child he lamenteth who far away doth abide,
And his kindly wiseheart helpmate, who indeed whenas she died
Drew eil untimely on him, and drew that sorrow on;
Since she died through the grief she suffered because of her glorious son.
A woeful death! may no one thus die of those that dwell
In the land and to me are kindly, and have done by me right well! 360
For so long as she was living, although sore sorrowing,
To ask and to seek about her to me was a happy thing.
For by her indeed was I fostered with her noble daughter fair,
E’en Címenë the long-robed, the latest child she bare;
With her I say was I fostered, and had honour little less.
But when we both were gotten to our youth of happiness,
Her then they wedded in Samé, and great wedding-gifts they had.
But in raiment very goodly the Queen my body clad,
A cloak and a kirtle she gave me and shoes for my feet to wear,
And into the fields she sent me, and yet ever held me dear. 370
Of these things now am I lacking, yet the happy Gods indeed
Of the work wherein I hold me have given me good speed;
And withal have I meat and drink, and for hapless folk some cheer.
But as now of my mistress that is there is nothing happy to hear,
By word or by deed: since surely a plague on the house doth fall
Of masterful men. Yet greatly it rejoiceth the heart of a thrall
To speak in the face of the mistress, and to ask of everything,
And to eat and to drink, and thereafter have somewhat afield to bring
Of such things as the hearts of thrallfolk for evermore are fain.”

But the many-wiled Odysseus he answered thus again: 380
“Woe worth, O swineherd Eumæus! how far hast thou wandered on,
From thy kindred and thy country when thou wert but a little one!
But come now, bespeak me of one thing, and clearly tell it all.
For, wasted by the warriors, did the wide-wayed city fall
Where thy father and mother beworshiped were dwelling a while agone?
Or thee, as thou wert abiding by the sheep and the oxen alone,
Did the foemen take to their ship, and carry thee away
Unto the house of that man, who for thee great price did pay?

Spake the swineherd, the leader of men, and in this wise spake he:
"O guest, since of these matters thou askest and seest of me,
Sit on and drink and be merry, and hush thy voice, and heed:
For measureless long is the night-tide, and time is for sleep indeed,
And time too for the merry hearkening; nor before the hour is come
Is need to wend us bedward; and much sleep is wearisome.
Of the others, whomso to sleep his heart and his soul shall away,
Let him go his ways and slumber, but with dawning of the day
He shall break his fast, and follow the swine-droves of the king.
But here in the booth we twain at the drink and the banqueting
Shall be merry with the memory of each other's weary woe.
For very grief shall gladden the man that to and fro
Hath wandered wide in the world, and suffered sorrow sore.
So whereof thou askest and seest, the tale shall I now tell o'er.

"There is an isle called Syria, if thereof thou hast heard and known,
Up over Ortygia is it, where turneth the sun to go down.
It is not right full of people, but a goodly land and sweet,
Well pastured, well be-herded, wine-plenteous, rich in wheat;
On that folk no famine falleth, and no sickness cometh anigh,
E'en such as oft so loathly smites hapless men that die.
But when eld amid that city creeps o'er the race of men
Cometh silver-bowed Apollo, and Artemis cometh then,
And they with their kindly arrows fall on and give the bane.
BOOK XV.

"Now therein are two cities and all things are shared atwain,
But over either people king was my father there,
E'en Ctesius, Ormenus' offspring, and the godhead's peer.
Now thither came the Phœnicians, the ship-famed; hucksters these,
Who bore ten thousand trinkets in their black ship over the seas,
And withal a Phœnician woman dwelt in my father's house,
Tall, fair, and very cunning in work most glorious.
Her then the wily Phœnicians befooled upon a day:
For first as she was washing by the hollow ship, one lay
With her in love and dalliance, that oft and evermore
Befooleth minds of women, though deft they be of lore.
Next who she was he asked her, and whence of lands was come;
And straightway then she told him of her father's lofty home:
"I call myself of Sidon, abounding much in brass,
And I am the very daughter of the o'er-rich Arybas;
But Taphian men and sea-thieves they took me on a day.
As I came from afield, and thither they flitted me away,
Unto the house of this man, and a noble price he paid."

"Then he, the man who by stealth had lain beside her, said:
"And if thou wouldst follow us back and homeward, how would it be,
That the high-roofed house of thy father and mother thou may'st see?
Yea, they themselves; for as yet they live and are wealthy, 'tis said?"

"Then spake to him the woman and a word thereto she laid;
'Th, this might be, if ye shipmen were willing now and here
To be sworn by an oath that scathless me homeward ye shall bear.'

"So she spake, and all they straightly took oath e'en as she bade.
But now when they had sworn them, and an end of the oath had made,
Then once more spake the woman, and thuswise answered she:
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

'Keep silence now; nor let any of you shipmen speak to me
Whenso ye happen upon me, if it be beside the well
Or out in the street, lest some one thereof to the old man tell
In the house, and he misdoubt him and take and bind me then
In bitter bonds, and devise him the death of all you men.
So the word in your hearts refrain you, and the sale of your wares push on.
But when the ship is laden with the stuff ye have trucked for and won,
Then unto the house let a message be quickly speeded home;
And such gold will I bring unto you as under my hand may come.
And yet more of a faring-penny were I fain to be giving withal.
A child there is of the goodman, that I tend in his house and hall, 450
Which same is a cunning youngling, that with me runs out and in;
And him would I bring to your ship, and huge price for him should ye win,
Whenso ye flit him to market amongst the alien men.'

"So saying she departed to the fair-built house as then;
But they abided by us for the wearing of a year,
And into their hollow ship their trucking drew much gear.
But when the hollow ship was burdened for the way,
Then they sent to the house one bearing a word to the woman to say.
So a man in craft exceeding came into my father's hall,
In his hand a golden collar with amber strung withal.

In the hall then the maids and my mother beworshiped were bidding a
For this thing and handling it over, and beholding it still with their eyes,
And meanwhile unto the woman a silent sign he sent
By wagging his head, and thereafter to the hollow ship he went.
So then by the hand she took me, and forth from the house she led;
And in the porch she happed on the cups and the tables spread,
Of the men who had been feasting, that my father did wait upon,
But unto the folk-assembly and the speech-stead forth had they gone.
So she caught up three cups and hid them away in her girdlestead,
BOOK XV.

And carried them off, and I followed, a simple fool, as she led.

"And so the sun sank under and all ways were darkened o'er,
And we hastened and came to the haven renown'd on the shore,
Where lay the swift seafarer of those Phoenician men.
And therewith we went a shipboard, o'er the wet ways sailed we then,
And Zeus for us was speeding a wind that blew aright;
So six days were we sailing alike by day and night.
But when Zeus, the Son of Cronos, had wrought the seventh day,
Then Artemis the shaft-fain did the woman smite and slay,
And she fell, and plunged down to the hold as diveth the mew of the sea;
And straight they cast her outboard, the meat and the prey to be
Of the sea-calves and the fishes, and left in my grief was I.
But the wind and water driving to Ithaca brought them anigh,
And there Laertes bought me with the wealth he had in hand,
And thus indeed mine eyen first looked upon the land."

But Odysseus, the Zeus-nourished, thus answering spake the word:
"Eumæus, very sorely this tale of thy telling hath stirred
The mood in my mind for thy sorrows, that oft thine heart hath had:
Yet Zeus for thee meseemeth hath set the good by the bad,
Whereas in thy toil thou hast gotten to the house of a man that is kind,
Who carefully for thy living both meat and drink doth find,
So that plentifully thou livest. While as for me—Yea, then,
Hither I come wide-wandering through the many cities of men."

Thus then they told to each other, and no long while did abide
In sleep and slumber lying, but e'en for the littlest tide,
For at hand was the Gold-throned Day-dawn. But on the shore at last
Telemachus' shipmen briskly struck sail and unshipped mast,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And then with rowing speeded the ship to the beaching-ground,  
And cast the anchors outboard, and fast the hawser bound.  
Then outboard on the seashore themselves withal they wend,  
And therewith their meat are dighting and the dark-red wine they blend.

But when the desire for meat and for drink they had done away,  
Then Telemachus the heedful thus fell to speak and say:  
"Do ye now drive on straitly the black ship toward the town,  
While I unto the acres and fields will get me down,  
But to-night will go up to the city when my lands I have looked upon,  
And to-morrow will set before you the faring-wage ye have won,  
To wit, a noble banquet of flesh and sweetest wine."

But therewith spake unto him Theoclymenus divine:  
"Dear child, and whither wend I? To what man's house of the men,  
Who in Ithaca the craggy are lords, shall I get me then?  
Shall I go straight unto thy mother, and the very house of thy stead?"

But Telemachus the heedful to him thus answered and said:  
"Yea, otherwise would I bid thee unto my house to speed,  
For none there faileth of guest-cheer; but for thee 'twill be worser indeed,  
For I shall lack; and neither will my mother see thee at all,  
For not oft before the Wooers is she seen amidst the hall,  
But aloof in the upper chamber her weaving doth she speed.  
But I of a man will tell thee to whom thou may'st come at need,  
E'en Eurymachus the glorious, the wiseheart Polybus' son,  
Whom e'en as the peer of Godhead do the Ithacans look upon;  
For he is their best and greatest, and longeth eagerly  
For the wedding of my mother and Odysseus' sov'reignty:  
But Zeus of Olympus knoweth who dwells in the lofty home,  
If yet before the wedding their evil day may come."
As he spake, from the right came flying a fowl, a falcon fleet,
Swift flutter of Apollo, who held betwixt his feet
A dove, and with talons tore her, and to earth the feathers poured,
Midway 'twixt where the ship was and Telemachus the lord.
Him then did Theoclymenus aloof from his fellows call,
And clasped his hand and bespake him, and said the word withal:

"Telemachus, nowise godless flew the fowl forth on the right;
Yea, I knew him for a token so soon as he came in sight.
Among the Ithacan people there is none so kingly a race
As thine is: ye are the stronger, and for ever first in place."

But Telemachus the heedful he answered him again:
"And were thy word accomplished, then O but I were fain!
Then shouldst thou know of my kindness and the gifts that I should give,
That whosoever met thee should call thee blest to live."

Therewith unto Piræus his trusty friend did he call:
"Piræus, son of Clytius, of my fellow-farers all
That followed me to Pylos thou hearkenest most to me;
So do thou take this stranger, and have him home with thee,
To cherish in all honour till back again I fare."

Then answered him Piræus, the famous with the spear:
"Telemachus, e'en if thou bidest longwhile ere thou come back,
I will cherish the man, and nowise of guest-cheer shall he lack."

So saying he went a-shipboard, and to all those gave the word
To cast aloof the hawser and themselves to come aboard;
And aboard went all men lightly, and a-down on the benches they sat.
But underneath his footsoles fair sandals Telemachus gat,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And from off the deck of the ship he took a mighty spear,
Headed with brass, sharp-whetted. Then they cast the hawsers clear,
And thrust out, and made for the city according to the word
Of Telemachus, son beloved of Odysseus the good lord.

But for him, his feet sped onward till he came to the garth and the wall,
Where dwelt his swine unnumbered, and where slept his swineherd withal,
The goodman knowing the kindness that unto his lords should fall.
BOOK XVI.

ARGUMENT.

TELEMACHUS COMETH TO THE BOOTH OF THE SWINEHERD, AND SENDETH HIM TO THE TOWN WITH TIDINGS TO PENELope. ODYSSEUS MAKETH HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS SON. THE CREW OF TELEMACHUS BRING THE SHIP TO HAVEN BY THE TOWN; AND IN LIKewise THose WHO WAYLAI D HIM COME BACK HOME. THE WOoERS TAKe COUNSEL CONCERNING TELEMACHUS' SAFE RETURN, AND PENELope UPBRAIDETH THEM FOR THEIR ILL-DOINGS. EUMÆUS COMETH BACK TO TELEMACUS AT THE BOOTH, AND TELLETH OF THE SPEEDING OF HIS MESSAGE.

As it fell, in the booth Odysseus, and the swineherd, the goodly of men, Were dighting their breakfast at dawning, and kindling the fire as And with the swine wold-pasturing had sent the herds away; [then, But round Telemachus fawned they, the ban-dogs wont to bay, Nor howled as he came forward; and Odysseus noted that, Both the fawning dogs, and the trampling of coming feet thereat, So straight unto Eumæus a wingèd word he said:

"Eumæus, one of thy fellows now cometh unto the stead, Or some one else that thou knowest; for the dogs howl at him nought, But are whining round about him; and the sound of feet have I caught."

But scarce the word had he spoken ere lo in the door of the close Stood his own son well-belovèd; and amazed Eumæus arose, And down from his hands fell the vessels wherewith he was labouring In blending the dark-red wine, and he went up unto the king,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And on the head he kissed him, and both his eyes so fair,
And both his hands moreover, and he shed a mighty tear;
And e'en as a loving father makes much of his dear son,
Who hath come from an alien country when the tenth long year is done,
His only son and darling for whom he hath travailed sore,
E'en so the goodly swineherd now kisseth him o'er and o'er,
Telemachus the godlike, as one escaped from death,
And amidst of moans and greeting such winged words he saith:

"Thou art come, sweet light of mine eyes, Telemachus! Yes, though I
I should see thee no more, when to Pylos in the fleeting ship ye sped.
Come in, dear child, I bid thee, that mine heart may be glad of thy face,
When at last I look upon thee new come from an alien place.
For not oft hast thou come to thine herdsmen, or the countryside hast seen,
But a city-abider art thou, and thy will hereto hath it been
To behold the throng of the Wooers, the ravening company."

Then Telemachus the heedful in this wise answered he:

"Yes, even so, my father! and for this cause am I come,
To set mine eyes upon thee and to hearken thy word of my home.
If yet in our halls my mother abideth, or is wed
To another man at this moment; the while Odysseus' bed
Lies lacking gear to sleep in, and cobwebs foul doth breed."

Then answered him the swineherd that folk said did lead:

"Yes, surely she abideth, and a steadfast heart she bears
Within the halls of thine homestead, but in grief the night-tide wears
All nights that are, and weepeth through all the days that pass."

So saying from the youngling he took his spear of brass,
Who over the stony threshold now stepped with entering feet;
And unto him would his father Odysseus yield his seat,
But Telemachus withheld him on his part, and thus he said:

"Nay, sit thee down, O stranger! for sure in this our stead
Another seat shall we get us; and the man is at hand therefor."

So he spake, and back went Odysseus, and sat him down as afore;
But green twigs was the swineherd strewing, and fleeces thereupon,
And on the same thereafter sat Odysseus' loved son.
Then platters of roasted flesh-meat did the swineherd by them lay,
Which was of the meat left over from the feast of yesterday,
And bread in the maunds of wicker he hasted to heap up,
And the wine heart-soothing he mingled within the ivy cup,
And sat down over against him, Odysseus wondrous of might.

So they reached out their hands to the victual that lay before them dight.
And when of meat and of drink they had done the longing away,
Then to the goodly swineherd 'gan Telemachus to say:
"Father, and whence is the stranger, and whatwise over the sea
Did the shipmen to Ithaca bring him, and what did they boast them to be?
For hitherward meseemeth afoot he might not fare."

Then thou, O swineherd Eumæus, didst answer then and there:
"Yea, son, and to thee full surely a true tale will I tell:
For he saith of the folk he cometh in Crete the wide that dwell,
And that he hath been cast in his strangling to men's cities full many an one.
Since e'en such is the thread of the doom that the Gods for him have spun.
But as now from a ship of Thesprotians hath he fled away aland,
And come to this mine homestead: so I give him into thine hand,
And do thou to him as thou willest: but he boasts him thy bedesman to be."

"
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

But Telemachus the heedful in this wise answered he:
"Urmæus, this word spoken is a grievous word of thine;
For how may I take this stranger to the house and the hall that is mine?
For myself, I am but a youngling; nor trust in my hands have I
To ward me from him who against me would stir up enmity;
And my mother, the mood within her hangs doubtfully indeed,
Whether she with me abiding the house and home shall heed,
And honour the bed of my father, and the fame of the folk and its word;
Or shall follow him of Achæans whom she deemeth the worthiest lord
That in her halls is wooing, and gives gifts most plenteous.
But now for this same stranger, since he hath come to thine house,
I shall give him a cloak and a kirtle that be raiment fair and meet,
And a two-edged sword moreover, and sandals to his feet,
And will speed him whithersoever his soul will have him fare.
Or keep him if thou willest in the stead and make him cheer;
And the raiment will I send him, and meat withal from the town,
That thee and these thy fellows, he may not wear thee down.
But I will not have him wending where the Wooers' band abide,
For with folly of heart do they fare, and most unmeasured pride,
Lest they fall to and maltreat him, and so bring me sorrow sore;
Since hard it is to be dealing, one man with many and more,
In despite of all his valiance; for the stronger side have they."

Then unto him did the goodly toil-stout Odysseus say:
"O friend, since for me it is lawful to answer yet a word,
My heart hast thou cleft asunder with this tale that I have heard;
Whereas ye say that the Wooers such prideful folly plan
Within thine halls despite thee, and thou such a worshipful man!
But say! art thou bowed of thy freewill, or the people everywhere,
Do they hate thee through the city because God's voice they hear?
Or castest thou blame on thy brethren; on whose help in the warfarings
BOOK XVI.

A man may well be trusting for as great as the strife may upspring?
Ah, were I yet in my youth-days, and of such an heart indeed,
Or were I the son of Odysseus, or himself come back at need.

From all his many wanderings; since the hope is yet alive;
Yea then might the stroke of another the head from my body drive,
But I went to the house of Odysseus, and into Laertes' hall,
And made myself the banesman of those Wooers one and all!

Yea, and even if, one amid many, I there were overcome,
Yet so to fall were better, and to die in the halls of my home,
Than such foul deeds for ever to look on with mine eyes.
The very guests mishandled, and in unseemly wise
The women-thralls haled roughly about the lovely stead;
The wine-casks ever running, and wantons eating bread

In waste—and all for nothing; for a deed that shall not be.”

Then Telemachus the heedful in this wise answered he:

“Yea the tale hereof, O stranger, to thee will I clearly show;
For the whole folk nowise hates me nor counteth me its foe;
Nor cast I blame on my brethren, on whose help in the warfaring
A man may well be trusting, for as great as the strife may upspring.
For look you, the Son of Cronus gives our race but a single son,
Arcesius begat Laertes, and had but him alone,
And his father begat Odysseus, one only son, and he
Left me in his halls one only—and had no joy of me.

And therefore in mine homestead is the foes' folk manifold:
Yea all the best of the islands, who rule thereover hold,
As Dulichium, or Samé, or Zacynthus' woody lands,
Or in Ithaca the craggy have folk beneath their hands,
All these are wooing my mother, and eating mine house away:
And she the loathsome wedding doth not utterly gainsay,
Nor may make an ending of it, while they eat up house and all,
And no long time shall pass over ere on me shall their bawoc fall.
But on God's knees it lieth, all this that is and shall be.
Now hasten, thou, O father, to the wise Penelope,
And say that back am I gotten from Pylos safe and well:
But here will I bide; and the tidings to her alone shalt thou tell,
And come thy ways back hither, lest thereof some man should know.
For my bane are a many devising, and manifold is the foe."

But his word, O swineherd Eumæus, thuswise didst thou answer it:
"I wot and I heed; for thou biddest a man not lacking for wit.
But I prithee tell me of one thing, and speak out straight and clear;
To that unhappy Laertes shall I go by the way to bear
These tidings? for up to this while, for Odysseus grieving withal,
He would oversee his acres, and eat and drink in his hall
With his house-carles, whensoe desire should move his mind thereto.
But from the time when to Pylos thou needs must ship and go,
Men say that thus it fareth, that he eateth and drinketh no more,
Nor hath an eye to his acres, but sitteth in sorrow sore,
In weeping and in wailing, and the flesh from his bones doth wane."

But Telemachus the heedful thus answered him again:
"Woe worth! but though it be grievous, alone must we leave him still.
For if all things by mortals might be chosen after their will,
Then would I choose my father and his returning day.
So get back after thy message, nor through the tillage stray
Seeking the man: but netheless thou may'st tell my mother to speed
Her housewife with all swiftness, yet privily indeed,
That she the tale may be telling to the elder of the land."

He spake, and uproused the swineherd, who took his shoes in his hand.
And unto his feet he bound them and took the townward road.
BOOK XVI.

But Athene failed not to note him as he went from that abode,
And drew near, like to a woman both tall and fair to see,
And deft in goodly working of the weaver’s mystery.
So manifest unto Odysseus she stood ’gainst the door of the place,
But Telemachus saw her nowise though she stood before his face; 160
For not unto all are the Gods clear-seen in the light of the day.
But the dogs and Odysseus beheld her, yet her they did not bay,
But toward the far side of the booth they shrank away with a whine.

Then she bent her brows and nodded, and Odysseus noted the sign,
And forth he went from the chamber to the garth’s high-built wall,
And there he stood before her, and to him she spake withal:

"O Zeus-bred son of Laertes, Odysseus of many a rede,
Now speak out the word to thy son, nor hide thou the day and the deed,
That death and doom for the Wooers ye two at last may frame,
When ye come your ways to the city and the dwelling great of fame.
Nor long shall I be lacking; for I weary for the fight." 171

At the word with her rod all golden Odysseus did she smite,
And a kirtle and cloak well-washed she did about his breast,
And fulfilled the might of his body, and his manhood at the best;
And his cheeks filled out, and the colour grew deep o’er all his skin,
And deep the beard was waxing and dark about his chin.

So she wrought, and her ways she wended, and aback to the booth went
And sore his dear son marvelled, and feared that sight to see,
[he,
And in dread his eyes drew from him lest a very God it were;
Yet his voice withal he uttered and winged a word to hear: 180

"O guest, now art thou another than thou wert before mine eyes,
And other raiment hast thou, and thy skin wrought otherwise,
Yes, thou art a God of the God-folk who the wide-spread heavens do hold.
Be kind, that we may give thee well-fashioned gifts of gold
With the holy rites thou lovest: and spare us now we pray!"

But the toil-stout goodly Odysseus in this wise fell to say:
"I am no God; why then a God of me wilt thou make?
And yet am I thy father, whom for thy sorrow's sake
So often thou bewailedst, borne down by the wrong of man."  189

So he spake, and his son he kissed, and to earth the tear-drops ran
From his cheeks, though up to this while he refrained them steadfastly:
But Telemachus, for in nowise he trowed him his father to be,
Again with words made answer, and thuswise fell to say:

"Thou art not my father Odysseus; rather some God today
Befooloth me, that the worser may be my weeping and woe.
For this thing a man that dieth could nowise fashion so,
Or in his mind contrive it; unless some God forsooth
Encompass him, and give him by his will or eld or youth.
For an old man clad but fouly thou satest here beside,
Who now to the Gods art likest that hold the heavens the wide."  200

But Odysseus of many a rede he answered thus and said:
"Telemachus, for that thou seest thy father here in the stead
Not overmuch shouldst thou wonder, or stand in all amaze.
For never another Odysseus shall come unto his place;
But such as I am, toil-worn, wide-wandering, hither I come
In the twentieth year of my travail to my fatherland and my home.
But all this is the work of Athene, the Driver of the Prey,
Who maketh me e'en as she willeth, for of might she is, and she may,
BOOK XVI.

One while like a very beggar, and another while indeed
Like a fresh young man, whose body is clad in lovely weed;
For unto the Gods 'tis easy, who hold the heavens the wide,
To exalt a man of mortals, or abase him on a tide."

So he spake and adown he sat him, and Telemachus withal
Clung round his valiant father, and let the tear-drops fall;
And so sorely for the weeping did the soul of either yearn
That each fell a-wailing shrilly; and as ceaseless as the erne,
Or the crook-clawed gar-fowl crieth, when the country-folk by sleight
Have carried off their fledgelings ere they be fit for flight,
So piteously the tear-rain down from their brows did pour:
And forsooth the sun had sunken upon their weeping sore.
If Telemachus had not spoken to his father presently:

"In what ship, beloved father, did the shipmen o'er the sea come?
Unto Ithaca bring thee? Who were they, and whence did they say they were
Since afoot and aland meseemeth thou cam'st not hither home?"

But the toil-stout valiant Odysseus made answer thereunto:

"Forsooth, my child, the story will I tell thee straight and true:
'Twas the ship-renowned Phaeacians who brought me here to hand,
Who ever ferry all men who come unto their land.
And they brought me amidst of my slumber in a swift ship over the sea,
And in Ithaca set me adown, and great gifts they gave unto me,
Both of gold and of brass abundance, and of goodly woven weed,
Which lie in the hollow rock-dens by the Godfolk's grace and speed;
And hither I come thrust onward by the lore that Athenè knows
That we may now take counsel, and compass the bane of our foes,
Now therefore number the Wooers, and tell out their tale to me,
That I may behold how many and what manner of men they be;"
And then in my mind unblemished I will ponder the deed to be done,
And consider if we be able to prevail against them alone,
We twain without another; or if we must seek us aid."

But Telemachus the heedful thereto made answer and said:

"I have heard of thy fame, O father, and the glory of thy deeds,
Of thine hands a mighty warrior, and wise of wit and rede;
But huge is thy word, and amazement hath seized me. Nay, but nought
May many men and valiant by two alone be fought.
For not ten alone are the Woorers; nor are they but twice ten,
But a many more: thou shalt know it, the number of those men.
There cometh up out of Dulichium a band of fifty and two,
Of chosen swains, and with them six house-carles ever go;
And next of the men of Samé are twenty youths and four;
And there cometh from Zacynthus of Achæans another score;
And twelve are from Ithaca hereby, and they forsooth of the best;
And with them is the herald Medon, and the godlike singer blest;
And therewith two swains of service full deft the victual to digest.
And if within thine homestead all these we meet in fight
Thy coming to wreak thee of wrong for us shall be bitter bane.
Say then if thou mayest bethink thee of a helper good for our gain,
E'en one who with heart and with soul will bear us warding and aid."

Therewith the valiant Odysseus, the toil-stout, answered and said:

"Yea, of such an one will I tell thee, and hearken thou, and heed,
If Athene with Zeus the Father be anywise good for our need,
Or whether I yet shall bethink me of another warder of bane."

Then Telemachus the heedful he spake, and answered again:

"Yea, these are valiant helpers of whom thou tellest the tale,
And aloft in the clouds are they sitting, and their might is of all avail,
BOOK XVI.

Both over all men of menfolk and the Gods that never die."

Then the toil-stout goodly Odysseus he answered presently:
"Not long shall these be lacking from the mighty battle-din
When we and the band of the Wooers shall meet my halls within,
And the play of the might of Ares shall be tried between us there.
But do thou thyself wend homeward when the daydawn shineth clear,
And there do thou mix and mingle with the Wooers overproud;
And me to the town thereafter shall the swineherd bring on the road,
Most like to a beggar, wretched and aged by many a year;
But if me in the house they mishandle, yet in thine heart forbear,
And refrain the soul within thee, whatso of ill I meet.
Yea, if e'en through the house and outdoors they hale me by the feet,
Or cast at me to smite me; yet forbear as thou lookest on these,
And with smooth words rather bid them that they from their folly cease.
Yet not for all thy speaking shall they hearken thee or heed,
Since on their heads full swiftly their day of doom doth speed.
Yet another word; and do thou to thine heart's root lay the thing:
When Athene rich in counsel the thought to my mind shall bring
I shall nod with my head, and straightway, when thou hast heeded me,
Whatsoever gear of Ares within the hall may be,
Take all, and lay it together in the nook of the chamber aloft,
And then unto those the Wooers give gentle words and soft,
When at last they come to miss them, and thereof they ask thee close:
4 From out of the smoke have I laid them; for now nought are they like
Which erst, to Troy-town faring, Odysseus left behind, [unto those
But are marred where the reek of the fire the face of them might find.
And another matter and greater hath Zeus set in my mind withal,
That ye, when ye are drunken to strife and wounds may fall
And befoul the feast and the wooing; for this is said aright,
That e'en of himself the iron draws on a man to smite."
But two swords and two spears for us twain alone shalt thou leave in the hall,
And two oxhide shields moreover for our hands to wield withal,
That we may rush on and take them, and Pallas Athene then,
And Zeus the allwise of counsel, to their doom shall draw those men.
And another thing yet will I tell thee, and anigh to thine heart let it be:
If thou art verily mine, and come of the blood of me,
Then let not any one hear it that Odysseus is within:
Let not Laertes know it, or the swineherd word of it win,
Nor any one of the house-thralls, nor e'en Penelope;
For the mind of the women, we only shall know what it may be;
And some indeed of the men-thralls we yet may try apart,
Which one of them giveth us worship and honoureth us in his heart,
And which heeds thee nought and mocks thee; yes, and thou e'en such
Then spake again and answered Odysseus' glorious son:
"Father, methinks hereafter thou shalt come to know my mind,
And no light headlong folly there holding me shalt find;
But unto us meseemeth this thing shall scarce be good,
And I bid thee turn it over in thy mind and in thy mood.
Long while shalt thou weary for little in trying each of these,
Through the country-side a-wandering, while in thine hall at ease
Those men thy goods devour, and spare them not a whit.
Indeed, for the ways of the women, I would have thee look to it
Which do thine house dishonour, and which be guiltless still.
But from stead to stead I would not be wending by my will
To try the men; though hereafter with this may we deal also,
If a sign of Zeus the Shielded thou verily dost know."
So unto one another such matters did they say;
But meanwhile to the Ithacan haven was the good ship come her way
Which had ferried Telemachus over from Pylos with his men,
BOOK XVI

But when to the deep of the haven they were gotten, there and then
They shoved the swift black ship all high and dry on the shore,
And the high-heart swains of service aland their weapons bore;
But to Clytius' house they carried the gifts full glorious,
And therewith sent on a henchman unto Odysseus' house,
To Penelope the wiseheart, to tell out all the tale,
How Telemachus had landed in the field and had bidden them sail
The ship unto the city; lest, soul-possessed by dread,
The goodly queen in sorrow soft flowing tears should shed.

So the henchman and the swineherd they met upon the way,
The twain on one errand wending, the tale to a woman to say;
But when at last they were gotten to the house of the holy king,
The henchman amidst of the handmaids his message straight did bring:

"O Queen, thy son belovéd is now come home to thee."

And therewithal the swineherd stood anigh Penelope,
And told her all the tidings as her son belovéd bade;
And so when he had spoken, and an end of his errand had made,
He turned him aback to his swine, and left the garths and the hall.

But sore troubled were the Wooers, and downcast of heart withal,
And out of the house they wended by the garth-wall high and great,
And thereby adown they sat them and over against the gate,
And amidst them fell to speaking Eurymachus Polybus' son.

"O friends, a deed that is mighty full boldly hath been done;
—Telemachus and his wayfare; and we said it should not be.
So come! a black ship of the goodliest, let us shove adown to the sea,
And gather sea-wont oarsmen, that their swiftest they may wend."
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

With the message unto our fellows to come home and make an end."

But lo, ere his word was over, the ship Amphinomus saw,
As in his place he turned him, to the deep of the haven draw,
And the folk her sails a-furling and the oars a-handling there;
So laughing very sweetly he spake to his fellows fair:

"Now ye shall not speed the message; for lo they are coming in:
Either some God hath told them, or they a sight did win
Of his ship a-slipping by them, and no meeting might there be."

So he spake; and they rose up and wended adown to the shore of the sea,
And the black ship straight did they beach all high and dry on the shore,
And the high-souled swains of service aland their armour bore,
And they unto the high-place went thronging, and none there
Would they have beside them sitting, whether old or young he were.
But Antinoüs son of Eupeithes amidst them speech began:

"Out on it! how have the godfolk from his evils freed this man!
Daylong on the windy nesses sat the watchers, ever one
Still following on the other; and at setting of the sun
On the land we never rested a night, but sailed the sea,
In our swift ship ever abiding, till the Holy Dawn should be,
Telemachus waylaying, till him we might take and slay:
But some God in meantime took him and led him home away.
But for him a woeful ending henceforth let us compass and speed,
Nor yet let the man escape us; because I deem of our deed
That while this man is living we shall not accomplish it,
Since forsooth he hath understanding of counsel and of wit;
And the people, they no longer be kind to us and sweet.
Come then, before this youngling shall call on the folk to meet
BOOK XVI.

In the high-place! for I deem not that he shall let it fall,
But will presently rise up in wrath, and tell out his tale before all,
How his utter bane we plotted, though we happed not on his ways;
And when our ill deed they have hearkened, see ye if they deal us praise!
Or rather do we a mischief, and drive us away from our home.
And our lands, and unto the people of an alien folk shall we come.
So let us forego him and slay him in the field aloof from the town,
Or on the way: and his chattels and goods shall be our own,
Dealt out by lot amongst us; the while the house and stead
We shall give unto his mother to hold with the man she shall wed.
But if this word nothing like you, and it rather be your will
That he yet shall live and be holding the wealth of his father still,
Then no longer here assembled let us eat as hitherto
His happy wealth, but each man from his own hall let him woo,
And press on with the gifts of wooing; and thereafter let her wed
The man that most gifts giveth and thereto by fate is led."

So he spake; but all they in silence that word of his did take,
Till Amphinomus amidst them took up the word and spake,
The noble son of Nisus, Aretias' son the King,
Who from the isle Dulichium, wheat-rich, grass-flourishing,
Led on the Wooers, and ever most pleased Penelope
With happy words; for gifted of goodly redes was he;
He then, no goodwill lacking, spake there, and fell to say:

"Friends, nowise am I willing Telemachus to slay,
For this is a thing most fearful in a kingly house to kill:
So first let us seek to the Gods, and ask of their counsel and will;
And if indeed it pleaseth the doom of Zeus in his might,
Then forsooth will I hearten you others; yea, and I myself will smite;
But if the Gods turn from it, then you I bid refrain!"
So Amphinomus spake, and the others of the word he spake were fain
And they rose and unto the house of Odysseus did they fare,
And entering, sat them adown on the polished high-seats there.

But Penelope the wise-heart she thought another thought,
To show herself to the Woers mid their pride unstayed by nought: 420
For she knew of her own child's slaying that was to be in the stead,
For Medon the benchman had told her, who had heard their counsel said.
And so with her women beside her to the feast-hall did she fare.

Then came that glory of Women amidst the feast-hall there,
And stood up by the door-post of the fair-built high-roofed hall,
And the gleaming coif was she holding before her cheeks withal.
So Antinois she chided and spake and named his name:

"Antinois, forger of bale, pride-holden, of thee is the fame
That midst of the Ithacan people thy peers dost thou out-go
In speech-words and in counsel; but nowise is it so. 430
Fool! why art thou patching up bale and bane for Telemachus then?
And the suppliants nought thou heedest, of whom Zeus bears witness to
And to patch up ill for each other is a thing to men accurst. [men.
Yea, knowest thou not that thy father fled hither a suppliant erst
In fear of the folk? since forsooth exceeding wroth they were,
Because with the Taphian sea-thieves the bale of war he bare
Against the folk Thesprotian, with whom as friends we live;
So his slaughter they desired and his heart to rend and rive,
And withal his goods to devour, a rich enduring store;
But as then Odysseus refrained them, for all that they longed for it sore.
And now his house thou eatest in shame, and wooest his wife, 432
And slayest his son, and bringest great bale upon my life.
Withhold thine hand, I charge thee, and these other men refrain!"
Then Eurymachus Polybus' son to her made answer again:
"O Daughter of Icarus, all-wise Penelope,
Hold up thine heart, and these things, let them not trouble thee!
For the man is not, nor shall be, nor yet may be born in the land,
Who on thy son Telemachus shall ever lay a hand,
At least while I am living and on earth beholding the sun;
And this straight out I tell thee, and verily shall it be done,
That his black blood soon should be running adown my battle-spear,
For the city-waster Odysseus full oft in the days that were
On his knees would set me, and give me into these hands of mine
The roasted flesh, and hold to me the cup of the dark-red wine.
Therefore to me of all men is Telemachus most dear,
And nowise do I bid him of his death to have a fear;
At least from these the Wooers; but God's doom is nought to shun."

Thuswise her heart was he cheering while he plotted death for her son.

But her ways therewith she wended to her gleaming bower aloft,
And her lord beloved, Odysseus, she wept, till slumber soft
And sweet upon her eyelids Grey-eyed Athene shed.

But a-night unto Odysseus and his son the swineherd sped,
And came thither; and their supper were they defily dighting there,
Having slain a yearling porker: but Athene drew anear
And stood beside Odysseus, Laertes' very son,
And with her staff did she smite him and his eld withal did on,
And foul raiment she did on his body, lest his face the swineherd should
And should know him for what he was, and unto Penelope [see,
Should hasten to bring the tidings, nor hold it hid in his heart.

But Telemachus unto him first spake a word for his part:
"Thou art come, O good Eumæus; what news in the town is told?
Are they yet come in from the ambush, the Wooers over-bold?
Or lie they yet a lurking my goings to waylay?"

Then thou, O swineherd Eumæus, thuswise didst answer and say:
"No matter of mine I deemed it of such things to seek and ask
As I went up toward the city, for my mind had set me the task
In haste to give my message and my way back hither to get:
But thy fellows' swift-foot herald, a speeder of errands, I met,
Who the word unto thy mother before me there did bring.
And another matter I wot of; for mine eyes beheld the thing.
I saw as I was a-wending whereas above the town
The ridge Hermæan lieth, a swift ship coming down
Our haven; and a many the men aboard her were,
And of bucklers was her burden, and good store of the two-tyned spear.
And that will be they, I bethought me.—Yet nought I know at all."

So he spake; and the holy might of Telemachus smiled withal,
And he cast his eyes on his father; but the swineherd's eyes did he shun.

So their meat they dighted, and feasted now all their toil was done,
And nought their souls were lacking of the equal feast and fain;
But when the longing for meat and for drink at last they have slain
Then they of the bed bethink them, and the gift of sleep they gain.
BOOK XVII.

ARGUMENT.

TELEMACHUS GOETH TO THE TOWN AND TELLETH OF HIMSELF TO HIS MOTHER. EUMÆUS BRINGETH ODYSSEUS TO HIS OWN HOUSE, WHICH HE ENTERETH ALONE IN THE LIKENESS OF A BEGGAR; HE BEGGETH BROKEN VICTUAL THEREIN, AND IS EVILLY ENTREATED BY ANTINOÜS.

BUT when the Mother of Morning, Rose-fingered Day-dawn, shone, Then Telemachus, beloved, godlike Odysseus' son, His sandals fairly fashioned bound underneath his feet, And he took a mighty war-spear for his own hand shapen meet, As townward he turned, and, going to the swineherd, thus spake he:

"Father, I go to the city that my mother may look on me; For I deem that ere she behold me she will cease not to lament, Nay—stay her woeful wailing with tearful weeping blent. But, for this guest unhappy, a charge on thee I lay, That thou lead him adown to the city that he may beg and pray, And earn him a meal; and whoso hath shall give him there. The morsel of bread and the cup; but for me I may not bear All manner of men to uphold them, for sore trouble weigheth on me; And if wroth theretoe be the stranger, then more grievous to him shall it be; But verily on my part of speaking the truth am I fain."

But Odysseus of many a rede he spake and answered again: "O friend, and I myself to be stayed here nowise yearn;"
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

For handier 'tis for a beggar his meat by begging to earn
In the town than afield; and whoso hath will thereto, let him give!
I am nought of an age meseemeth by field and fold to live
In all wise heeding a master, who biddeth me to to and fro:
Go then, and this man shall lead me as thou biddest him to do
When I am warmed by the fire, and hot is waxen the sun,
For exceeding ill is my raiment, and I fear lest I be undone
By the morning rime; and the town is afar off as ye say."

So he spake; and Telemachus thereon from the homestead went on hisway,
With brisk feet hastening onward as ill for the Wooers he sowed;
But when he was come to the houses of that well-builted abode,
'Gainst a tall-shafted pillar he leaned his battle-spear,
And he himself strode over the stony threshold there.
But the nurse, e'en Eurycle, beheld him first of all
As the fleecy fells she was spreading o'er the painted seats of the hall,
And weeping went straight toward him; and the other maids thereto
Of Odysseus hardy-hearted all round about him drew,
And they kissed him and caressed him, his shoulders and his head.

Then Penelope the wise-heart from her chamber forth she sped,
Like to golden Aphrodite or Artemis the fair,
And she cast her arms amidst weeping round her son beloved and dear;
And therewithal she kissed him, his head and his lovely eyes,
And ever she moaned about him as she spake the word that flies:

"Thou art come, sweet light of mine eyen! and I, I said of thee,
That I never again should behold thee when thou sailedst privately
In my despite unto Pylos, of thy loved father to hear.
Come, tell me what was the sight that thou haddest of him there."
BOOK XVII. 307

But Telemachus the heedful made answer for his part:
"Wake not my grief, O mother, and harry not my heart
Within my breast, who but hardly from the bitter bane have won.
But wash thy body with water, and fresh raiment do thereon,
And unto thine upper chamber with these thy women go,
For the gifts an hundred-folded, full told, the vows to do
To all Gods; that Zeus may grant it that the wreaking-day may come.
But I will go forth to the High-Place to bid a stranger home,
Who as I journeyed hither came with me over-sea;
But him did I send forward with my godlike company,
Giving charge unto Piræus with him to his house to go,
And cherish him in honour till I might come thereto."

So he spake, and with her abided wingless the word he said,
And she washed her body with water, and thereon fresh raiment laid;
And to all the Gods she promised gifts an hundredfold to do,
Full tale, if the day of wreaking Zeus yet would bring thereto. 60

But Telemachus turned him, and thence from the hall of the stead strode
With his spear in his hand, and followed by two hounds full fleet of foot;
And Athene shed upon him a holy, wondrous grace,
So that all the people marvelled that he happed on in the place.
But thereafter were gathered those Wooders high of fame, [they frame;
With good words in their mouths; but evil in the deep of their hearts did
So from their crowd he drew him, and the great entanglement,
And where Mentor and Antiphus sat, and Halitherses, he went,
Since his father's friends had they been from old time and the early days:
So he sat him adown by these men, and they asked him of all his ways.

But to them drew near Piræus, spear-famous lord, who led
His guest throughout the city unto the meeting-stead;
Nor long aloof from his guest was Telemachus, but drew near;
Unto whom thus spake Pireus a word for him to hear:

"Telemachus, bid the women unto my house to wend,
That the gifts of Menelaus to thee I straight may send."

But Telemachus the heedful he answered him and spake:
"Pireus, nay: for we know not what turn the thing may take,
If the haughty Wooers should slay me by stealth within my hall,
And should deal out the goods of my father, and my chattels one and all. So
Then better that thou have them, and use them, than one of these.
But if of the seed of their deathday and their doom I may reap the increase,
Then to me, made glad in my house, shalt thou bring them glad on a day."

So saying he led to the homestead the stranger worn by the way;
But when to the place well builded and into the hall they win,
They cast their cloaks on the benches and the high-seats therewithin,
And wend to the well-smoothed bath-vats, and wash their bodies there.
But when the maids had washed them, and with oil had sleeked them fair,
Good cloaks they did upon them, and kirtles therewithal, 89
And they went their ways from the bath-vats, and sat down in the seats of the
And the water for washing the hands thereto the maiden bore [hall.
In a goodly golden ewer o'er a silver bowl to pour;
And the table polished smoothly beside them there she spread;
And thereto the reverend goodwife bare in and set the bread,
And made them cheer of the dainties that were to hand withal.
But his mother sat over against him by the doorpost of the hall,
'Gainst the high-seat leaning, and twining the distaff fine and fair:
So they reached out their hands to the victual that lay before them there.

But when the desire for meat and for drink they had done away,
Then Penelope the wiseheart began to speak and say: 100
"Telemachus, unto my chamber aloft now will I go
And lie on the bed that knoweth the wailing of my woe,
With many a tear bewatered since the day Odysseus fared
With Atreus' sons to Ilios. For neither hast thou dared,
Before the Wooers get them unto the house, to tell
True tale of thy father's homefare, if thereof thou knowest well."

Then Telemachus the heedful he answered and 'gan say:
"The truth will I tell thee, O mother, as plainly as I may:
To Pylos unto Nestor the folk-herd did we come,
And he took me unto guesting in the high-built hall of his home,
And cherished me kind and closely as a father might his son
New come from other countries: so did that kingly one
Amidst his sons renowned heed me carefully and well,
But he of the toilworn Odysseus had never a tale to tell,
Nor dead nor alive: nor of any on earth had he hearkened a word.
But unto the Son of Atreus, Menelaüs spear-famed lord,
He sent me away with horses, and a jointed well-wrought car;
And there saw I Argive Helen, for whom such toils of war
On the Argives and the Trojans the will of God did lay.
And then asked me Menelaüs, loud-voiced in the battle-play,
What need had brought me thither to Lacedaemon divine;
And therewith I told him truly straight out that tale of mine,
And therewithal he answered, and thus in words he said:

"'Hah, surely are they minded to lay them adown in the bed
Of a man that is a great-heart, and they the puny men:
As when a hind hath been laying in a mighty lion's den,
Her fawns new born, yet suckling, and pasturing then doth pass
O'er the slopes and the dales of the mountains all plentiful of grass:
But in a while thereafter he cometh aback to his lair,
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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And the doom of death unseemly on those twain be layeth there: 130
E'en so the death unseemly on these men shall Odysseus bring,
Would to Father Zeus and Athene, and would to Apollo the king,
That, being as he was in Lesbos well-builted on a day,
When he rose against Philomeides to strive in the wrestling-play,
And heavily threw him, rejoicing Achæan men thereby—
Ah, might he, e'en such as he was, meet that Wooers' company,
Then were they fleeting-fated and bitterly wedded indeed.
But of that whereof thou sekest, and askest me at need,
Nought crooked shall I tell thee, and in nought shall I cosen thee,
But all that the Elder told me, the soothfast Wight of the Sea,
No word thereof will I hide it, or aught from thee withhold.
He said that he saw thy father mid stark grief manifold
In the halls of the Nymph Calypso, who held him in her home
Perforce, that no might had he to his fatherland to come.
For no oar-dight ships were with him, nor any folk had he,
E'en such as might speed him homeward o'er the broad back of the sea.'

"Then Atreus' son, Menelaüs spear-famed, spake words like these,
And these things I did and departed, and the Deathless sent me a breeze,
And swiftly sped me homeward to my fatherland the dear."

So he spake, and the soul of his mother within her breast did stir; 150
But godlike Theoclymenus to them the word 'gan speed:
"Beworshipped wife of Odysseus Laertes' very seed!
Forsooth he wotteth not clearly; but my word, give heed to it!
For all sooth will I foretell thee, nor hide from thee one whit;
Zeus, God of the Gods, bear witness, and this table of the guest,
And this hearth of the blameless Odysseus whereto I am come to my rest,
That even now is Odysseus within his fatherland,
Sitting or wending, with tidings of these evil deeds to hand,

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And this hearth of the blameless Odysseus whereto I am come to my rest,
That even now is Odysseus within his fatherland,
Sitting or wending, with tidings of these evil deeds to hand,
And the bane of all the Wooers is he planting to flourish and grow.
This I saw in the fowl-flight's token, as I sat awhile ago
On the well-decked ship, and declared it for Telemachus to heed."

Then Penelope the wise-heart a word to him did speed:
"Ah, stranger, and well were it if thy word accomplished were!
Then wouldst thou wot of my kindness, and my many gifts and fair;
And whosoever met thee, a happy man should hail."

Thus one unto the other they gave and took the tale,
But before the hall of Odysseus meanwhile the Wooers were,
And with the quoits made merry, and with casting of the spear,
Upon the fashioned pavement where they used to show their pride.
But now when it was supper, and up from the country-side
All round the flocks came, driven by those whose wont it was,
Then unto them spake Medon, who to them all did pass
As the handiest of all henchmen, and with them at the board would be:

"O youths, ye have now been merry with the strife and mastery,
So unto the house now wend you, and dight the banqueting,
For supper in due season is nought so ill a thing."

So he spake, and his word they hearkened and wended on their way,
But when they came to the homestead, where built well it lay,
They cast their cloaks on the benches and the high-seats of the hall,
And the great sheep fell to slaying, and the fatted goats withal,
And the sleek swine: yea, and a heifer of the herd they slaughtered there,
Their feast thereby to furnish.

But meanwhile busked them to fare
From the field to the town Odysseus, and that most goodly herd,
And therewith the leader of menfolk, Eumaeus, took up the word:
"O guest, since today on the wending to the town thou hast set thine heart,
And the master biddeth, so be it: albeit for my part
At home I fain had left thee the field and the fold to guard;
But I worship him, and I fear him lest he chide me afterward;
And forsooth the blame of the master is a grievous thing to bear.
But come now and let us be going, for late the day doth wear,
And soon shalt thou find it chilly toward the birth of the eventide."

But the many-wiled Odysseus made answer on his side:
"I know it, and I note it, thou biddest a man of wit;
So wend we; and lead thou the way throughout, for thou knowest it.
But if thou hast cut some cudgel, then give me the same, I pray,
That I lean me thereon, for thou saidest that slippery was the way."

He spake, and about his shoulders the foul scrip did he swing,
That was but a bunch of tatters hung on to a twisted string;
And withal Eumaeus gave him a staff cut after his mind,
And the twain passed on; and the herdsmen and the hounds were left
To guard the stead: but Eumaeus led on the King to the town;
And like to a wretched beggar, a staff-carle, is he grown,
And woeful is the raiment that the body of him hath.

But now whereas they wend them adown the rugged path,
Anigh to the town, they come on the fountain flowing fair,
Wrought so by men; and the townsfolk do draw their water there.
And Ithacus, and Meritus, and Polycctor wrought it out:
There the water-nourished poplars make a grove all round about,
In a ring around it standing, and the fresh cold waters fall
From the rocks above, and an altar of the Nymphs is built o'er all.
And ever the folk wayfaring make their offerings thereupon.
Thereby as now did meet them Melanthius, Dolius' son,
Driving his goats, and the flower of all the flock they were,
Unto the Wooers' banquet, and two herdsmen followed him there;
And he saw them, and fell a-chiding, and spake in unseemly wise,
With big words fiercely stirring Odysseus' heart to arise:

"Yea, yea! and thus full surely the base man leadeth the base,
And the like to the like God bringeth: where then, to what a place
Dost thou, O hapless swineherd, lead this hungry wallowing beast?
This grievous gangrel beggar, this spoiler of the feast?
Who shouldering many a door-post a-begging there will stand,
And seek reward of the morsel, and not of the bowl nor the brand;
But if unto me thou wouldst give him to guard my stead and stall,
To sweep out the folds and to carry to the kids their twigs withal,
There then the whey a-drinking he might get him a sturdy thigh.
But since ill deeds he is learned in, the toil he will not try,
Nor the work afield; but rather midst the folk will he cower still,
And ever be craving somewhat his ravening maw to fill.
But now a thing will I tell thee which shall come to pass one day,
If to the house of Odysseus the godlike he cometh his way.
About his head shall the footstools from the hands of men fly fast,
And his ribs shall wear out a many as about the house they cast."

So saying, in his folly a kick on his haunch he gave
As he passed him by: yet in nowise the King from the path he drave,
Who steadfast there abided: but the thought did Odysseus weigh,
Whether he with his club on-falling the life of him should slay,
Or to earth should dash him headlong, having lifted him up in his place:
But his wrath he withheld and forbore him. Then the swineherd looked
in his face
And chid him, and hove up his hands, and prayed a mighty prayer:
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

"O Nymphs of the wells, Zeus' Daughters, if on thine altars here
Hath Odysseus folded the buttocks in fat for the altar fire,
And hath offered of lambs or of kids, fulfil ye now my desire!
May that man at last come hither by God to usward brought!
Then quickly thy vain-glory would he scatter unto nought
Which thou in thy pride upholdest, as thou wanderest to and fro
Through the town. Yea, evil shepherds, the sheep they soon undo."

But Melanthius the goatherd made answer to his tale:
"Gods-help! what a word he sayeth, this dog well-learned in bale!
Him on the black ship well-decked belike on a day shall I take
Aloof from the Ithacan land, that much living for me he may make.
Might but silver-bowed Apollo smite Telemachus to-day
In his halls, or 'neath the Wooers his life as surely lay,
As the homefaring day of Odysseus aloof is dead and gone!"

So saying there he left them, but slowly wending on,
But himself he hastened, and quickly to the house of the King he gat,
And hied him in, and withinward amidst of the Wooers sat:
In face of Eurymachus sat he, for he was his friend above all,
And his share of the flesh those brought him who were serving in the hall,
And thereto the reverend housewife the bread for his eating bare.

But Odysseus and the swineherd now drew exceeding near;
And on the road they stayed them, for about them came along
The voice of the hollow lyre, as Phemius sent forth the song.
Then Odysseus caught the swineherd by the hand and spake out there:

"Eumaeus, this is the house of Odysseus, the dwelling fair;
And 'twere easy to see and to mark, yea e'en midst many an one.
There chamber riseth on chamber, and the garth is deftly done
BOOK XVII.

With a wall, and all embattled, and every double door
Is well fenced from the foeman; no man could win it by war.
And a many men meseemeth therein are feasting well,
For the savour of fat goeth upward, and the lyre her tale doth tell, 270
E'en she whom the God ordaineth for the feast's own sister fair."

Then thou, O swineherd Eumaeus, didst speak and answer there:
"Thou art right, and herein, as ever, thou art of those that know:
But let us now take counsel how all is like to go.
Either be first to enter the well-built house and fair,
And mingle with the Wooers, and I will abide thee here:
Or if thou wilt, abide here, and forth before will I.
But no long while be lingering, lest some one thee espy,
And drive thee off or smite thee: lay now these things to heart."

But the toil-stout goodly Odysseus thus answered on his part: 280
"I know and I note; thou biddest a man that hath wit to know,
Do thou go on before me, and I will abide while ye go.
Forsooth in stripes and in peltings I am not unlearned to-day,
For I have a heart that is hardy, and have borne many griefs by the way,
Of the waves of the sea and of battle; and let this be numbered with those;
Since forsooth the ravening belly may not be hidden close,
The forger of bale, that giveth to menfolk many an ill,
For whose sake the ships well thwarted will men array them still,
To carry woe for the hapless o'er the sea unharvested."

But while each unto the other such things as this they said, 290
Lo a hound his head was uplifting and pricking his ears as he lay,
E'en Argus, the hound of Odysseus, whom he bred in the earlier day;
But no joy of him had he gotten ere to Ilios' holy land
He went. In days aforetime would the young men take him in hand,
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The goats of the wold and the roe-deer and the hares to follow fast.
But aloof had been his master, and there he lay outcast
Amongst the dung of oxen and of mules, whereof there lay
A plenty about the garth-gate till folk should have it away,
The thralls of the lord Odysseus, to dung his acres wide.
There then did the woodhound Argus all full of ticks abide;
But now so soon as he noted Odysseus drawing anear
He wagged his tail, and fawning he laid down either ear,
But had no might to drag him nigher from where he lay
To his master, who beheld him and wiped a tear away
That he lightly hid from Eumæus, unto whom he spake and said:

"Eumæus, much I marvel at the dog on the dung-heap laid;
Fair-shapen is his body, but nought I know indeed
If unto this his fairness he hath had good running speed,
Or is but like unto some; men's table-dogs I mean,
Which but because of their fairness lords cherish to be seen."

Then thou, O swineherd Eumæus, didst speak and answer thus:
"Yes, this is the hound of the man that hath died aloof from us;
And if yet to do and to look on he were even such an one
As Odysseus left behind him when to Troy he gat him gone,
Then wouldest thou wonder beholding his speed and hardihood,
For no monster that he followed through the depths of the tangled wood
Would he blench from, and well he wotted of their trail and where it led.
But now ill he hath, since his master in an alien land is dead,
And no care of him have the women, that are heedless here and light;
Since thralls whenso they are missing their masters' rule and might
No longer are they willing to do the thing that should be;
For Zeus the loud-voiced taketh half a man's valiancy
Whenso the day of thrldom hath hold of him at last."
BOOK XVII

So saying into the homestead of the happy place he passed,
And straight to the hall he wended 'mid the Wooers overbold.
But the murky doom of the death-day of Argus now took hold.
When he had looked on Odysseus in this the twentieth year.

But Telemachus the godlike, the first of all men there, [straightway,
Saw the swineherd come through the house, and he nodded to him.
And called him: who looked around him and took a bench that lay.
Near-hand, and thereon the carver was wont to sit withal,
Dealing much flesh to the Wooers as they feasted in the hall.
This then to Telemachus' table as now Eumeus drew,
And thereon sat over against him, and the henchman came thereto,
And took and dealt him his share, and bread from the basket withal.

But hard on his heels was Odysseus, and he entered his house and his hall.
Most like to a wretched beggar, and a staff-carle bent and old,
And woeful was the raiment that his body did enfold.
There he sat on the ashen threshold within the feast-hall's door,
Leaned against a cypress pillar, which the wright in days of yore
Had smoothed by dint of cunning and straightened by the line.

Then Telemachus called to Eumeus, and spake to the herder of swine.
When a whole loaf he had taken from out the basket fair,
And of the flesh moreover as much as his hands might bear.
"Go take and give to the stranger, and bid him now to wend
From Wooer unto Wooer, and beg from end to end,
For nothing good, meseemeth, to a needy man is shame."

So the swineherd when he had hearkened straight unto Odysseus came,
And standing close anigh him a wingèd word spake he:
"Telemachus giveth thee this, O guest, and biddeth thee..."
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

To beg of all the Wooers, and from end to end to speed,
For he saith that shame avails not the man that lives by bede."

Then the many-wiled Odysseus he spake and answered again:
"King Zeus, Telemachus make me a happy man of men!
And may all things befall him as his soul would have them to be!"
So he spake, and in both hands took it, and set it presently
Before his feet and laid it on the scrib, that ugly thing;
And he ate the while the minstrel in the hall ceased not to sing.
But when his meat was ended and the holy singing ceased,
And uprose the din of the Wooers throughout the hall of feast,
Then Athene stood by Odysseus, Laertes' son of yore,
And egged him on of the Wooers to gather cakes good store,
That he might know the righteous from the reckless midst of these;
Albeit no man among them from his bane would she release.

So on from the right he started, and forth his hand did he hold
To each man there, as he had been a beggar from of old;
And they had compassion and gave him, and wondered at him there,
And were asking of each other what the man, and whence he were.
Then spake to them Melanthius, who the goatherd long had been:
"Hearken to me, O Wooers of our most renowned Queen,
Concerning this man, for I saw him but a little while ago;
And forsooth it was the swineherd that hath led him hereunto,
But himself I know not clearly nor of whom he boasts him to be."

So he spake; but Antinoüs thereon chid the swineherd, and quoth he:
"O thou most ill-famed swineherd, why broughtst thou this man to the
Have we nought enough of bedesmen that wander up and down, [town?
And grievous irksome beggars, the spoil-feasts of the land?
And deemest thou this so gainful that they gather here their band,
BOOK XVII

And eat up thy master's life-store, that him too for a guest ye must take?"

Thereon Eumaeus the swineherd in this wise answered and spake; "Antinoüs, though thou be noble, yet ye say things nothing fair,
For who would a guest be bidding, when himself from otherwhere
He cometh: save he should happen on a craftsman of the folk
As a seer, or a healer of sickness, or a woodwright deft of stroke?
Yea, or a holy singer, whose song shall please us well?
For welcome are these to all men on the limitless earth that dwell.
But none would bid a beggar himself to waste and wear.
Yet hard art thou for ever amidst these Wooers here
To the homemen of Odysseus, and to me the most of all.
Though I heed not, while yet with the living within this house and hall
Dwell Telemachus the godlike and the sage Penelope."

Him then Telemachus answered, and in this wise spake he:
"Nay, peace! nor answer this man with many words I pray.
'Tis the wont of Antinoüs ever the strife on us to lay
With bitter words; and the others to like things oft hath he stirred."

So he spake and to Antinoüs put forth a winged word:
"Thou carest for me, Antinoüs, as a father cares for a son!
Since thou biddest the guest here with a hard word to begone
From out of the house and the hall; and may God forbid it to be!
Take somewhat and give him! I grudge not, nay rather I pray it thee.
And herein heed not my mother, nor any within the house
Of the thralls or any other of Odysseus the glorious
Yet within thy breast mesemeth no such a thought there came;
Yea, rather than give to another thyself wouldst thou eat the same."

So therewithal Antinoüs he saith and answereth now:
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

"Telemachus, wordy, unbridled in anger! and what sayest thou? If all the Wooers should give him a gift as bounteous As I, for three months henceforward should we stave him off from the house."

And he took up and showed a footstool which lay 'neath the table there, Whereon he was wont to be resting his feet the sleek and fair; 410 But gifts gave all the others, and with flesh and bread good store They filled his scrip; and Odysseus would get him back once more To the threshold, there to be tasting of the gifts of the Achaean lords: But he stayed him by Antinoüs and spake in such-like words:

"Give, friend! since thou nowise seemest of Achaean in this hall To be the worst: nay, rather the best and the king of all So thou forsooth shouldest give me a greater deal of bread, That I the fame of thy bounty o'er the boundless earth may spread. For I indeed aforesight midst men a house did have; And rich was I and happy, and oft to the wanderer gave, 420 Whatso he were, and what errand to my homestead drew him nigh. And thralls had I out of number, and all other things whereby Men hold a plenteous living and rich are held to be; But Zeus the son of Cronos he willed the waste of me: For with wide-wandering sea-thieves he sent me forth to go A long road unto Egypt, that my life he might undo. So in the River of Egypt my shapen ships I stayed, And there my trusty fellows e'en one and all I bade That they by the ships should be biding and draw them up a-land: 429 And the watchers I bade to betake them to the heights and there to stand. But they yielded to fierce folly, and went after the lusts of their might; The fair fields of the men of Egypt they fell to wasting forthright, And they drave away their women and their children, and thereby The men they slew: but quickly to the city came the cry,
And men heard the shout and gathered when the day dawn shone again,
And the footmen and the horsemen were over all the plain,
And the light of brass a-flashing; and Zeus the thunder-glad
Cast ill fear amidst of my fellows, and no heart any had
To outface the host in battle, for the bale all round us drew.
There many a man of my fellows with the whetted brass they slew, 440
And some alive they led them to toil as thralls in need;
But me to a guest that happed there they gave to Cyprus to lead,
E'en Dmetor, son of Iasus, in Cyprus rich and great.
And thence now come I hither bearing my sorrows' weight."

Him then Antinoüs answered, and spake unto him thus:
"What God this plague, this mar-feast, hath hither sent to us?
Stand clear! stand out amidstmost, aloof from my board and me!
Lest thou come to a bitter Egypt and a Cyprus ill for thee,
Thou shameless among beggars! thou sturdy one to stand
And in turn to beg from all men, and they give thee out of hand, 450
Reckless and nought close-fisted, nor knowing any ruth
In bestowing the wealth of another: when much lies by each forsooth."

But to him the wily Odysseus thus spake as he drew aback:
"Woe worth! that thou with thy fairness the mind of wit shouldest lack,
Not a grain of salt hadst thou given in thine house to the wanderer,
Who now in another's sitting hast no heart to take from the cheer
A crust of bread to give me; and abundance by thee lies."

But the wrath the more for his speaking in Antinois' heart did arise,
And therewith scowling upon him a wingèd word he spake:  [make
"Now deem I that nought happy thy way through the house shalt thou
As thou goest aback, since forsooth thou babblest blame in the hall."
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Then he caught up the stool and cast it, and struck his right shoulder withal;
At the nethermost part of the back: yet stark he stood, rockfast,
And nothing there he tottered for all Antinoüs' cast;
But in silence his head he nodded, in his deep heart deeming of ill.

So he sat down again on the threshold, and the scrip that had gotten its fill
He took and spake to the Wooers, as there he set it down:
"Hearken to me, O Wooers of the Queen of great renown,
While I speak what the heart in my bosom is bidding me now tell out:
Nothing there is of anguish, and nought is the trouble no doubt:
When a man is smitten a-warring, and about his goods is the fight,
Whether it be o'er the oxen, or the sheep-flock woolly white.
But me hath Antinoüs smitten for my miserable maw,
The ravening thing that such evil on the folk of men doth draw.
But if there be Gods and Wreakers of them that beg their bread,
Then may Antinoüs hap on death's ending ere he wed."

But to him then spake Antinoüs, the lord Eupeithes' son:
"Eat thou and be quiet, O stranger, or otherwhere begone,
Lest hand and foot through the homestead the young men thee shall hale,
And strip the skin from off thee, for thy tongue that telleth of bale."

So he spake; but great wrath gathered about them at his words,
And thus would one be saying of those high-hearted lords:
"Antinoüs, ill thou diddest, the wretched guest to smite,
And if God yet dwelleth in heaven, then doomed art thou outright.
Yes, too, the Gods in the likeness of guests from far away,
Since all-wise are they shapen, through men's cities oft will stray,
And look on the wrong and well-doing that midst of men are wrought."

In thuswise spake the Wooers, but their words he heeded nought.
BOOK XVII.

But Telemachus, great in his heart grew the grief for the smitten man,
And therewith from under his eyelids adown the teardrops ran, 490
And he shook his head in silence, and bale in his heart did brood.

But hereof moreover hearkened Penelope wise of mood, [forthright:
How the man in her halls had been smitten, and she spake to her maids
"May Apollo, the glory of bowmen, thee too Antinoüs smite!"

But Eurynome the goodwife a word thereto she said:
"Yes, if our prayers' fulfilment might anywise be sped,
Not one of these should come to the fair-throned Dawn of Day."

Then Penelope the prudent thuswise thereto did say:
"Yes, nurse, all these are hateful, since they devise but ill,
But Antinoüs, he seemeth to the Black Doom likest still. 500
Lo you, a hapless stranger, a-begging at men's hands,
Strays through the house, since suchwise his utter lack commands,
And his scrip were the others filling, and giving to the wight,
While he his back and shoulder with the footstool needs must smite."

So, sitting in her chamber to her women thus she spake,
While Odysseus the most goodly in the hall his meal did make.
But she called to the goodly swineherd, and him she spake unto:
"Hither now, O good Eumæus! to the guest with the bidding go
To come hither, that I may hail him, and ask of him a word,
If he perchance of Odysseus toil-laden may have heard, 510
Or seen him with eyes, for meseemeth he hath wandered by many a way."

Then thou, O swineherd Eumæus, didst answer her and say:
"Ah, Queen, and if those Achæans would hold their peace awhile,
And he might speak, full surely thine heart should he beguile;
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

For three nights at my booth I held him, and three days I kept him at home, And first from a ship a-fleeing unto meward did he come. But the tale of all his sorrows not yet to an end hath he brought. —Lo, as a man looks on a ministrel, and a man whom the Gods have taught, And sweet are the words of his singing, and therefor mortals long, And ceaseless him would they hearken whenever he wakeneth the song; E'en so did this man soothe me as he sat in the stead with me; And the house-friend of Odysseus he tells himself to be, In Crete erewhile a dweller, whence cometh Minos' race, Who now with woe beladen, drifting from place to place, Is come here; and he saith he hath tidings of Odysseus alive and anigh In the fat land of Thesprotians, and stands by it steadfastly; And how that abundant treasure he hath for his home and his stead.

But Penelope the heart-wise to him made answer and said: "Go call him, that he may tell it to me e'en face to face: But for these let them sit merry about the doors of the place, Or up and down through the chambers, since with their hearts 'tis well! For untouched the gear is lying in the halls where they should dwell, Sweet wine and bread, and their homemen they live upon all this, While they our house are haunting all days, and no day there is But they slaughter the sheep and the oxen, and the fatted goats of the And there they hold the revel, and drink the wine dark-red [steat, In wanton wise: wealth waneth, and no man now we have, E'en such as was Odysseus, the bane from the house to stave, Ah, were but Odysseus come, to his fatherland would he haste! Soon then with his son would he wreak him on these men and their wrong [and their waste."

As she spake did Telemachus sneeze a great sneeze, and through the hall It rang with a terrible sound, and Penelope laughed withal, And straightway unto Eumæus she set a word on the wing:
BOOK XVII.

"Go, speed thee, Eumaeus, and call him, and the guest before me bring. What I heedest thou not how my son hath sneezed to all words that I said? So the death of all these Wooers shall not be a thing unspeed, Nor shall any thereof escape it, his death and his doomful day. But one thing now do I tell thee, and the same to thy heart do thou lay, Whenas I shall wot of this man that he speaketh all truth indeed I will do on him cloak and kirtle and fair shall be that weed." 550

So she spake, and the swineherd hearkened and on his errand went, And standing anigh to Odysseus a wingèd word he sent: "O thou, my guest and father, the wise Penelope, Telemachus' mother, calleth; for her heart will have it to be That she ask some tale of her husband despite the weight of her woe; And if of thy soothfast telling she come hereafter to know She shall do on thee cloak and kirtle, whereof thou art most in need. So begging thy bread midst the people thy belly shalt thou feed, And they shall give unto thee whose hearts thereof be fain."

Then the toil-stout goodly Odysseus thuswise he answered again: 560 "Eumaeus, e'en now straightway to the wise Penelope, The Daughter of Icarus, would I tell all things as they be, For true tale of him am I wonting, and we twain have borne one toil: But this fierce folk of the Wooers, full sore I fear their broil, For the pride of them and their riot to the iron heaven doth fare. And look you, when he smote me and gave me grief to bear, As about the house I wended and doing hurt to none, Telemachus did not save me, nor he, nor any one. So Penelope go bid ye in the hall to tarry as yet, For all that she may be eager, until that the sun be set, And then let her ask of the day of her husband's coming aback, When she by the fire hath set me; for my raiment's woeful lack
Thereof full well thou wostest, since thee did I first beseech.

[his speech:
So he spake, and departed the swineherd, having hearkened the word of
But as he went over the threshold unto him Penelope spake; [make?
"Thou bringest him not? What matter doth the mind of this beggar-man
Doth he fear some man out of measure, or is he shamefast still,
About the house as he wendeth? Shame fitteth a beggar but ill."

Then thou, O swineherd Eumæus, didst answer even so:
"He speaketh according to reason, as many a man might do,
Because the pride and the riot of masterful men doth he shun.
But he biddeth thee abide him till the going down of the sun.
And this, O Queen, meeeemeth, shall be meeter for thee forsooth,
That alone thou speak with the stranger and hearken the word of his
mouth."

But unto him then answered all-wise Penelope:
"Nought witless is the stranger whatsoever man he be,
For no men are there certes 'mid all men born to die
So masterful as these men to work so wickedly."

In suchwise was she speaking: but the swineherd thereupon
To the Wooers' throng betook him now his errand was all done,
And unto Telemachus straightway a wingèd word he spake,
Head laid unto head, that the others thereof might nothing make:
"Dear lord, my ways am I wending to guard my swine and the gear,
Thy living, and mine also: but do thou heed all things here.
And first thyself do thou safe-guard, and look thou to it still
Lest thou take a hurt; for a many of Achæans wish thee ill,
Whom may Zeus undo for ever ere they become our bane!"

But Telemachus the heedful he spake and answered again:
BOOK XVII.

"E'en so shall it be, O father. Go, after thine evening cheer, But come betimes on the morrow, and bring slaughter-beasts full fair. But the rest, e'en I and the Deathless all that will heed and meet."

So he spake, but the other straightway on the smooth bench took his seat; But when to his mind both of meat and of drink he was filled withal He went on his way to the swine-droves, and left the garth and the hall Fulfilled with folk a-feasting, and merry now were they With the song and the dance, for at hand was the eventide of the day.
BOOK XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

ODYSSEUS BEING MOCKED BY THE BEGGAR IRUS, AND THREATENED BY HIM, OVERCOMES HIM IN BUFFETS. THE WOOERS GIVE GIFTS TO PENELlope. THE HANDMAID MELANTHO AND EURYMACHUS MOCK ODYSSEUS.

NOW there came a common beggar, who was wont to beg his way,
Through the Ithacan folk; whose belly still ravenous without stay
Passed all in eating and drinking: nor had he any might
Or strength of limb and body, though a big carle to the sight:
Armæus his name; his mother beworshipped called him so
From his birth; but all the younglings as Irus him did know,
Because he went on errands at men's bidding up and down.
So he came, and would drive Odysseus from the house that was his own,
And chid him and bespake him in wingèd words and fleet.

"Out from the garth, old gangrel! lest they drag thee forth by the feet.
See'st not how all are winking on me, as bidding me
To drag thee forth? Yet, nathless, I grudge to handle thee.
So up! lest soon betwixt us be strife of handy blows."

Then bespake him the wise Odysseus, as he frowned from knitted brows:
"What, carle! I do thee no evil, and no words with thee I make,
And begrudge thee no man's giving, how much soever ye take.
The threshold shall hold us both, nor hast thou any need
To begrudge me the goods of another. A gangrel thou seemest indeed
As I be; and 'tis for the Gods goodhap on us both to bestow: 20
But egg me not to the handstrife, lest the wrath upon me grow,
Lest, old as I be, I befoul and bebloody thy lips and thy breast;
And then forsooth to-morrow shall I have increase of rest;
For nowise twice mesecmeth shalt thou turn thee about to come
To the hall of the son of Laertes and to see Odysseus' home."

Therewith the gangrel Irus unto him in his anger spake:
"Out! how this greedy glutton a tripping speech doth make!
E'en as a chimney carline; and to him might I meet out ill
With a double stroke, and earthward every tooth in his head would I spill,
As though they were teeth of a swine that wasteth the standing wheat.
Now gird thee! that all may behold us how we in the battle may meet,
For to nought shall come thy fighting with a younger man, I ween."

So there by the lofty doorway, on the threshold smooth and clean,
With all their hearts set to it they roused the wrath of fight;
But unto the twain now hearkened Antinoüs' holy might,
And therewith amidst pleasant laughter he bespake the Wooers thus:

"Friends, never such a goodhap hath yet befallen us,
Such joyance as God bringeth unto our house and home,
For the stranger here and Irus to fighting-pitch are come:
So swift let us set them to it, that they to work may fall."

So he spake; and there a-laughing they rose up one and all,
And round those foul-clad beggars all men were gathered there.
Then Antinoüs bespake them, Eupeithes' son the fair:
"Now all ye noble Wooers hearken the word I say:
Two goat paunches cook by the fire, that there we laid away,
Stuffed full of fat and of blood, for supper to be dight;"
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Now whichso of these shall vanquish and be better in the fight
He shall rise up then and take him whichso of these he will,
And thenceforth with us shall he feast, and him and none other still
Will we suffer with us to mingle, and here to make his bede."

So Antinoüs spake, and the others all fain his word they heed. 50
But to them spake Odysseus the wise, from the wit in his heart that was
"O friends, 'tis no work for an elder with toil and trouble outworn [born:
To fight with a man that is younger; but my belly, the worker of ill,
To my bale and my quelling with stripes must needs be egging me still.
So come; do all ye swear me with an oath that is stark and strong,
No man for the pleasure of Irus against me to upbear the wrong,
And with heavy hand to smite me, and for him to quell me with might."

So he spake; and as he prayed them, so all they swore aright;
And when the oath was accomplished, and all had sworn amain,
Then Telemachus' holy might made answer, and spake again: 60

"O guest, if thine hardy heart and thine high mood bid thee to chase
This man, then fear no other Achaean here in the place.
For whosoever smites thee with a many shall have to do.
Lo, I am the host, and moreover these kings say yea thereto,
E'en Antinoüs and Eurymachus, and both these are prudent men."

So he spake, and all yeasaid it; and Odysseus fell to then
And girt his rags round his middle, and showed fair-shapen thighs,
And mighty, and broad shoulders, and breast fashioned in likewise,
And stark stout arms: and Athene drew nigh and stood by him,
And for the People's Shepherd made greater every limb, 70
And all the Wooers were smitten with wonder and amaze,
And thus would one be speaking to his neighbour next in place:
BOOK XVIII.

"Now winneth Irus un-Irused a self-made bale no doubt,
Such a thigh from amidst of his rag-gear as the old man thrusteth out!"

So they spake; and the heart of Irus quaked at the coming bale;
But e'en so the homemen girt him, and forward him did hale,
While with fear his flesh was creeping upon his every limb:
But Antinoüs bespake him, and with words fell chiding him:

"Foul fall thy life, big braggart! best wert thou not to be
If so sore hereat thou tremblest, and blenchest so fearfully
Before this old carle, wearied with the trouble and toil he hath won.
But now a thing do I tell thee, and forsooth shall it be done:
If this man overcome thee, and be the best of the twain,
On a black ship shall I thrust thee, and send thee on to the main
To King Echus, the maimer of every mortal anear;
And the ears and the nose from off thee with the ruthless brass shall he
And tear off thy manly members for the dogs to devour raw."  [shear,

But so much the more for that word did the trembling over him draw,
And they hailed him into the ring, and both held up their hands for the fray.
But the toil-stout goodly Odysseus he pondered either way,
If he so should smite that the soul from the man as he fell should fly,
Or should lightly smite him and lay him along on the earth to lie.
And better him-seemed as he pondered to lay on the lighter stroke,
Lest some deeming of him they might gather, those lords of Achæan folk.

So they held up their hands, and Irus to his shoulder right did win,
But his neck 'neath the ear smote Odysseus, and crushed the bones within,
And up through his mouth came gushing the purple blood straightway,
As he fell in the dust a-moaning, and gnashed his teeth as he lay,
The earth with his feet a-spurning. But the Wooers haughty and high
Held up their hands, and for laughter were hard at hand to die. 100
By his feet then Odysseus dragged him through the porch to the garth of the
And the very gate of the cloister, and there by the in-garth's wall [hall,
He leaned him up, and thrust on him his staff for his hand to take,
And therewith his voice he uttered, and a wingèd word he spake:

"Sit there now, and be warding the swine and dogs from the door,
But of bedesmen and of strangers be thou chieftain never more,
Thou sorry wretch! lest thou win thee some worser bale at last."

He spake, and over his shoulders his loathly scrip he cast,
The tattered thing whose baldric was a rope-yarn twisted thin, 109
And he went and sat down on the threshold; and they withal went in,
And amidst of merry laughter they greeted him and spake:

"May Zeus and all the Deathless give thee, O guest, to take [dear.
The thing that thou wouldest of all things, and that most thine heart holds
Whereas this measureless glutton thou hast caused at last to forbear
From begging amidst of the people; whom unto the main shall we bring
To the maimer of all mortals, e'en Echecus the King."

So they spake; and for valiant Odysseus that omen gladdenèd his heart.
But Antinois set by him the great paunch as his part,
Fulèlled with the fat and the blood; and the like did Amphinomus do:
For he took two loaves from the basket, and laid them thereunto, 120
And with the gold cup pledged him, and spake, and thus said he:

"Hail, guest and father! henceforward a happy man may'st thou be,
For all that thou now art holden by many an evil need!"

But thuswise spake in answer Odysseus of many a rede:
BOOK XVIII.

"Amphinomus, surely I deem thee a man of wisdom and wit,
And come of a glorious father; for his fame, I have heard of it,
That Nisus of Dulichium was a man of wealth and might,
And of him they say thou wert gotten, and knowest of speech and of right.
So one thing now will I tell thee; and thou, do thou hearken and heed,
There is nought more mightless than man of all that Earth doth breed,
Of all that on Earth breatheth and that creepeth over it.

For while God giveth him valour, and his limbs are lithe and fit,
He saith that never hereafter the bale shall he abide;
But when the Gods all-happy fashion his evil tide,
Perforce that load of sorrow his stout heart beareth then;
For in such wise still is fashioned the mood of earthly men,
As the Father of Gods and of menfolk hath brought about their day.
Yea, e'en I amongst men was happy in times now passed away,
And wrought full many a folly, and gave way to my heart's desire.
For I trusted in the backing of my brethren and my sire.

Therefore indeed let no man in unrighteous fashion live,
But hold in peace and quiet such things as God may give.
But, O me! how I see of the Wooers what fearful folly they plan,
Whereas the goods they are wasting, and shaming the wife of the man,
Who not for long I tell thee from his well-loved fatherland
Will yet be aloof; nay, rather e'en now he is hard at hand.
But thou—God lead thee hence, that this man thou may'st not meet
When he hath gotten him homeward to his land the dear and sweet;
For when under his roof he cometh, and they deal betwixt and between,
The Wooers and he, nought bloodless shall be the work I ween."

He poured and he drank of the wine heart-lulling as he spoke,
And gave back the cup to the hands of the orderer of the folk;
Who as through the house he wended on his heart bore heavy load;
And he shook his head as he pondered, for his heart the bale forebode.
But nought his doom might he flee from; for Athene bound him there
To be quelled by Telemachus' hand and the mighty edge of the spear.
So he went back and sat on the high-seat, whence he had arisen erewhile.

Now the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, she set a thought of guile
In the heart of Icarius' daughter, all-wise Penelope,
To show herself to the Wooers, that e'en as much as might be
She might open their hearts unto her, and win worship even more
From her son and from her husband than she had had before.
So she laughed with empty laughter, and thus she fell to say:

"Eurynome, longeth my heart as never yet on a day
To show myself to the Wooers, for as loth as they are to me;
And a word to my son will I speak, that better spoken will be,
Not so wholly to blend with these Wooers, the men of masterful will;
For soft are the words of their babble, but behind they ponder the ill."

Then Eurynome the handmaid she answered and 'gan say:
"My child, all this that thou speakest is on the meetest way.
From thy son do thou hide it nothing, and this word of thine go tell.
But first wash thou thy body, and thy cheeks anoint thou well,
Nor bear thy face before him so stained with tear on tear,
For ill it is to sorrow, and never to forbear;
And of such age now is thy son, as thou prayest the Deathless of grace
That thou might'st yet behold him with the beard upon his face."

But her in turn thus answered the wise Penelope:
"Eurynome, nowise bid it, though sore thou carest for me,
That I should wash my body and sleek me o'er with oil;
For the Gods that hold Olympus, my fairness did they soil
Since the day when he departed in the hollow ship to wend."
BOOK XVIII.

But now to me Autonoë and Hippodameia send,
That when I go down to the feast-hall they may stand on either side,
Since for shame amid the menfolk alone I may not bide."

So she spake; and fared the goodwife through the feast-hall of the place,
With the message for the women to bid them come their ways.
But the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, thought on another thing,
For on that Icarius' Daughter the sweet sleep did she bring,
That she lay aback and slumbered, and all her limbs withal
Lay loose in the chair. And the Goddess, the glory of them all, 190
Gave deathless gifts, that the Achaeans might wonder at the sight:
And first she cleared her visage with the deathless beauty bright,
Wherewith doth sleek her over Cytherea of the crown,
When she unto the Graces and the lovely dance goes down;
And she made her taller and greater for every one to see,
And made her skin yet whiter than the new-sawn ivory.

So wrought the Glory of Godhead, and went her ways withal,
The while the white-armed handmaids drew thither from the hall,
And came their ways a-talking; then the sweet sleep sped away,
And she stroked her cheek with her hand, and therewith fell to say:

"Soft slumber hath covered me over for all my weight of woe,
And oh ! that as soft a death-tide might Artemis bring me now,
That no more in lamentation I my life and soul might wear,
In my longing for all the valour of my lord the loved and dear,
For he amidst the Achaeans was the man most excellent."

So speaking, down from her gleaming fair bower aloft she went,
Not lonely, for two handmaids went beside her therewithal.
But when came that Glory of Women to the Wooers in the hall
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

She stood beside the pillar of the roof-tree fashioned stout,
And withal her gleaming headgear she held her face about,
And a wise and trusty handmaid each side of her there stood.
But the limbs of those were loosened, and love beguiled their mood,
And all they longed full sorely to lie by her abed.

But unto Telemachus spake she, to her son beloved she said:
"Telemachus, nothing steadfast is thy mind and thy wit as of yore;
While yet thou wert but little thou hast gainfuller wit and more. [youth,
But now when great thou art waxen, and hast reached the full measure of
And a stranger might say, beholding thy stature and beauty forsooth,
That thou must needs be the offspring of a happy man and good,
No longer art thou seemly of thy wit and of thy mood.
What a deed in thine house hath befallen! yea, e'en such a deed as this,
That thou hast suffered a stranger therein to be handled amiss.
How now, if a guest be sitting within our house and hall,
And to him from this mishandling some evil should befall?
Then blame and shame and unworship from men should come on thee."

Her then Telemachus answered, and in this wise spake he:
"Though thou art wroth, my mother, yet me it angers not.
Each thing that ever passeth, thereof I heed and wot,
The better things and the worser: and erst but a babe was I.
But lo you, not all matters can I handle heedfully;
For out of myself they drive me, thronging thick and all around,
And ever devising evil: and for me is no helper found.
But in truth this broil befell not betwixt Irus and the guest
By the willing of the Woers; and the stranger had the best.
Would to Father Zeus and Athene, and King Apollo withal,
That even so the Woers within our house and hall
Might bow their heads so vanquished! Some out there in the close,
And some within the chambers, and the limbs of all grow loose,
Even as now that Iris by the garth-gate sitteth there
Wagging his head, and faring as a drunken man may fare;
Nor hath might to stand straight on his feet, nor homeward get him aback,
Or whatso place he is bound for: for his limbs they lie all slack."

Thus unto one another the speech and the tale they sped;
But Eurymachus fell to speaking to Penelope and said:
"O Daughter of Icarius, all-wise Penelope,
If all Achaeans of Argos the Iasian looked on thee,
Then many more of Wooers in the house wherein ye dwell
Would be feasting on the morrow; for all women ye excel
In goodness and stature, and in mind well-fashioned within."

Then Penelope the all-wise, such answer did she win:
"My body's guise, Eurymachus, and the worth that was in me,
The Deathless marred, when for Ilion the Argives took the sea,
And with them went Odysseus that was my wedded lord.
And might he but get him homeward this life of mine to ward
Then greater were my glory, and fairer far its tale.
But now do I grieve, whereas God speeds on me abundance of bale.
Yea, in the day and the hour when he left his fatherland
How he spake, as a while he held me by the wrist of my right hand:
'O woman, nowise deem I that all the well-greaved folk,
The Achaeans, shall win homeward unscathed of any stroke:
For the tale goes that the Trojans wot well of the warrior's craft;
That there be good spear-casters and shooters of the shaft,
And backers of swift-foot horses: all they that be the best,
The strife of the balanced battle to doom the speediest.
Wherefore nowise am I wotting if the Gods shall give me speed
To my home, or in Troy I be taken: so all things here do thou heed.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Care thou for my father and mother, who dwell beneath my roof,
As now, yea even better, when I am far aloof.
But when our son thou beholdest with a beard upon his face
Then wed thee with whom thou willest, and leave him here in the place.'
—In this wise he spake unto me; and now time fulfilleth all, 271
And the night when this wedding beloathed must now at the last befall
to me undone; and my welfare doth Zeus take all away.
And wthal on my heart and my soul this sore grief comes on a day;
For not thus have Wooers been wont, nor thus have they hitherto done,
When the goodly wife or the daughter of some great and wealthy one
They were fain to woo, and thereover with each other they must strive:
Then they forsooth the oxen and the fat sheep ever drive,
A feast for the friends of the damsel, and of rich gifts give good store,
But eat not the wealth of another paying no atonement therefor." 280

So she spake; and the goodly Odysseus toil-stout was glad the while
That she drew the gifts from out them, and their hearts did so beguile
With wheedling words; but far others she pondered in her heart.

But Antinois, son of Eupeithes, spake to her on his part:
"O Daughter of Icarius, all-wise Penelope,
Take thou the gifts of Achæans whatsoever they will bring to thee;
For to gainsay the gift of the giver is neither good nor fair.
But not to our lands will we get us, nor any otherwhere,
Before to the man thou art wedded who of all the Achæans is best."

So Antinois spake, and his speaking seemed good to all the rest, 290
And each man sent his henchman the gifts thereto to bear.
For Antinois thither brought he a great robe wondrous fair,
All 'brodered, with twelve brooches thereon all wrought of gold,
And every one well-fitted with hooks well-wrought to hold.
BOOK XVIII

For Eurymachus a collar of gold most deftly done,
All hung about with amber that shone out as the sun.
And the swains of Eurydamas brought him two earrings wrought full fair,
   Three-beaded; and great glory from out them glittered there.
And the henchman of Pisander, Polyctor's son the king,
   Brought up with him a neck-chain, a fair and seemly thing;
   And each one of the Achaeans for fair gifts to give her sent.
So therewith the Glory of Women to the upper chamber went,
   But the lovely gifts bore the handmaids as they went with her along.

But now unto the dancing and the love-fain tide of song
   Turned the Wooers and were merry, and for nightfall there did they dwell,
And there as they made merry the black night on them fell.
Then three braziers amidst of the feast-hall they set up presently,
   To give a light to all men; and around laid the bavins dry,
   Sear from of old and sapless, with the brass new-cleft to burn,
   And they set the brands amidst them: but they quickened the blaze in
   The maids of Odysseus the toil-worn; and unto them in a while [turn,
   Spake Odysseus himself, the Zeus-bred, the man of many a guile.

"O maids of Odysseus, the king aloof for so long a tide,
   Go now your ways to the chamber where the holy Queen doth abide,
And there the rock be twirling and do her pleasure there,
The wool with your hands a-carding as ye sit in the chamber fair,
   But I for all these Wooers will give enough of light.
E'en if they will to be biding the Gold-throned Day-dawn bright,
   Yet shall they not outdo me, for hardy am I to abide."

He spake: but they fell a-laughing, and each the other eyed,
   And that fair-cheeked Melantho, she chid him shamefully;
   E'en Dolius' daughter, fostered of Queen Penelope
As her very own; who had given her of playthings bounteous store;
Yet in her heart she held not Penelope's sorrow sore,
But with Eurymachus ever in loving wise was blent.
So now unto Odysseus these chiding words she sent:

"O wretched guest, now surely right out of thy wit thou art!
Since to sleep at some man's stithy thou hast no will to depart,
Or unto the place of gangrels; but must tarry babbling here
Midst these many men, in thy boldness, and thine heart without a fear.
Yea, either wine now holdeth thine heart, or else maybe
E'en such is thy mind at all times, and thou babblest emptily.
Exultest thou in thy beating of the gangrel Irus there?
Yet now lest some one better stand up, do thou beware,
Who with sturdy hands shall smite thee a buffet over thine head,
And with plenteous blood befoul thee and drive thee forth from the

Then spake the shifty Odysseus, as he scowled from knitted brow:
"O dog! I will hasten and get me to Telemachus even now,
And tell him thy tale, that limb-meal thy body he may shear."

So he spake, and with words so spoken the women did he scare,
And they went their ways through the house, and their limbs, all loose
they grew
With the fear of him; for they deemed it that he spake what was but true.

But quickening up the firebrands by the blazing hearth he stood,
Giving heed and eye to all men; and in his mind and his mood
He pondered other matters that should be accomplished yet.

But those haughty Wooers Athene not even now would she let
From their sore heart-grieving outrage, that into the heart yet more
BOOK XVIII.

Of Odysseus son of Laertes might sink the sorrow sore.
So Eurymachus, Polybus' son, took up the mockeries
'Gainst Odysseus; and midst of his fellows he made the laughter arise:

"Ye men the high Queen wooing, come now and hearken ye,
Till I tell you the tale of my heart and the word it biddeth me:
Nought godless this man cometh to Odysseus' house and our hands,
Since from him and his head there gleameth the very light of the brands
For no hair on his head there waxeth, however poor and small."

Then he turned his speech to Odysseus, the bane of burg and wall:
"Would'st thou, O guest, that I wage thee, if I should take thee away
Far up in the country-side (and assured should be thy pay)
To gather stones for the garth-walls and plant the saplings tall?
Then victuals would I find thee year-long; and therewithal
Would I do the raiment upon thee, and give thee shoes to thy feet.
But in naughty deeds art thou learned, and thou wilt not deem it meet
To labour afield; but art fainest of begging about the land,
Till for thy maw insatiate some meat may come to hand."

But Odysseus of many a rede, he spake and answered again:
"Would'lychus, might there but happen a strife betwixt us twain,
On some hour of the season of spring when the days are waxing long,
In the grass maybe, and I holding a scythe the well-curved and strong,
And thou with such another, that we twain the work might try,
Both fasting right unto even, and good store of grass thereby.
Or if 'twere the driving of oxen, the very best ye may,
Both mighty beasts and sleek-skinned, and stuffed with plenteous hay,
Of like age and like burdened, and tireless beasts afield,
And there were the close four-scred, and the clod to the ploughshare to
Then see if aught I fail me straight furrows still to drive!"
And again, if the Son of Cronos the war-play smite alive,
Then if I have a buckler, and two spears of war I get,
And therewith a helm all brazen upon my temples set,
Then shalt thou see me blended in the forefront of the play,
Nor yet upon my belly thy mocking words shalt thou lay.

Now thou mockest me out of measure, and hard is the heart in thee,
And thou deemest thyself a great one, and stark thou seemest to be,
Because with but few thou consortest, and they but a worthless band.
Ah! were but Odysseus hither, come aback to his fatherland,
Then verily these doorways, for as broad as they be indeed,
As ye flee through the porch and outdoors, shall be narrow for your need."

So he said: but Eurymachus, thereat did the wrath in his heart awake,
And, from his knit brow scowling, a wingèd word he spake:
"O wretch! I will do thee a mischief, whereas thou thus hast said
Bold words amidst a many; nor hath thine heart a dread.

Yea, either wine now holdeth thy wit, or else maybe
E'en such it is at all times and thou babblest emptily.
Art thou mad for the beating of Irus, the gangrel of the town?"

So he spake, and caught up a footstool; but Odysseus sat him adown
Beside Amphinomus' knees, the lord of Dulichium's land,
For Eurymachus he dreaded; who smote on the right hand
The cup-swan, and loud clanging to earth down fell the bowl.
And the man himself fell groaning and aback in the dust did roll.
Then through the shadowy feast-hall the Wooers raised the cry,
And thus would one be saying to him that sat next by:

"Would God that the gangrel stranger had perished otherwhere
Ere hither he came, since he raiseth so great a turmoil here!
For now we strive about beggars, nor any joy do we hail
Of the goodly feast and the banquet, and the worser doth prevail."

But unto them fell speaking Telemachus' holy might:

"Fair sirs, ye are mad, and no longer in your hearts do ye carry aright
Your meat and your drink; meseemeth some God your mood doth stir.
But now unto your slumber, since well ye have feasted here,
Go home whenso ye will it, for no man I drive away."

So he spake, and they bit their lips, and in wonder there were they.
At Telemachus and his speaking, and his heart of hardihead.
But Amphinomus spake among them, and in suchwise words he said,
He, the glorious son of Nisus, Aretias' son, the King:

"O friends, when one amongst us has said a righteous thing,
With hard words none should mate him, nor rage against him then.
No longer mock the stranger, nor any of the men
Of the house of Odysseus the godlike, house-carles or thralls of war,
Come now, and let the wine-swain go round the cups once more,
That, having poured drink-offering, we may get us home to bed.
And the stranger, let us leave him here in Odysseus' stead
For Telemachus to cherish, since he came to his house the kind."

So he spake, and the words of his speaking seemed good unto their mind,
And Mulius then, the hero, for them the wine-bowl blent,
Who as squire of Amphinomus and Dulichian henchman went;
So in turn to all he dealt it, and they made drink-offering meet
To the Happy Gods, and were drinking the wine the honey-sweet;
But when they had poured and had drunken as their hearts' desire bade,
Then home to his house went each man in slumber and sleep to be laid.
BOOK XIX.

ARGUMENT.

ODYSSEUS AND TELEMACHUS BEAR OFF THE WEAPONS FROM THE HALL,
AND LAY THEM IN THE TREASURY. ODYSSEUS SPEAKETH WITH
PENELope, AND WITH EURyCLEA THE NURSE, WHO, BATHING HIS
FEET, KNOWETH HIM BY THE SCAR OF THE ANCIENT HURT THAT
HE GAT IN THE HUNTING OF THE BOAR.

THERE then the goodly Odysseus was left to abide in the hall,
Still pondering bane for the Woeeus with Athene's help to befall,
And unto Telemachus straightly a winged word did he say:
"Telemachus, now withinward all the war-gear must thou lay,
But give soft words to the Woeeus when they come the same to miss
And thereof ask thee closely: such words shalt thou speak as this: [more
"From out of the smoke have I laid them; for nought such are they any
As Odysseus left behind him when he sailed for the Troy-folks' shore,
But are worsened where the edges the breath of the fire might find.
And another thing yet greater hath God put into my mind,
Lest ye, when ye are drunken, to strife of strokes may fall
And hurt you; thus befouling the feast and the Wooing withal.
For e'en of himself the Iron to battle draweth men."

So he spake; and his father beloved Telemachus heeded as then,
And he called to Euryclea, and spake to his nurse of old:
"Good dame, within the chamber the women do thou hold
While my father's lovely weapons in the treasure-house I stow, [now.
Which have lain in the house unheeded, and are marred by the fire-seek
BOOK XIX.

For far aloof was my father and I but a child at home; 19
But now would I lay them together where the fire's breath may not come."

Then the loved nurse Euryclea this word to him did speed:
"O child, and might'st thou do it to take on thee good heed,
And keep the house with wisdom and ward well all the gear!
But say who wendeth him with thee the brands for thee to bear,
Since the maids may not go before thee a light for thee to make?"

But Telemachus the heedful made answer thus and spake:
"This guest: for I will not suffer that any have his hand
In my meal-ark, and be deedless, though he come from a far-off land."

So he spake, and the word of his speaking unwinged with her did dwell,
And she shut the door of the chambers that were builded fair and well.
And then fell to Odysseus and his well-renownèd son, 31
And bore out the helms of battle, and the shields with bosses done,
And the keen spears; and before them Pallas Athene went,
Holding a golden lantern, and a fair light from it sent.
Then Telemachus fell a-speaking to his father presently:

"O father! lo a marvel that mine eyes behold and see,
For lo how the walls of the chambers, and the panels fashioned fair,
And the rafters of the pine-tree, and the shafts that all uprear,
All shine unto mine eyesight as if with the fire ablaze! 39
Ah, some God is within of the dwellers of the wide-spread heavenly place."

But Odysseus of many a rede he spake and answered again:
"Nay, hold thy peace, and refrain thee, and thy mind and thine asking
For this is the wont of the God-folk that hold Olympus high. [restrain,
So go thou and lie thee adown, while I abide hereby,
That yet again thy mother and the handmaids I may stir,
That about all things she shall ask me for the grief that is in her."

So he spake, and Telemachus wended his ways adown the hall,
And 'neath the blaze of the firebrands he gat to his chamber withal,
Where aforetime would he lay him when sweet sleep came his road;
There yet again he laid him, and the holy Dawn abode.

But there the goodly Odysseus was left to abide in the hall,
Still pondering the doom of the Wooers, with Athene's help to befall.

And now from out her chamber came all-wise Penelope,
And like Aphrodite the golden, and Artemis was she,
And they set her a bench by the fire, and she sat her down thereon,
Of turned ivory and of silver all by a craftsman done,
Icmalius hight; and a footstool for the feet beneath had he made
That grew unjointed from out it, and thereon a great fleece was there laid.

So Penelope the all-wise sat down upon that same,
And from out the hall the damsels white-armed about her came;
And they therefrom much bread, and the boards had borne away,
And the beakers wherefrom had drunken those men o'er-haughty that day;
And they cast down the fire from the braziers, and thereon laid withal
New-quickened brands in plenty for light and heat to the hall.

But now again Melantho Odysseus fell to chide:
"Through the night season, O Stranger, will thy troubling yet abide?
About the house wilt thou loiter eyeing the women o'er? [before;
Out, wretch! out a-doors, and there hug thee on the feast thou hast had
Or smitten by the firebrand thy way out shalt thou take!"

Then, from his bent brows scowling, guileful Odysseus spake:
"Yes, wench! and why fallest thou on me with thy wrath and evil will?
Is it because I am foul, and my body clad but ill?
And because through the land I go begging? Well, hard need driveth me,
And such forsooth all beggars and gangrel men must be.
And I—I once was wealthy, and midst of men did live
In a fair rich house; and to bedesmen a many did I give
Whatso they were, and whatso was the need that brought them there.
And thralls had I out of number, and all the goods and gear
Whereby men live in plenty, and for great and rich men pass.
But the Son of Cronos drained me all dry; for his will it was. 80
So look thou to it, O woman, lest thy fairness thou should’st lose
Wherein thou so excellest all the handmaids of the house;
Lest thy mistress have thee in anger, and her wrath lie hard on thee,
Or Odysseus return, whereof yet a grain of hope there may be.
Moreover, if he hath perished, and his home fare be but dead,
Yet by the will of Apollo a like son stands in his stead,
Telemachus: and of the women of the house that the wanton play
Shall none escape him henceforth: for ripe is his age today.”

But Penelope the all-wise the thing he spake she heard,
And she spake unto the handmaid and said a chiding word: 90
“Thou shameless dog! thou bold-face! from me thou hid’st not away,
Thou and the deed that thou doest: but thine head therefore shall pay.
And now full well thou wottest, since the word thou heard’st me speak,
That in these halls of my dwelling of the stranger would I seek
Some tidings of my husband, since grief besetteth me sore.”

To Eurynome the house-dame therewith she spake once more:
“Eurynome, bring thou the settle, and thereover cast a fell,
That thereon the guest a-sitting the tale to me may tell,
And hear my word: for his tidings I would search out thoroughly.”
So right handily she brought it and set it down thereby,  
The well-smoothed settle, and on it the fleecy fell she cast,  
And the goodly toil-stout Odysseus sat down thereon at last,  
And Penelope the all-wise took up the word and spake:

"Now of the speech, O Stranger, beginning will I make,  
And ask of what men thou comest, whence thy city and thy kin?"

But answered the wise Odysseus and thuswise did begin:

"O Queen, no man of mortals upon the boundless earth  
May blame thee: for unto the heavens goeth up the fame of thy worth,  
As of some king most noble; and the Gods is he worshipping,  
As he rules o'er a folk that is many, and of valiant men is king;  
And good manners there he upholdeth, and the black earth yields increase,  
Both of the wheat and the barley, and heavy with fruit are the trees;  
And the ewes bring forth and fail not, and fish the sea-flood gives.  
All this from his well-ruling; for the folk beneath him thrives.  
In this thine house then ask me of any other thing,  
But of my land and my people nought be thou questioning,  
Nor flood my heart with sorrow by very memory.  
For I am a man of mourning: nor is it meet for me  
Bewailing me and moaning in another's house to sit;  
And ill it is to be grieving and make no end to it.  
Lest one of the home-folk blame me, or e'en by thee it be said  
That I in tears am swimming, my wit with wine o'erlaid."

But unto him then answered heart-wise Penelope:

"O guest, my form and my fairness and the worth that was in me  
The Deathless slew when for Troy-town the Argives went aboard,  
And in their fellowship wended Odysseus, once my lord.  
Ah! would he but be coming, and rule o'er my livelihood,
BOOK XIX.

Then greater were my glory, and my days more fair and good.
Now woe is me for the onrush of ills that the God hath sent!
For all that in these islands are kings and excellent,
In Dulichium, or Samé, or Zacynthus of the trees,
Or abide in the Ithacan country clear-seen across the seas,
All these do woo me unwilling, and my house they waste and wear.
Therefore I heed no guest-folk nor of bedesmen have a care,
Nor any whit of the henchmen who the people’s craftsmen be.
But in sorrow for Odysseus melts out the heart in me,
While they press on the wedding, and by cunning ways I wind.
But the first thing that God gave me, and set within my mind,
Was to gear a great loom, and be weaving a web within the hall,
Full fine and wide of measure; and I spake unto them all:

"O Wooers of mine, O younglings, since the goodly Odysseus is dead,
Stay the urging on of my wedding till this web to an end I have sped,
Lest all for nought its warp-threads on mine hands should wane away.
'Tis a shroud for the hero Laertes, for the season and the day
When the doom of death shall take him that layeth men along;
Lest some one of Achæan women on me should lay the wrong.
Lo the man of great possessions now shroudless is he laid.'

"So I spake, and the men high-hearted my bidding they obeyed,
And through the day my weaving in the mighty loom I plied.
And undid my web in the night when the torches were set by my side;
So for three years I beguiled them, and the Achæans did I tame.
But when it now was the fourth year, and around the seasons came,
And time, through the waning of months and the days’ fulfilling must speed,
Then by the means of the handmaids and the wantons lacking heed
They came upon me and caught me, and loud they chided me,
And perforce my work must I finish for as loth as I might be.
"Now no more may I flee the wedding, and other device have I none,
And unto the wedding my parents now urge me, and my son
Is troubled now he noteth how his livelihood they eat;
For to manhood now is he waxen, and a man of all most meet
To heed the house; and Zeus giveth to him a glorious part.
So now withal I bid thee tell thy folk from whence thou art,
Since from no oak old in stony and from no stone art thou."

But unto her in answer speaketh wise Odysseus now:
"O worshipped wife of Odysseus that was Laertes' son,
In asking of my kindred wilt thou no more be done?
Well, the tale then will I tell thee, though ye give me into the hand
Of more griefs than e'en now hold me. For still, when aloof from his land
Hath one been such a while as I have, e'en thus will the matter go,
When he hath strayed through the cities of menfolk bearing his woe.
But even so will I tell thee what thou sekest and askest of me.

Now Crete is a certain country amidst of the wine-dark sea,
Fair, fat-soiled, sea-begirded; and a many men are there,
Yea, more than may be numbered; and ninety cities fair
There mingle men's tongues that are divers: there Achæans talk and tell,
And the high-heart Eteo-Cretans, and there Cydonians dwell,
And the Dorian folk three-folded, and Pelasgian folk God-bred.
And Cnosus the great city they have, in which same stead
From nine years old ruled Minos, who great Zeus for a speech-friend won,
The father of my father, high-souled Deucalion.
So Deucalion begat me and Idomeneus the King,
Who, in the beaked ship sailing to Ilion wayfaring,
Went with the sons of Atreus: while I, the younger of birth,
Am Æthon hight: but the elder is he, and the better of worth.
Now there I saw Odysseus, and the guest-gifts to him gave,
Since him for Troy-town making to Crete the strong wind drive;
For seaward from Malea it thrust him straying then,
And bound him in Amnisus, where is Eleithyas’ den,
A haven strait, where hardly by the storm he failed to be caught.
So, coming unto the city, Idomeneus he sought,
For he said that he was his guest-friend, and a dear and honoured one.
But he for ten days at the least, or eleven days, was gone,
In his beaked ship unto Ilios wayfaring over the sea.
So I brought the man to my house, and guested him well with me,
And heedfully him did I cherish, for my house held many a thing.
And unto those his fellows who that man were following
Red wine and the flour of barley from the folk-store I gathered and gave,
And oxen for burnt-offering, that now their souls might have.

“So twelve days the holy Achaéans abided there in the land;
For stark drave the north wind on them that hardly might they stand,
And some God that was hard to deal with the storm-rush’gainst them made,
But the thirteenth day the wind fell, and thereupon they weighed.”

Then he stayed his feigned story, that like to the truth did he tell,
And the flesh of her was molten, and the tears as she hearkened fell;
And e’en as the snow is molten on the mountain peaks on a day,
And that which the west wind sheddeth the east wind wasteth away,
And the streams of the river are swollen by that melting off the hill,
So were her fair cheeks molten, and there she wept her fill;
And sore she bewailed her husband who beside her sat in the life.

Great pity then had Odysseus in his heart of his weeping wife,
But his eyes beneath his eyelids like horn or steel they stood
Untrembling, and he refrained him of the tears by his craftihood.
But when of her tearful wailing she was satiate at the last
Therewith again she answered, and this word to him she cast:
"Now guest, and thou guest indeed, yet thy tale I think to try;
If indeed thou there hast guested with his godlike company,
My husband in thy feast-hall, as the tale to me ye bore,
Then tell me what like was the raiment that about his body he wore,
And what was the man to look on, and his fellows, what were they?"

But Odysseus of many a counsel he fell to answer and say:
"Tis hard to tell, O woman, so long as the time doth wear;
For now indeed already hath come the twentieth year
Since the day when he departed and left my land behind.
Yet forsooth e’en so will I tell thee as the image abides in my mind.
For a well-fulled cloak of purple the goodly Odysseus wore,
Twofold; and therewith a buckle of goldsmith’s work it bore
With double clasps for the tongue, and its face with wise-work wrought.
For thereon a hound in his forepaws a spotted hind had caught,
And glared upon it gasping: and all men marvelled there
At those things of gold; how he still glared on as he throttled the deer,
And how with her feet she was writhing, so sore as she longed to go free.
Now withal a gleaming kirtle on his body did I see;
As the peel that showeth outward of a thin-layered onion,
E’en so dainty was its fashion, and it shimmered as the sun,
And many women beheld it, and wondered at it sore.
And now a thing will I tell thee for thine heart to ponder o’er,
If Odysseus this weed did on him at home I nothing wot,
Or if on the ship swift-fleeting the gift of a fellow he got,
Or mayhap of a guest-friend; for to many men was he dear,
And amidst all of the Achæans scarce might he find his peer.
But a brazen sword I gave him, and a cloak twofold and fine,
Of purple dye and lovely, and a long-skirt gaberdine,
And I brought him with all honour to his well-bench’d ship on the sea.
"Now there went with him an henchman, but a little older than he;
Of whom I will tell thee the fashion as truly as I can:
A black-skinned man, round-shouldered, a curly-headed man;
Eurybates his name was, and over every wight
Odysseus held him in honour, for he knew what was meet and right."

So he spake, and yet more was he stirring the longing of her woe,
As she knew the soonfast tokens that Odysseus there did show.

But when of her tearful mourning she was satiate at the last
Therewith she fell to answer, and this word to him she passed:

"Now from henceforth, O Stranger, though erst thou wert piteous,
Shalt thou be dear and honoured in the chambers of my house.
For 'twas I that dight him the raiment whereof e'en now ye told,
And I folded it up from this chamber, and did on it the buckle of gold;
Yea, e'en for his adornment. But now ne'er will he come to mine hand!
Nay never more come homeward to his lovely fatherland!
O baleful doom of Odysseus in the hollow ship to sail,
And make for the evil Ilios and the unnamed Burg of Bale!"

To her then spake in answer Odysseus of many a rede:
"O worshipped wife of Odysseus that was Laertes' seed,
Mar thy fair flesh no longer, nor waste thy soul away
In wailing for thine husband. Though no blame on thee I lay;
For thus often a woman bewaileth her lawful husband gone,
For whom she hath borne the children of their blended loving won,
Were he worser than Odysseus, whom men call the Godhead's peer.
Yet stay thy grief and be heeding the word that of me thou shalt hear;
For in good sooth shall I tell thee, nor cover up the word
Which of Odysseus' homefare a while ago I heard;
How that he is alive and near by in the rich Thesprotian land,
And goodly and great is the treasure that as now he bringeth to hand,
By seeking of gifts 'mid the people: but his trusty folk they died,
And his hollow ship was broken amid the wine-dark tide,
As he came from the Three-horned Island; for wroth were Zeus and the
With him, because his fellows the kine to death had done. [Sun
So all they perished together 'mid the clashing billows' roar.
But him to the keel a-clinging the waves cast up ashore
On the land of the Phaeacians, men unto the Gods akin;
From whom to his heart's desire as a God did he worship win; 
And many things they gave him, and were fain to ferry him home
All scathless; and long ago had Odysseus hither come:
But it seemed to his soul more gainful to wander wide o'er the land,
And goods and gear to gather, e'en such as might come to hand;
Since beyond all men that are death-doomed Odysseus wotteth the lore
Of waxing wealth, and no man may match him evermore.
Such tale I had of Phidon, of Thesprotian men the king,
Who swore the same in his house as he poured the drink-offering,
That the ship was shoved down to the sea, and the shipmen ready there
Who were bidden to fit Odysseus to his fatherland the dear. 280
But he sent me away before him, for a keel happed there, that was bound
From the folk of the Thesprotians to Dulichium's wheat-rich ground.
And there moreover he showed me Odysseus' gathered store,
That would feed to his tenth generation of men, yea even more;
In the chamber of King Phidon lay such abundant gear.
But Odysseus they said had wended to Dodona, to hearken and hear
The word and the counsel of Zeus from the oak of the lofty crest,
In what wise his home-faring to his land beloved were best,
(Whence so long aloof he had bided) or by stealth, or openly.

"Thus then the man is scathless, and e'en now is close hereby,
300
Nor long aloof shall be biding from his friends and his fatherland."
And forsooth an oath hereover will I swear thee out of hand.
And first: thou, Zeus, bear witness, of all Gods the highest and best,
And thou, hearth of the blameless Odysseus, whereto I am come for my
That this very tale I am telling shall be accomplished and done,
And hither shall come Odysseus in this same year of the sun,
Yea, ere this same moon’s waning and the next moon’s waxing be.”

She then in words bespake him, all-wise Penelope:
“O guest, this thing that thou tellest, may it be but even so!
Then verily of my kindness and my many gifts shouldst thou know,
And whosoever meets thee shall deem thee blest indeed.
And yet my mind forebodeth in what wise this shall speed:
Odysseus shall never come home, and no furtherance gettest thou;
For nowhere like are the masters within our house as now
To Odysseus amidst of the menfolk—if ever he were indeed—
For the aiding of guests bepitied, and for taking them home in their
Now wash ye this man, O handmaids, and the slumber for him dight,
The bedstead and the blankets and the rugs the dainty-bright,
That he with warmth well cherished the Gold-throned Dawn may meet.
And betimes on the morrow bathe him, and sleek him soft and sweet,
That by Telemachus sitting in the feast-hall at his case
He may have a care of his victuals: but whosoever of these
Shall grieve him in their anger shall fare the worse therefor;
And his errand here shall be bootless for all his wrath be sore.
For how shalt thou know it, O Stranger, whereby of womankind
I am excellent of counsel, and of understanding mind,
If all weather-worn and ill-clad in our hall thou sittest at meat?

“Short-lived forsooth are menfolk and swift their day to fleet,
And he who is hard-hearted and learned in cruelty,
All men pray evil on him while living he may be,
And dead he hath all men's mocking that erst alive he earned.
But he who liveth upright, and righteousness hath learned,
Far and wide midst all menfolk goes the glory of his name,
Borne by guests; and many people tell the goodness of his fame."

But to her then spake and answered Odysseus of many a rede:
"Beworshipped wife of Odysseus, the old Laertes' seed,
But loathly to me are these mantles, and these blankets fine and meet,
Since the day when I departed from the snowy fells of Crete,
Across the sea a-faring in the long-ship of the ear:
I will lie as in sleepless night-tides I have rested oft before,
For many a night have I streaked me in full unseemly lair,
And abidden the holy morning, the Gold-throned Dawn and fair.
And moreover, this foot-washing to my mind is nothing meet,
Nor shall any of your women set hand unto my feet,
Of those in the house about thee that are serving in the place,
But it were some woman ancient, of prudent wont and ways,
Whose heart hath borne such troubles as I have had to bear:
To her I should not begrudge it that my feet she handled here."

But to him thus spake in answer heart-wise Penelope:
"Dear guest, no man aforetime hath come to my house and me
Of all far-coming strangers so heedful and so dear,
So heedfully and wisely ye speak of matters here.
Such a goodwife I have, in whose heart do wholesome counsels dwell,
Who erst that man unhappy did rear and nourish well,
And in her hands she took him when his mother brought him to light;
And she thy feet shall wash thee, though now she be diminished of might.
—Ho, Euryclea, thou wiseheart! rise up, rise up to me,
To wash one of like age to thy master! Ah, now it well may be
That suchlike are the feet of Odysseus, and suchlike his hands indeed."
BOOK XIX.

For mortal men age swiftly amidst of baleful need.”

So she spake; but the ancient woman warm tears adown she shed, And her face with her hands she covered, and a weary word she said: “Woe's me, O child! I am redless for thee whom much, and far more Than all men, Zeus now hateth: and such godlike mind as ye bore! And although no man of mortals unto Zeus the Thunder-fain Burned ever thighs so many, or of hundred-folded gain Of choice gifts gave as thou gavest, when thou wouldst speed the prayer To come unto eld soft-faring, and thy noble son to rear. But now from thee hath he taken thine hope and thine home-faring day. And on him too mescemeth their mocks shall the women lay, The mocks of the far-come stranger when he entereth houses fair, As on thee, guest, all these bitches lay the mocking and the jeer; So to shun their taunts and much mocking as now thou wilt not away With their washing; but now upon me, nought loth, the bidding doth lay The Daughter of Icarius, heart-wise Penelope. And so for Penelope's sake will I wash thy feet for thee, And for thine own moreover: for my heart is inly stirred With thy griefs. But withal do thou hearken and lay to heart this word, For hither have come a many of guests with grief foredone, But never beheld I another so like to look upon As thou unto Odysseus of body, of voice, and of feet.”

Then answered and spake Odysseus, the rich in counsels meet: “Yea, carline, and thus say all men, who look on us with eyes, That we twain are alike to each other in every manner of wise, As thou of thine understanding dost e'en now say aright.”

So he spake; but the ancient woman took the bath-vat shining bright For the washing of feet, and cold water a plenty therein did she pour,
And therewith the warm she mingled, and down by the hearth of the floor
Sat Odysseus; but now to the shadow he turned, for a thought in his mind
Foreboded, that when she should handle his body the scar she should find,
And that all the deed he was doing should be manifest today.

So she drew nigh her master to wash him, and knew the scar straightway,
E’en the wound that the wood-boar furrowed with his white tooth on the
When he to Autolycus fared, and his sons, by Parnassus’ side; [tide
The famed father of his mother, who in thievish sleight, and the shift
Of oaths did outgo all men; and he had it of Hermes’ gift,
Unto whom he made burnt-offering, well-liked, of many a thigh
Of lambs and of kids, and the God was fain to help him thereby.

Now Autolycus, coming his ways to Ithaca’s fat-fed land,
Happed there on the son of his daughter, on earth new-come to hand,
And this child, Euryclea laid it upon his kindly knees,
As he rested after his supper, and spake out words like these:

“Autolycus, some name find thou to lay on the manchild fair,
The child of thy daughter beloved, the child of many a prayer.”

Her then Autolycus answered, and thus the word he said:
“O son-in-law and daughter on him let my word be laid,
Whereas I am hither, laden with the wrath of many a mood,
Of men and women dwelling on earth the wealthy of food,
So let him be called Odysseus, and have the Wrath-child’s name.
But when, waken a man, he cometh to his mother’s house of fame,
When he cometh to me to Parnassus, where my wealth in store I lay,
Thereof a gift will I give him and will send him glad on his way.”

So there where the gifts abode him came Odysseus to that house,
BOOK XIX.

And therein Autolycus took him, and the sons of Autolycus,
With the hands they gave him welcome, and with soft sweet words of the
And the mother of his mother about Odysseus sung,
[longue.
And therewith on his head she kissed him and on both his lovely eyes.
And Autolycus fell to calling on his glorious sons to arise,
And dight the feast; and they hearkened the bidding that he gave,
And a neat of five years old, a bull, thereto did they have,
And flayed him withal and dight him, and the carcase, they jointed it,
And in gobbets clave it deftly, and set it on many a spit,
And roasted it very wisely, and dealt out the shares each one.
So there daylong they feasted till the going down of the sun,
Nor was there a soul of them lacking of one equal feast and the same.
But when the sun sank under, and the dusk and the darkness came,
There then they fell to slumber, and the gift of sleep took they.
But when shone the Mother of Morning, Rose-fingered Early Day,
Forth then they fared to the hunting, both the hounds and Autolycus' sons,
And the goodly Odysseus moreover went with those other ones.
To the steep fells then they betook them, Parnassus' wood-crowned hills,
And speedily were they gotten aloft to the windy ghylis,
Whenas the sun new risen smote the acres of the earth,
Risen up from the soft-flowing river, the deep-streamed Ocean-girth.

So unto a glade came the prickers, and following up the scent
Were the hounds before them going, and at heel of them there went
Autolycus' sons, and Odysseus the valiant went along
Close up to the hounds, and brandished a long-boled spear and strong.

Now there lay a mighty wood-boar, in a thicket so close grown
That not e'en by the might of the storm-wind was the wet blast through it
Nor did the sun bright-shining smite through it with his ray,
[blown,
Nor the rain-drift pass amidst it, close grown up every way.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And great store of scar leaves ever lay fallen upon its ground.

Now the din of dogs and the trampling of men's feet girt it around
As the hunt came driving against him, and out from his thicket lair
He faced them, his crest a-bristling, and his eyes, as the fire they were,
And he stood at bay anigh them: then Odysseus first of the band
Rushed on, his spear long-shafted upraised in his mighty hand,
All eager for his hurting; but the boar forewent him and drove
A gash above his knee-bone, and much flesh with his tooth he clave
As he charged him athwart; but the bone of the man he touched not it.
But a stroke Odysseus smote him, and his right shoulder he hit,
And straightway through and through him came the spear-shaft's glittering
And he fell in the dust a-grunting, and forth his spirit fled.

Then the kindly Autolycus' children the boar they dighted there,
And the hurt of the goodly Odysseus, the valiant godhead's peer,
Defly they bound, and they staunched the blood with the staunching-song,
And unto the house of their father they speedily brought him along.

Him Autolycus thereafter, and the sons of Autolycus,
Having healed him well and given him gifts great and glorious,
Did truly and kindly speed him with gifts on either hand
To Ithaca, where his father and high mother to his land
Returning gave him welcome, and asked him of each deed,
And the hurt that he had gotten; and the tale to them did he speed,
How a-hunting of the wood-boar, his white tooth tore him thus,
As unto Parnassus he wended with the sons of Autolycus.

But now as the old wife took him, and with flat hand stroked him withal,
She handled the scar and knew it, and let the limb down fall,
And it came adown on the bath-vat, that with a clanging sound
Upon its side turned over, and the water spilled on the ground;
Then joy and sorrow mingled caught her heart; tears filled her eyes,
And choked was her fulness of voice, and scarce might utterance arise:
But she touched the chin of Odysseus, and spake as her voice she got:

"O thou art Odysseus!—dear child, and I, I knew thee not
Until all over my master these hands of mine had passed!"

And unto Penelope therewith a glance of her eyes she cast,
Full fain that she should be wotting that her lord was there in the place.
But she had no might to behold him, and to look and heed his face,
For her mind thence turned Athene. But Odysseus groped about
With his hands, and so with his right hand he caught the nurse by
And with the other drew her yet nigher him and said: [the throat,

"Ah, nurse, wouldst thou destroy me? and thou, when me thou hast fed
On thy very breast! Yea, 'tis I, that with many a grief to bear,
Have come back to the land of my fathers at last in the twentieth year.
But now since thou hast known me, and some God thy soul hath taught,
Keep silence, lest to some other of the house the knowledge be brought;
For one thing now I tell thee, and fulfilled shall be the same:
If these high-hearted Wooers the God 'neath me shall tame,
For all that I was thy sucking from thee will I not refrain
When the other serving-women by me in the house are slain."

But the heart-wise Euryclea, she answered him and said:
"O me, my child! what a word from the hedge of thy teeth hath sped!
Thou knowest my will, how steadfast, how little I use to bend;
I will hold me hard as the iron or some stark stone to the end.
But now a thing will I tell thee; in thine heart do thou ponder it well,
If some God these high-heart Wooers beneath thine hand shall quell,
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Of the women here in the hall will I give the tale to thee,
And tell thee wh ichso shame thee, and wh ichso sackless be."

But to her then spake and answered Odysseus of many a rede:  499
"Nay, why shouldst thou tell me, goodwife? hereof is nought of need.
Nay, each myself will I mark her, and will know how each doth live:
Hold but thy peace of speaking, and the rest to the Gods do thou give."

So he spake, and therewith the carline through the feast-hall went adown
To fetch the foot-washing water, for the first to the earth was thrown;
But when she had washed him and sleeked him with olive oil all o'er,
Then Odysseus drew the settle anigh to the fire once more,
To warm him, and hid the scar with his rags that it should not be seen

But Penelope spake amidst them, and thus said the all-wise Queen:
"O guest, yet a little longer will I ask thee in speech to abide,
For soon shall be the season of the happy slumber-tide  510
For him whom the sweet sleep taketh, though grieved at heart he be;
But a sorrow without measure hath the God ordained for me.
Daylong indeed I delight me with the wailing of my woe;
As my work and the women's o'erseeing, about the house I go:
But when at last night cometh, and Sleep taketh hold of all,
Then I lie on my bed, and thick thronging the sorrows on me fall,
And bitter-sharp and ceaseless stir up my heart to wail;
As when the Pandareus' daughter, the fallow nightingale,
Singeth exceeding sweetly in the new-come Spring's increase,
Amid the close leaves sitting, and the covert of the trees;  520
And many a trill she turneth, and her full voice doth she pour
As that Itylus she bewaileth, her loved son, whom of yore
With the brass she slew unwitting, e'en the son of Zethus the King.
So twowise hither and thither my soul goes wavering,
BOOK XIX.

Whether here by my son abiding I shall guard all steadfastly,
My treasure, and my handmaids, and my great house roofed on high,
And worship the bed of my husband, and the fame of the folk and their
Or shall follow some one of Achaean, whoso is the worthiest lord,
And wooeth me here in the halls with wooing gifts measureless great.
And so long as my son was light-minded and nought but a child of estate,
Then I might not wed and be leaving my child and my husband's home;
But now that great he is waxen, and to manhood's measure hath come,
He also in turn craves of me to get me gone from the hall,
Being grieved at the gear a-waning; for the Achaean lords eat all.

"But come now, hearken a dream, and the same unto me arede:
I have twenty geese in the homestead who come up from the water to feed
On the wheat; and me it delighteth to look upon the same.
But lo you, a crook-necked eagle adown from the mountain came,
And brake all their necks and slew them, that there on a heap they lay
In the stead, and aloft he flew to the holy lift of the day.
And for me I wept and bewailed me though nought but a dream it were,
And the well-pressed damsels Achaean were gathered about me there,
While sore I wept that the eagle had slaughtered my geese for me.
But aback came the eagle, and now on the jutting eaves sat he,
And spake with the voice of a mortal, and bade me stay my woe:

"'Heart up, Icarius' Daughter, whom all the world doth know!
No dream is this, but a vision most good, and shall come to pass;
For these geese they are the Wooers, and I, the erne that was,
Now as thy very husband to thee have come back home,
And over all the Wooers shall draw a deadly doom.'

"So he spake, and Sleep the soother then let me go, and fled:
And I gazed about, and my geese, I beheld them there in the stead,
Then Odysseus of many a rede this answer toward her bore:
"How then may this dream's a-reding be turned another road,
Since the very man, e'en Odysseus himself, to thee hath showed
What wise shall all be accomplished? for manifest and plain
Shows the death for all the Wooers, none shall 'scape the doom of
[bank?

But Penelope the heart-wise unto this answer fell:
"Yet, guest, dreams come to nothing and confused tales they tell, 560
Nor yet doth all their tokening to all men come about.
Lo now, of dreams swift-fleeting! through two gates fare they out,
And one of horn is fashioned, and one of the wood-beast's tooth,
And those through the tooth that wend them to usward, they forsooth
But vainly do beguile us with the promise idly borne;
While they that come unto menfolk by the gate of polished horn
Fulfil their tokening truly to the man who them hath seen:
But not from thence meseemeth hath the way to meward been
Of that wild dream, else welcome to me and my son it were:
But this I tell thee, and hold it in thine heart with heed and care, 570
That to-morrow cometh name-cursed for the day that shall sunder me
From Odysseus' house: for the contest shall I ordain it to be,
The game of the axes; which that man within our house and hall
Would set up a-row like ship-ribs to the number of twelve in all,
And, standing aloof, a long way, would shoot a shaft right through,
So this contest shall I 'establish for them that come hither to woo.
For lo you, who so with his palms the bow shall lightly bend,
And through all twelve of the axes a shaft therefrom shall send,
Him then shall I follow, departing from this house of the wedded wife,
This fair house, so abundant in all that upholdeth life, 580
Which yet shall I remember, though but in dreams it be.
Then Odysseus many-counselled he answered, and thus spake he:
"O beworshipped wife of Odysseus, that is Laertes' son,
This strife within your homestead delay not; let it be done!
For hither ere that shall Odysseus the many-counselled have come,
Ere these men have handled the bow well polished, or drawn home
The bow-string unto the nocks, or shot the iron through."

Then Penelope the heart-wise in turn made answer thereto:
"O guest, if thou wert willing to sit here in the hall
And pleasure me thus, no slumber on mine eyelids then should fall.
But nowise it availeth that sleepless men should live;
For the Deathless unto menfolk on the cornkind earth do give
Some share of sleep and slumber, yea unto every one:
Now therefore unto my chamber aloft will I be gone,
And in my bed will lay me, which is made but a place of lament,
And with my tears is watered since the day when Odysseus went
To look on evil Ilios, the nameless place of guilt."
[wilt,
There then will I lay me; but thou, lay thee down in this house as thou
And on the floor do thou streak thee; or a bed for thee let them dight."

So saying, her ways she wended to her bower-aloft the bright;
But not alone, for the handmaids along with her did they fare.
So, going aloft to her chamber with her women thralls, then there
She fell to bewail Odysseus her dear lord, till at last
Sweet slumber over her eyelids Grey-eyed Athene cast.
BOOK XX.

ARGUMENT

HEREIN IS TOLD OF SIGNS AND WONDERS IN AND ABOUT THE HOUSE OF ODYSSEUS.

So adown in the porch Odysseus the valiant had his bed,
For he strewed him an untanned oxhide, and over that he spread
Many fells of the sheep which the lordlings of Achaean there had slain,
And over him Eurynome spread a cloak when down he was lain.
There then lay Odysseus waking, with his mind on bale intent
For those Wooers; but the women now forth from the feast-hall went,
Who e'en now with the Wooers were mingled, and along with them were laid,
And each to each were they laughing, and game and glee they made.
Moved then was the heart of the man within his breast the dear,
And much in doubt was he swaying in his heart and his spirit there, 10
Whether falling on he should deal them, to every one, her bane,
Or suffer them to mingle with the masterful Wooers again,
E'en one last time and latest; and growled his inmost heart.
And e'en as a bitch that goeth round her tender whelps to part
The strange man from them, and says him, and longeth for the strife,
So inly was he growling in grudge at their evil life,
And, smiting his breast, with a speech-word his heart he fell to chide:

"Yet bear it, O heart! things uglier hast thou borne upon a tide;
Yea, on the day when the Cyclops' stark fury ate thy men, 19
Thy goodly folk; and thou bearest, till even out of the den [day."
Rede led thee forth, though thou deemedst that thou shouldst die that
BOOK XX.

So he spake, the soul a-chiding within his breast that lay, That abode in all obedience steadfast the thing to bear, But he himself in meanwhile was tossing here and there. As when a man hath gotten by a great fire blazing out A paunch of fat and of blood, and turneth it oft about Hither and thither, all eager to roast it speedily; So tossed he hither and thither, and ever pondered he What wise he might have the handling of those Wooers bare of shame, And he but one among many. Then anigh him Athene came, Come adown from the lofty heavens, and e'en as a woman was made; So over his head was she standing, and the word to him she said:

"Why watchest thou and wakest, O man most luckless of life? In thine own house now thou liest, and within the house is thy wife, And thy child; such a son as all men would have their son to be."

Then the many-counselling Odysseus thus answered, and said he: "Yea, all these things, O Goddess, aright dost thou surely say, But one thing the mind in my breast doth turn about and weigh, What wise on these shameless Wooers I now may lay my hand, Being one alone, and they ever are within a gathered band. And withal a greater matter I ponder earnestly, In what wise, if I slay them by the will of Zeus and thee, I myself may come off scathless: now hereof, I prithee, heed."

But the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, thus did her answer speed: "Hard heart! a man might hearken to a friend e'en sorrow; Yea if he were but a mortal, nor so wise of counsel were! But I that am a Goddess, and through all toil and pain Without fail ever guard thee, one thing I tell thee plain: If fifty bands of menfolk, word-speaking wights that are,
Stood round about us, eager for our slaying in the war,
Yet their kine shouldst thou be driving and their goodly fatted sheep,
So now let slumber have thee; for 'tis grievous watch to keep,
And wake night-long; and thine evils shalt thou beguile at last."

So she spake, and over his eyelids the sleep and slumber cast,
But back again to Olympus did that Godhead's Glory depart.

But while Sleep, limb-loosener, took him, and let loose the cares of his heart,
His wife, the wont of wisdom, she wakened from her sleep,
And sat up on her bed soft-fashioned and fell therewith to weep.
But when of very weeping all satiate was her mind,
Then to Artemis of all Gods prayed that crown of womankind:

"O Artemis beworshipped, Zeus' daughter, thee I pray,
Cast thy shaft into my bosom and take my soul away,
Now, now! or let the whirlwind before the lapse of days
Catch me up, and bear me, hurried adown the dusky ways,
A waif for the outgate of Ocean that aback on his ways doth flow.
As the storm-wind bare off the daughters of Pandareus long ago,
When the Gods had slain their parents, and orphans in their hall
Were they left, and Aphrodite she nourished them withal
With cheese and with sweet honey, and joyful wine and good;
And Heré gave unto them beyond all womanhood
Fair shape and wit; and stature gave the holy Artemis;
And cunning gave Athene in the craft that goodly is,
But once, while Aphrodite to the long Olympus hied,
To pray for these same damsels a happy wedding-tide
Of Zeus, the Fain-of-the-thunder, since he knoweth utterly
All things that are doomed and undoomed for men on earth that die,
That while the Wights of the Tempest snatched them up there and then,
And gave them over for handmaids to the Wreakers loathed of men;
E'en so may Olympus' dwellers from all eyes cover me,
Or the fair-tressed Artemis smite me while Odysseus yet I see,
Yea, e'en if I needs must wend me beneath the dreadful earth
Rather than be the darling of a man of worser worth.

"But lo you, a bale to be borne with if one shall weep through the day,
And ever in ceaseless sorrow shall wear his life away,
But Slumber holds him a night-tide, for all memory then dieth out,
Both of good and of ill, when his eyelids the slumber covereth about:
But evil dreams unto me sendeth God in the sleeping tide;
Yea, e'en on this very night one like to him lay by my side,
E'en such as he was when he wended with the host; and my heart was
For I thought that a dream no longer, but a vision at last I had had."

So she spake; and even therewith was the Gold-throned Dawning come.
But unto the valiant Odysseus the voice of her wailing went home,
And therewith he fell a-pondering, and it seemed to his mind and his mood
As even now she knew him, and over his bed-head stood.
So he took up the cloak and the fleeces wherein he had slept that tide,
And laid them down on a bench of the hall, but bore out the hide
Without doors; and prayed unto Zeus with hands uplifted on high:

"Zeus Father, if ye have willed it, o'er the wet ways and o'er the dry,
Unto my land to lead me after all that bale of thine,
Let one of those here wakening withinward speak me a sign,
And Zeus himself withoutward show forth a token clear."

So he spake, and Zeus the all-wise gave heed unto his prayer,
And therewithal he thundered from aloft amidst the sky,
From out of Olympus the gleaming; and Odysseus was glad. But hard
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

From the house a grinding woman gave forth a sign and a word [herd, From the place where the mills were standing, the mills of the people's And thereat twelve thralls of the women would labour yet and again, For ever milling the barley, and wheat the marrow of men; [done, But the others now were sleeping since their grain they had ground and But the last had not yet given over, for she was the weakest one; 110 So she stayed her quern and spake out for her master a boding word:

"Zeus Father, of Gods and of menfolk the very King and Lord! Now mightily thou thunderest aloft from the starry heaven, And no cloud is about; so to some one hereby a sign hast thou given. So do thou for me unhappy e'en after the word that I pray, And let this day be for the Wooers the last and the latest day, That they in the halls of Odysseus may hold the feast full fain Who with heart-wearying labour and the grinding of the grain Have loosened the knees beneath me. So now may they eat their last."

So she spake; and the valiant Odysseus rejoiced in the words' forecast, And the thunder of Zeus, and looked to it on those sinners to wreak him [there. But now waked the other handmaids in Odysseus' house the fair, And the flame that never wearies they quickened on the hearth, And Telemachus rose from his bed, a man like the Gods in worth, And clad him, and over his shoulders his whetted falchion cast, And unto his feet the sleek-skinned his sandals fair made fast. [tack, Then a spear strong-shafted, and headed with the whetted brass, did he And stayed as he went o'er the threshold, and unto Euryclea spake:

"Dear nurse, the guest in our house have ye honoured with victuals and Or lieth he at haphazard uncared for in the stead? [bread? For such-like is my mother, though prudent she may be,
BOOK XX

That amidst of men word-speaking, but rashly honoureth she
The worser man, while the better unhonoured she sendeth away.

But Euryclea the heart-wise to him did answer and say: [blame,
"Nay, my child, thou shouldest not blame her when she is nought to
For he sat and drank of the wine while he had goodwill to the same:
And he said that meat he craved not; for thereof she asked him indeed.
But when of sleep and slumber he began to have a heed
Then bade she her handmaidens the bed to strew and dight:
But he as a man fate-baffled, and overworn outright,
Would nought of the beds; nor would he amidst of the blankets sleep;
But on an untanned oxhide and amidst the fells of sheep
He laid him adown in the porch, and a cloak we did o'er him withal."

So she spake: but Telemachus wended his ways from out the hall
With his spear in his hand, and two wood-hounds swift-footed followed
his ways,
And he went to the well-greaved Acheans, and the folk in the market-
[place.

But Euryclea, daughter of Ops, the son of Pisenor the Lord,
That glory of women, called out, and gave to her handmaids the word:
"Now gather, and some of you hasten to sweep the house all through,
And sprinkle it; and cast ye the carpets purple of hue
O'er the well-wrought high seats: and others wash the tables all about
With the sponges, and the wine-bowls for the blending rinse ye out,
And the double cups well fashioned: and ye others do ye fare
Unto the well for the water, and haste the same to bear.
For not long now will the Wooers be away from the feasting-hall,
But betimes will come back hither: for this is a feast-day for all."

She spake, and they hearkened; and lightly to fulfilling her word they fell.
And a twenty of them hied them to that dark-watered well,  
While the others round the houses wrought deftly there and then.  
Thither too came the folk of service of those Achean men,  
And the logs cleft well and deftly; and the women’s company  
Came from the well; and the swineherd to these now drew anigh,  
Leading three swine, that the fairest of all his swine-droves were:  
These then he left to pasture in the closes trim and fair,  
But himself unto Odysseus he spake in gentle wise:

"Guest, do the Acheans behold thee at last with kinder eyes?  
Or, as erst they did, do they mock thee about the house and hall?"

But Odysseus of many a rede thus answered and spake withal:

"Ah, may the Gods, Eumæus, avenge me of their scorn,
And these wanton fools, that fashion things nowise to be borne,
In the very house of another! for no whit of shame they have!"

But while in talk together these twain they took and gave,
Melanthius the goatherd unto them drew anear,
A-leading kids, and the flower of all the flock they were,
For the Wooers’ feast, and two herdsmen were following on his ways.

So the goats he bound in the forecourt, the echoing pillared place,
And then turned upon Odysseus and spake a bitter taunt:

"So, stranger, still art thou plaguing the house, and there wilt thou haunt,
Pestering the folk, and nowise without doors wilt thou fit?
Betwixt us twain messeemeth will be no end to it
Till we try it with hands; for thou beggest beyond all that is right and
And other feasts of Acheans belike be otherwhere."

[fair ;

So he spake: but all-wise Odysseus he spake no word for his part.
But shook his head in silence, and brooded bale in his heart.
But a third man came up with them, Philocteus leader of men,
And a barren cow and fat goats for the Woes he had with him then,
And the ferrymen these had fetched over, as others they use to speed
Who may chance to come unto them and of them the ferrying need.
So the beasts he bound up duly in the echoing cloister there,
And fell to asking the swineherd, when he had drawn anear; 190

"What man is the stranger, O Swineherd, I would have thee tell to me,
New come to our house, and of what men doth he give himself out for
to be?
Where is the land of his fathers, and what is his kindred and seed?
Hapless! and yet of his body like a lord and king indeed.
Ah! the Gods drown men wide-wandering in enough of bale and broil,
When even for the king-folk they spin the thread of toil."

Then Odysseus' hand in greeting with his right hand did he take,
And a word he winged unto him, and in such manner spake:
"Hail, father and guest! and henceforward fair fall the luck of thee,
Although of manifold troubles thus holden now ye be! 200
Zeus Father! none of the Gods is more baleful a God than thou,
For the men whom thou hast begotten thou pitiest nothing now,
And thou minglest them with evil and with woeful misery.
Ah! I brake out a-sweat to behold him, and wept the eyes of me
For the memory of Odysseus; for me seems he too this tide,
Such clouts as this is clad in 'midst menfolk wandering wide,
If anywhere yet he be living and beholding the light of the sun.
But if at last he hath perished, and to Hades' House hath gone,
Woe for great Odysseus! who set me to look to his neat e'en then,
When I was but a lad in the folk-land of the Cephellenian men. 210
Now numberless are they waxen; nor may any race of neat
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Wide-faced fare any better to wax as the ears of wheat.
But them do others bid me for their meat hereto to drive;
Nor heed they aught his man-child within the halls alive,
Nor fear the Gods' a-wreaking: and yearning now are they
To share amidst them the treasure of the King so long away.
Now this the soul within me full oft doth turn about;
For while his son yet bides here 'twere an evil thing, no doubt,
To wend to another folk-land and these beeves with me to drive
Unto alien men. Yet 'tis heavy meseemeth here to live
O'er the kine of others a-sitting, and suffering drearhead:
And long ago to some other of the high-heart kings had I fled
Since things past all endurance come in on us amain;
But my mind of that hapless bethinketh, if yet he may come again
For the scattering of those Wooers about the house of the stead."

Then Odysseus of many a rede thereto made answer and said:
"Neatherd, since like to no evil or witless one thou art,
And I myself am noting the wisdom that toucheth thine heart,
One thing I tell thee, and hereby with a great oath the same do I bind:
Bear witness, Zeus, thou King-god, and thou guest-table kind,
And thou hearth of the glorious Odysseus whereunto I have come!
That e'en while thou abidest shall Odysseus win him home;
And thou thyself shalt see it, if thou hast will to see,
The slaying of the Wooers where now the lords they be."

Thereto then answered the neatherd, the keeper of the kine:
"O guest, may the son of Cronos make good this word of thine,
Then shouldst thou know of my might, and my hands what like they were."

And in like wise did Eumæus to all Gods make his prayer,
That Odysseus of all wisdom might get him home to his stead.
BOOK XX.

But while each unto the other such words as this they said,
For Telemachus death and the doomday shaped out the Wooers' band.
But unto them in that while came a fowl on the right hand,
An eagle lofty-flying with a faint-heart dove in his clutch:
Then Amphinomus spake amidst them, and the words he said were such:

"Friends, once more nothing cometh of our counsel and our rede
For Telemachus' bane: now rather of the high feast have we heed."

So Amphinomus spake amidst them, and good to all was his word,
And into the house they gat them of Odysseus godlike lord;
And they cast adown their mantles on the thrones and the benches there,
And the mighty sheep they slaughtered, and the fatted goats the fair,
And they slew fat boars moreover, and one of the herded kine,
And they roasted the inwards and shared them; and then they mingled the wine
In the blending bowls, and the swineherd dealt round the beakers then,
And the bread to them was dealing Philoctius, master of men,
In baskets fair, and Melanthius the wine poured out and bare,
And they reached out their hands to the victuals that lay before them there.

But Telemachus, heedful of goodhap, Odysseus set adown
Within the well-built feast-hall upon the threshold of stone,
Having brought him a sorry settle and withal a scanty board;
And he gave him share of the inwards and the wine for him he poured
In a golden cup; and moreover a word he bespake him then:

"Sit there adown and be drinking the wine amidst the men,
And I myself will ward thee from the gibes and the hands of all
These Wooers here; since soothly this no common hall,
But the very house of Odysseus, which he gat for me and my gain."
The Odyssey of Homer.

But ye, ye Wooers, from buffets and chiding your souls refrain,
Lest contention rise amidst us and strife herein be stirred."

So he spake: but they the Wooers, they bit their lips as they heard,
And at Telemachus wondered, so boldly as he spake.
But Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, thereon the word did take:

"Telemachus' word, Achaëans, let us take; for as hard as it is,
Although forsooth against us a very threat is this.
For the Son of Cronos stayed us, or else by us had he been
Well-hushed within the feast-house, for all he speaketh keen."

So Antinoüs spake, but the other no whit his word gainsaid.
But now the hallowed hundreds of the Gods the henchmen led
Through the town, and the long-haired Achaëans were gathered 'neath the
Of Apollo's shady thicket, the Shooter far aloof.
Then they roasted, and unspitted the flesh that lieth without,
And a glorious feast they feasted, and dealt the shares about.
And an equal share by Odysseus the swains of service laid,
Like the share to the others allotted, for so indeed he bade,
Telemachus, son beloved of Odysseus, godhead's peer.

But not wholly Athene suffered the haughty Wooers there
To refrain from mocks heart-grieving, so that yet more grief and need
Might drown the soul of Odysseus, the old Laertes' seed.

Now there was a man of the Wooers, which same Ctesippus hight,
And he had his house in Samé and was wont to all unright,
And he, trusting in his riches, that were great and marvellous,
Was wooing the wife of Odysseus so long away from his house.
So now to the masterful Wooer he fell to speak, and said:
BOOK XX.

“O noble Wooers, hearken till a word of mine is sped!
This guest for long mesemeth hath had his equal share,
And surely now mesemeth ‘tis nothing right nor fair
To maltreat Telemachus’ guest-friends who may come to this stead on a day,
So I also will give him a guest-gift, which he may give away
As a guerdon to the bath-maid, or any one else of the thralls
Who dwell hereby, and are haunting godlike Odysseus’ halls.”

So saying from out of a basket the foot of an ox he took,
And cast with his sturdy hand: but Odysseus shunned the stroke,
His head but lightly swerving; and a bitter laugh and fell
His heart laughed as the ox-foot smote the wall that was builded well,
But Telemachus spake, and straightway with words Ctesippus chid:

“It is well for thy life, Ctesippus, that to thee it thus betid
To miss the guest; for thy bolt he shunned himself, e’en he:
Or else with the whetted spear midmost had I smitten thee,
And thy father before thy wedding should have looked to thy burial.
Therefore let none put forward such shameless deeds in the hall,
For by this time every matter I understand and know,
Both the good and also the worser: and a child was I long ago.
Forsooth there have been doings we have borne to look upon,
The slaying of flocks, and the drinking of wine, and the bread foredone,
Since for one to refrain a many is a thing right hard to do;
So now no longer do me the ill-deeds of the foe.
And yet if at last ye desire to slay me with the brass,
That would I; and far better that my death should come to pass
Than that here I sit beholding such ugly deeds played out:
Guests mauled and mocked, and men haling the women thralls about
In most unseemly fashion through all the chambers fair.”
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

So he spake, and a while the others they sat in silence there,
But at last spake Agelaüs, who was Damastor's son:
"O friends, with him who hath spoken aright there is not one
That with thwart words should chide him or to contest with him fall.
Nought now this guest let us mischieve, nor any man or thrall
That haunteth the house of Odysseus the godlike day by day.
But unto Telemachus now and his mother a word would I say,
A gentle word for the pleasure of the hearts of both the twain:
For even so long as the hope did yet in our hearts remain
That Odysseus of all wisdom should come back to his house of old,
So long, no blame of her biding in the homestead to withhold
The Wooers therein, and refrain them: for better so would it be
If Odysseus compassed his homefare, and home at his house were he.
But now 'tis as clear as it may be that he never returneth again;
So come now, sit by thy mother, and bid her straight and plain
That she wed the best amongst us, and the greatest giver of gear,
That thou thyself rejoicing may'st have thine heritage here,
And eat and drink, and thy mother another's house may heed."

But Telemachus the prudent a word to him did speed:
"Nay, nay, by Zeus, Agelaüs, and by my father's woe,
Who afar from Ithaca wanders, or is dead a while ago,
My mother's wedding I let not, but bid her evermore
To wed with whom she willeth who shall give her gifts good store.
But 'twere shame that her unwilling I should thrust from out the hall
With the hard word: God forbid it that such a thing befall!"

So he spake; but Pallas Athene amidst the Wooers' crew
Awoke undying laughter, and their minds astray she drew;
For now all they were laughing with the jaws of other men,
And flesh bloodstained were they eating, and the eyes of them as then
BOOK XX.

Were filled with tears, and the thoughts of their souls into sorrow strayed.

Then the godlike Theoclymenus he spake to them and said:

"Why bear ye this bale, ye unhappy? For your heads and your faces out-
And the knees that are beneath you are wrapt about in night,
And let loose is the voice of wailing, and wetted with tears are your cheeks,
And blood the hall-walls staineth and the goodly panels streaks;
And the porch is full of man-shapes and fulfilled is the garth of the stead,
As they wend 'neath the dusk and the darkness, and the sun from the
heavens is dead;
And lo! how the mist of evil draws up and all about!"

So he spake: but all they on him sweet laughter yet laughed out,
And Eurymachus, Polybus' offspring, then fell to speaking there:

"Now witless is this stranger new come from otherwhere!
So out a doors, ye younglings, do ye lead the man forthright,
That he wend him unto the high-place, since he deemeth us here in the

But the godlike Theoclymenus, thus answering, fell to say:

"Eurymachus, nought I crave thee for speeders on the way.
For verily eyes I lack not, nor ears, nor both my feet,
And the mind in my breast is fashioned in manner nought unmeet.
With these will I get me without doors; for I see the bale coming on
Which no man among you shall flee from, and no man of the Wooers
shall shun,
E'en those who about the homestead of godlike Odysseus abide,
And are mocking men, and framing the wickedness of pride."

So saying, his ways he wended from the house fast built and fair,
And came to the house of Piraeus, who took him blithely there.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

But all the Wooers, beholding each other face to face,
Fell to stirring Telemachus' anger, and to laugh at the guests of the place.
And some one of those masterful younglings e'en thus would be saying
"Telemachus, surely no man hath more evil guests than thou; [now:
E'en such as is this wanderer that guesting here doth lurk,
The bread and the wine a-craving; and hath no skill in the work
Of the field or the fight; but goeth on earth an idle load.
And again here rose this other to foretell us and forebode.
Now if thou would'st but hearken, far gainfuller would it be
To cast these guests together in a many-banked ship of the sea,
To Sicilian men to ship them; whence thy gain were good and due."

E'en such were the words of the Wooers; but he gave no heed thereto,
And in silence looked on his father, abiding the hour of the day
When he on those shameless Wooers his hands at last should lay.

But the Daughter of Icarius, wise-heart Penelope,
As now right over against them her lovely chair set she,
And she hearkened the voice of each one of the men within the hall.
And for them—they arrayed the banquet midst laughter, and withal 390
Sweet was it and heart-staying, for many a beast had they slain.

But no such an unblessed banquet shall ever be again
As that which the mighty man and the Goddess soon should dight
For those that first had fashioned the deeds of all unright.
BOOK XXI.

ARGUMENT.


NOW the Grey-eyed, the Goddess Athene, planted a thing to grow
In the heart of Icarius' daughter, Penelope wise to know,
That she bring the Bow to the Wooers, and the grey steel therewithal,
For the birth of strife and murder within Odysseus' hall.
So up the lofty stair of her chamber now she went,
And in her strong hand took she the key that was shapely bent,
And brazen and fair, with a handle thereto of ivory,
And she went with her women of service to the outermost chamber on
Wherein there lay together the treasure of the King, [high,
Both gold and brass and iron well wrought in the smithing.
And therein lay the bent-back bow, and the shaft-full quiver lay there,
Wherein were a many arrows the grief and the groan that bear;
Which same were the gift of a friend, godlike, whom while agone
He met in Lacedaemon, e'en Iphitus Eurytus' son;
But it was in the stead of Messene that they came together there,
In Orsilochus' house the war-deft: thither needs must Odysseus fare
To seek him a debt which the people, the whole folk, owed him aright;
Whereas men of Messene had lifted in their ships with the benches dight
Out of Ithaca sheep three hundred, and the herders that with them were.
And so upon that sending the long way did Odysseus fare,
Yet a lad, and his father sent him, and the elders of the men.
But Iphitus sought his horses which he had lost as then,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Twelve brood-mares with their sucklings, toil-patient mules beneath;
And they forsooth thereafter were but for his doom and his death;
When he to the Son of Zeus the man, the strong-souled came,
E'en Heracles, well-proven in mighty deeds of fame,
Who slew him, his guest in his house, and in his hardihead
Feared not the following wrath of the Gods, nor the table he spread
For the guest; but e'en thereafter the man himself did he slay,
And kept for his own the horses strong- hoofed, nor let them away.  30

On this quest he fell in with Odysseus, and to him he gave the bow
Which Eurytus the mighty had borne a while ago,
But unto his son he gave it when he died in his lofty hall.
Unto him a keen sword gave Odysseus, and a mighty spear withal,
For the birth of close-knit friendship: but yet they never knew
The tables of each other: for ere that Zeus' offspring slew
That Iphitus Eurytus' son, the Deathless Godfolk's peer,
Who had given the bow to Odysseus: who never the same would bear
On the black ship, when he wended his way to the battle-tide,
But for his dear friend's memory he laid it to abide 40
In his treasure; but oft would he bear it as about his lands he passed.

So when that glory of women to her chamber came at last,
She stood on the oaken threshold which erst the wight had made
All smooth by his art and his cunning, and the rule thereto had laid,
And thereto had fitted the door-posts and hung the door-leaves bright.  
Therewith the thong of the latch-ring she cast a loose forthright,
And thrust in the key moreover, and shot back the bolts of the door
With an aim that was straight and downright; and e'en as a bull doth roar
A-feeding in the meadow, the fair doors smit by the key
Roared out so loud, and before her flew open speedily, 50
And she went on the high-raised flooring whereon the coffers stood,
BOOK XXI.

Wherein there lay the raiment stored up sweet-smelling and good;
And thence she reached her over, and took down the bow from the pin,
And therewith the shining bow-case that the same was lying in.
There then adown she sat her, and the case on her dear knees laid,
And her King's bow thence a-drawing shrill wailing there she made.
But when of tearful wailing she was satiate at the last,
Therewith unto the feast-hall and the haughty Wooers she passed,
And the back-bent bow in her hand and the shaft-full quiver she bore,
Wherein were many arrows laden with groaning sore;
And the handmaids that were with her, a chest were they carrying
Where lay much brass and iron, the war-gear of their King.

But when that glory of women came amidst of the Wooers there,
She stood beside the doorpost of the roof built stout and fair,
Before her face upholding a lap of her delicate hood,
And withal on either side her a trusty handmaid stood;
And straight she spake to the Wooers and said a word to hear:

"Hearken, O high-heart Wooers, this house that waste and wear,
Eating and drinking our substance without a stop or stay,
The wealth of our house-master so long a while away,
And can make no other pretext of the matter ye plan to do
But that ye long to wed me and make me the wife of you.
—Come, Wooers, since the contest and the prize befalleth so,
Here will I lay before you Odysseus' mighty bow,
And whichever of you the easiest with his palms the bow shall bend,
And throughout all twelve of the axes the shaft therefrom shall send,
Him then shall I follow, departing from this house of the wedded wife,
This fair house so abundant in all that upholdeth life;
Which yet shall I remember, though but in dreams it be."
So she spake, and Eumæus the swineherd, the goodly man, bade she 80
To lay before the Wooers the bow and the iron grey;
And Eumæus took them weeping as adown the gear did he lay:
And otherwhere wept the heatherd when he saw the bow of his lord.
But Antinoüs fell to chiding, and spake and said the word:

"O fools of the field! still pondering on things that endure but a day,
Why drop ye tears, poor wretches, and stir in such a way
The heart of our lady within her? when even as it is
In grief her soul abideth, since her loved mate she doth miss.
Now sit and feast in silence; or out a-doors go ye
To weep your fill, and behind you leave this same bow to be 90
A contest for the Wooers, and no lightly-heeded thing;
For I deem that the bow well-shaven not lightly one shall string,
Since no such man of prowess midst all these doth abide
As once was that Odysseus: and I saw him once on a tide,
Whereof I yet have memory, when a little child was I."

So he spake, and the heart within him was hoping verily
To stretch the string, and the arrow right through the iron to waft,
While he himself was fated to be first to taste of the shaft
At the hands of the blameless Odysseus, the man he then did shame
As he sat in his halls, still urging his fellows to the same. 100

But Telemachus' holy might now spake amidst them and said:
"Ah! Zeus the Son of Cronos all witless me hath made!
For my mother belovéd is saying, and she the wise of heart,
That she now will follow another and from this our house depart,
While I laugh and in my mind, gone witless, glad am I.
So come ye, ye Wooers, look to it! for set forth is the prize on high.
There is never another such woman in all the Achæan land,
BOOK XXI.  

Not in Pylos the holy, or Argos, or there where Mycene doth stand,
Nor in this our Ithacan folkland, or the mainland black of earth;
And ye yourselves ye know it: why praise I my mother's worth? 110
So draw ye aback for no pretext, nor hold ye long afoot
From this bow-bending, for we too would see it put to the proof;
Yea, I myself will try it, this deed of the bow to do,
If haply I may bend it and shoot the iron through. [mind
Then my mother beworshipped shall leave me, and I with no sorrow of
When she goes from this house with another, and I am left behind;
E'en I, such a man that my father's fair weapons I bear at the last."

So he spake, and his cloak of purple from his shoulders straight he cast
And leapt upright; and his war-sword from his shoulder did he do.
Then first he set up the axes, having digged a long trench straight through
For all the axes to stand in; and by rule set them aright, 121
And trod in the earth about them, and all wondered at the sight,
How orderly he arrayed them, who the first time saw them now.
Then he went and stood on the threshold, and fell to trying the bow.
Thrice then he made it tremble in his longing the bow to bend;
And thrice he laid by his prowess; though his soul yet longed in the end
To draw the bow-string duly and shoot the iron through:
And now might he have bent it, so strong the fourth time as he drew,
But Odysseus nodded unto him and withheld him, long as he might.
Then Telemachus' holy power amidst them spake outright: 130

"Out on it! either a dastard unworthy henceforth shall I be,
Or I am o'eryoung to be trusting in the might and the hands of me
To ward off the man who preventeth, or falling on me in the fight.
But come now, ye who of prowess are mightier than my might,
Prove ye the bow amongst us, let an end of the trial be made."
So saying, the bow from off him adown on the ground he laid,
And against the well-joined panel fair-polished the same did he lean,
And by its fair-wrought horn-tip the arrow swift and keen,
And so went and sat him adown on the high seat whence erst he arose.

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, fell to and spake amidst those: 140
"Rise up now from the left hand, all ye fair fellows of mine,
From the selfsame place beginning whence beginneth the pouring of wine."

So he spake, and the word of his speaking seemed good to every one.
And first uprose Leiodes; and he was Ænops' son,
And the seer unto the Wooers; and he sat by the goodly bowl
In the innermost nook, at all tides; alone unto his soul
The deeds of shame were hateful, and the Wooers, he blamed them all.

So first the bow he handled, and the sharp shaft therewithal, [would do;
And he went to the threshold and stood there and the deed of the bow
But nowise might he bend it, for it wearied his hands as he drew 150
That were all unworn and tender: so then to the Wooers he spake:

"O friends, I may not bend it; so the bow let another take.
But many a man of the highest, this bow shall bring to nought
His life and his soul. Yet far better it is unto death to be brought
Than to live and make, miss of the thing for which in this house alway
We are gathered here together, expecting day by day.
And now, if any hopeth and his heart longeth eagerly
To wed Odysseus' bed-mate and wed Penelope,
Then, when of the bow he is proven and a sight of the matter hath had,
Let him woo some other woman of Acheans lovely clad, 160
And seek her with gifts of wooing; and this woman, soon or late,
Let her wed the greatest giver and the man that is sent her by fate."
In such words he bespake them, and from him put the bow,
And leaned it against the panel, well-jointed, smoothed enow,
And against the fair-wrought horn-tip he leant the arrow keen,
And so set him adown on the high-seat wherein he erst had been.

But Antinoüs fell to chide him, and spake the word and said:
"Leiodes, and what a word from the wall of thy teeth hath sped!
A hard word and a grievous that I am wroth to hear.
What! the life and the soul of our highest this bow then shall outwear
Because thou wert not able to bend it by thy might? 
Nay, sure thy mother beworshiped ne'er brought thee forth to light
To be a bender of bows, and a man the arrow to wend;
Yet the other high-heart Wooers that bow shall speedily bend."

He spake, and the herder of goats, Melanthius, bade withal:
"Melanthius, hasten and kindle a fire amidst of the hall,
And put a great bench beside it, and fleeces over it spread,
And bring forth the great lard-cake that lieth within the stead,
That we younglings the bow may warm, and with fat anoint it about,
And so try it again, and the contest to its end may carry out."

Then Melanthius speedily quickened the fire unwearied of flame,
And brought up a bench to set by it, and fleeces cast over the same,
And brought forth the great lard-cake that lay the house within;
And the younglings warmed it and tried it; but neither so might they win
To bend the bow, for thereunto much lacking in might they were.
But Antinoüs yet withheld him and Eurymachus, godhead's peer,
The chiefs of the Wooers excelling in might most valorous.

But those twain, they now had wended together out of the house,
The neatherd and the swineherd of Odysseus godhead's peer;
And himself, the goodly Odysseus, came forth to where they were, 190
And when they were come without doors and were gotten forth of the close
He put forth the sound of his voice, and with kind words spake unto those:

"Neatherd, and thou, O Swineherd, shall I say a word to you,
Or hide it within me? that speaking my spirit biddeth me to.
—What men were ye for the warding of Odysseus, were he come
From anywhere of a sudden, and a God should bring him home?
On that day would ye stand by Odysseus, or the men that are come to woo?
Speak out what the heart and the soul withinward urgeth you!"

Spake the neatherd, he who heeded the herds of the beeves and the kine:
"Zeus Father! now be accomplished this inward hope of mine, 200
Of this man's home-returning with a very God to lead;
Then should ye wot of my prowess and my hands to do the deed."

And in likewise spake Eumæus, and to all Gods sped the prayer
For all-wise Odysseus returning to his house upbuidled fair.
So now when he had knowledge of their steadfast hearts and true,
Again in words he bespake them, and thuswise answered thereto:

"Lo, here am I, and at home. Many griefs have I had to bear,
And am come to the land of my fathers at last in the twentieth year,
And I wot that of all the homemen I am welcome to you alone.
Forsooth amid all the others no prayer have I heard and known, 210
No prayer for my returning a-back to my house and hall.
Unto you then the truth shall I tell, how hereafter things shall befall:
If a God these haughty Wooers shall quell beneath my hand
I shall give you a wife to each one, and thereto gear and land,
And a house by my house builted; and when all these deeds are done
Shall ye be Telemachus' fellows, yea, brethren of my son."
BOOK XXI.

But come, another token most manifest will I show, [may know. That the truth in your souls may be strengthened, and my very self ye —Lo the scar of the hurt, which the wood-boar with his white tooth drave on a tide, When with Autolycus' children I sought Parnassus' side!"

So saying, the rags about him from the mighty weal he drew, And they twain looked upon it, and all the tale they knew; And they wept, and o'er wise Odysseus they cast their hands, they twain, And kissed his head and his shoulders, and loved him and were fain; And Odysseus also kissed them on their heads and on their hands.

And now amidst their wailing had the sunlight left the lands Had not Odysseus refrained them; and he spake, and thus said he: "Cease now your weeping and wailing lest any one may see From out the hall a-coming, and thereof within may show. Now enter we not together, but one after other go, 230 I first, ye following after: and take this for a sign from me. For all the others, as many as high-heart Woes be, They will all of them hinder the giving unto me of the quiver and bow; But, bearing the same in thine hands, Eumæus, do thou go Through the house to give them to me; and tell thou the women withal To shut and to lock the doors well-fitted that are to the hall; And if any shall happen to hear the din or the groaning of men Within our walls, then nowise let her go without doors then; But before her work abiding in silence let her be. But thou, O good Philætius, I charge thee shut with a key 240 The gate of the garth, and make haste the cable across it to cast."

So saying, into the house of the pleasant place he passed, And sat him adown on the settle from whence he erst arose;
And those homemen of goodly Odysseus moreover entered the house.

But Eurymachus this meanwhile was a-handling of the bow,
With the fire a-warming it over; and yet not even so
Might he bend it, and most hugely groaned his heart of valiancy,
And in grief he fell to speaking, and e'en such a word spake he:

"Out on it! Sorrow is on us for myself and all of these!
Not so much do I grieve for the wedding, though that be sore misere.
For a many there be of maidens Achaean, both here on the shore
Of Ithaca sea-begirdled, and in many a folkland more.
But if in the might of our bodies we fall so far below
The might of the godlike Odysseus, that we may not bend the bow,
Then e'en for the men of hereafter lo a pitiful tale to tell!"

But Antinoës, son of Eupeithes, to answering him befall:
"Eurymachus, nought shall it be so, as thyself thou wottest indeed:
For e'en now though the folk to that God a holy feast do they speed,
And who can bend the bow that while? Let it be as now.
And were it not well if we left all these axes standing a-row?
For indeed I nowise deem it that any shall come to the hall
Of Odysseus, son of Laertes, and bear them off withal.
So come now, let the wine-swan fill all the cups a-row,
That we may pour drink-offering and lay by the crooked bow.
And to-morn bid we Melanthius, who over the goats hath heed,
That the best of the goats up hither, yea, the flower of the flock, he lead,
And we to the Bowman's Glory, Apollo, shall offer the thighs,
And prove the bow, and accomplish the contest and the prize."

So Antinoës spake, and all men consented to his word;
And came the henchmen, and over their hands the water poured.
And with the drink the younglings crowned all the wine-bowls there,
And filled the cups for the offering, and dealt to each his share.
But when they had poured, and had drunken whatso their souls deemed
Then spake the wise Odysseus from his craft-devising mood:

"Hearken to me, O Wooers of this Queen renownèd well,
Till I say what the soul in my breast now biddeth me talk and tell;
But Eurymachus am I praying, and Antinoüs godhead's peer
Over all, for he hath spoken a rightful word to hear.
Leave we the bow for a season, that the Gods may heed it still,
And the God shall give might to-morrow to whomsoever he will,
Yet give me the bow well-shaven, that here, before your sight,
I may try my hands and my prowess, if yet abideth the might
Wherewith my limbs the litesome were furnished while ago;
Or if straying and ill-nurture by now have all foredone."

So he spake; and out of measure in all those the wrath did grow,
For fear lest he get to bending the shapely-shaven bow.
And Antinoüs fell a-chiding, a word he fashioned there:

"O wretch of guests! who lacketh all wit, e'en the littlest share,
Is it nought that midst us high ones in peace thou makest cheer,
Nor lackest thy share of the banquet, and furthermore may'st hear
Our words and all we tell of; and none else is hearkening
Of strangers or of bedesmen to our talk of many a thing?
It is the sweet wine scathes thee; which hurtest others too,
Who take it greedily gaping, nor drink but what is due.
It was wine that bewildered the centaur, Eurytion, mighty of fame,
In the hall of the man, high-hearted Perithoüs, when he came
To the Lapithæ: in that while with wine his soul he distraught,
And, run mad in Perithoüs' house, great deeds of evil wrought,
But wrath fell on the lords, who leapt up and through the porch and the door
Haled him out, and the ears and nostrils from off the centaur shore With the pitiless brass; so, bewildered, he wandered from part unto part,
Bearing the sin and the sorrow of the folly of his heart.
Thence then 'twist the men and the centaurs the battle came to pass;
But first he brought bale on himself, for that heavy with wine he was,
And a mighty bale I forebode thee if thou shalt bend the bow,
And ye shall meet no kindness as amidst our folk ye go,
But in a black ship of the sea shall we verily send thee then
To King Echettus, the maimer and scathe of all mortal men,
Whence nought shall ever save thee. In peace sit drinking now,
Nor fall to strife and contest with men that are younger than thou."

But Penelope the heart-wise she fell to speaking there:
"To maltreat the guests, Antinoüs, is neither right nor fair,
E'en Telemachus' guests, whoever to this our house may wend.
Deem'st thou that if this stranger the great bow of Odysseus shall bend,
Putting trust in his hands, and the prowess that within the man is rife,
He shall lead me home and make me his very wedded wife?
Nay, the man himself in his breast no such a hope doth bear,
Nor yet need any man of you, of those that are feasting here,
Be vexing his heart hereover; 'twere a most unseemly thing."

Then Eurymachus, Polybus' son, thus spake in answering:
"O Daughter of Icarius, all-wise Penelope,
That the man should lead thee homeward no such a thought had we,
But we fear the shame and the rumour of men, and of women withal,
Lest some one of Acheans be saying, some man, the basest of all:
'Forsooth men worsen than worse must go wooing the bed-fellow
Of a mighty man, and nowise might they bend his well-smoothed bow,
And lo another, a beggar, a wanderer, cometh thereto,
And lightly the bow hath he bended and shot the iron through.
So will they say, and of us a most pitiul tale will it be.”

But to him thus spake in answer heart-wise Penelope:

"Eurymachus, nought 'mid the people can they be fair of fame,
Who eat up the house of a chieftain and do him deeds of shame:
Why then make ado of this also to be for a pitiul tale?
And lo you! tall is the stranger, a well-knit man and hale,
And he boasts him of his kindred as the son of a father of might,
So give him the bow well-shaven that we may look on the sight.
And one thing now I tell you, and fulfilled shall be the same:
If he the bow hath bended, and Apollo give him the fame,
A goodly change of raiment, cloak and frock, will I give him then,
And a keen-head spear will I give him to ward him of dogs and of men,
And a two-edged sword moreover, and shoes on his feet will I do,
And will speed him whithersoever his soul may bid him go."

But Telemachus the heedful he answered presently:

"My mother, none of Achaans is a better man than I
To give the bow or withhold it from whatso man I will,
For as many as lord it over the rugged Ithacan hill,
Or dwell about the islands that off horse-kind Ellis lie.
Of whom shall no man force me unwilling; not if I
Shall give this gear to the stranger straight out for his own to bear.
But go thy ways to the chamber, and heed thine own work there,
Distaff and loom, and the women bid thou their work to speed.
But as for the bow, this matter it is for men to heed,
For all men, and me above all men; for the might of the house is in me."

Then, wondering, back to her chamber she gat her presently,
For in her heart was she storing the wise words of her son.
So then to the bower aloft with her handmaids was she gone,  
Where she wept for her husband belovèd, Odysseus, till at last  
The sweet sleep over her eyelids grey-eyed Athene cast.

Then the swineherd took up the bow to bear it adown the hall;  
But throughout the halls the Wooers cried at him one and all;  
And thus would one fall speaking 'midst those haughty younglings there:  
"Thou hapless, thou gangrel swineherd! and whither dost thou bear  
The crooked bow? Now swiftly shall the swift hounds thou hast bred  
Devour thee far from menfolk amidst the swine of thy stead,  
If we have but the grace of Apollo, and the Deathless give their grace."

So they spake; and the bow he was bearing he laid adown in its place,  
In fear because a many in the halls against him cried.  
But Telemachus shouted at him a threat from the other side:  
"Nay, bear on the bow, my father, lest thou do ill, heeding all!  
Take heed lest I, thy younger, to driving thee forth shall fall,  
And pelt thee afield with pebbles, since in might am I better than thou.  
Yea, would that in hands and prowess as much mightier were I now  
Than those others, they of the Wooers, that hang about the house!  
Then speedily would I send them in manner dolorous  
From out our halls and homestead, for they plan me bale hereby."

So he spake, and all the Wooers laughed on him pleasantly,  
And their bitter wrath against him they laid aside withal.  
And in that while the swineherd bare the bow adown the hall,  
And drawing anear to Odysseus in his hands the weapons laid.  
Then he called forth the nurse, Euryclea, and spake to her and said:  
"Euryclea, thou the heart-wise, Telemachus biddeth thee  
That the hall-doors closely-fitting thou shut and lock with a key;  
And if any hear a groaning, or the noise of men and the din
Amidst our walls, in nowise go ye outdoors from within,
But there abide in silence beside the work ye speed."

So he spake; and his word was wingless and abode with her for her heed,
And she locked with a key the doors of the halls of the lovely stead.
And silently forth from the house meanwhile had Philcteius sped,
And therewith he bolted the gate of the well-walled forecourt there;
But there lay beneath the cloister a curved ship's mooring-gear,
A flag-wrought rope, and therewith he bound o'er the gate of the close,
And then gat him aback and sat down on the bench whence he erewhile
And set his eyes on Odysseus, who as now the great bow bare,
And was turning it over on all sides, and trying it here and there,
Lest the worms its horn should have eaten while long was its master away,
And one would be eyeing his neighbour, and thuswise would he say:

"Lo here, a lover of bows, one cunning in archery!
Or belike in his house at home e'en such-like gear doth lie;
Or e'en such an one is he minded to fashion, since handling it still,
He turneth it o'er, this gangrel, this crafty one of ill!"

And then would another be saying of those younglings haughty and high:
"E'en so soon and so great a measure of gain may he come by
As he may now accomplish the bending of the bow."

So the Wooers spake; but Odysseus, that many a rede did know,
When the great bow he had handled, and eyed it about and along,
Then straight, as a man well learned in the lyre and the song,
On a new pin lightly stretcheth the cord, and maketh fast
From side to side the sheep-gut well-twinced and overcast:
So the mighty bow he bended with no whit of labouring,
And caught it up in his right hand, and fell to try the string,
That 'neath his hand sang lovely as a swallow's voice is fair.
But great grief fell on the Wooers, and their skin changed colour there,
And mightily Zeus thundered, and made manifest a sign;
And thereat rejoiced Odysseus, the toil-stout man divine,
At that sign of the Son of Cronos, the crooked-counselled Lord;
And he caught up a swift arrow that lay bare upon the board,
Since in the hollow quiver as yet the others lay,
Which those men of the Achaians should taste ere long that day,
And he laid it on the bow-bridge, and the nock and the string he drew,
And thence from his seat on the settle he shot a shaft that flew 420
Straight-aimed, and of all the axes missed not a single head,
From the first ring: through and through them, and out at the last it sped,
The brass-shod shaft; and therewith to Telemachus spake he:

‘The guest in thine halls a-sitting in nowise shamest thee,
Telemachus. I missed not thy mark, nor overlong
Toiled I the bow a-bending; stark yet am I and strong.
Forsooth, the Wooers that shamed me no more may make me scorn!
But now for these Achaians is the hour and the season born
To dight the feast in the daylight, and otherwise to be fain 429
With the song and the harp thereafter that crown the banquet's gain.’

So he spake; and with bent brow nodded, and Telemachus the lord,
Dear son of the godlike Odysseus, girt on his whetted sword;
His dear hand gripped the spear-shaft, and his father's side anear,
He stood by the high-seat crested with the gleaming brazen gear.
BOOK XXII.

ARGUMENT.

HEREIN IS TOLD OF THE SLAYING OF THE WOOERS IN THE HOUSE OF ODYSSEUS.

BUT Odysseus of many a rede of his rags he stripped him bare,
And on the great threshold he leapt, and the bow, and the quiver
Fulflilled of arrows he handled, and all the shafts to the ground
Before his feet then poured he, and spake to those Wooers around:

"Thuswise then is accomplished the strife so hard to do;
Now another mark will I loose at that no man hath hit hitherto,
If I perchance may attain it, and so fame of Apollo be earned."

So he spake, and the bitter shaft on Antinois then he turned;
Who e’en now was just upraising a golden cup wrought fair
Two-eared; and to drink of the wine his hands about it were,
And no foreboding of slaughter his heart was heeding then;
For who might ever be deeming that amidst of feasting men
That man alone among many, for as stark as he were and great,
For him would fashion the death-day, and the bale of the blackness of fate?
But Odysseus loosed, and smote him amidstmost of the throat,
And therewith the head of the arrow through his tender neck thrust out,
And sidelong he rolled over; from his hand down fell the cup
As he gat the hurt, and straightway through his nostrils spouted
The thick gush of the man’s-blood; and his feet spurned out at the board
And cast it adown, that the victuals wide over the ground were poured,
And the bread and the roasted flesh were defiled. And all over the hall

Then they railed upon Odysseus, and in bitter words they spake:

So each one spake; for they deemed that unwitting the man he had slain,
And they had no understanding, fools as they were, and vain,
That to all the end of the Death-doom was hard upon them now;
Unto whom spake the wise Odysseus, scowling from knitted brow:

"O Dogs! And ye were saying that I should come home no more
From the people of the Trojans! So ye wasted my house and my store,
And lay with my women servants perforce and against my will,
And went wooing my wife from off me when I was living still;
And neither the Gods were ye fearing that hold the heavens the wide,
Nor yet the vengeance of menfolk that hereafter should betide.
But now the end of the Death-doom is on you one and all."

So he spake; and over them all thereon did the pale fear fall,
And about him each glared, seeking whereby sheer bane to shun;
But Eurymachus spake in answer, and he the only one:

"If thou be indeed Odysseus the Ithacan come back,
Of the deeds of us Achaeans no right thy word doth lack,
BOOK XXII.

For much folly here in the homestead and much afield have we wrought;
But Antinoüs, he that here lieth already come to nought,
Was the cause of all, for he speeded such evil deeds and such,
Not longing so much for the wedding, nor heeding it overmuch,
As devising other matters which Zeus hath not fulfilled;
For to rule o'er the Ithacan land well-built this he willed,
And to lie in wait for thy son that he might slay him there.
But himself by the Death-doom is dead: so thy people do thou spare,
And we mid the people hereafter will make atonement for all,
For what we have eaten and drunken within thine house and hall.
And a twenty-beeve atonement from each man shall there be,
And gold and brass shall be given till we melt the heart in thee.
But meanwhile 'tis nought blameworthy that thou art wrathful now."

Then spake all-wise Odysseus as he scowled from knitted brow:

"Eurymachus, were ye to give me your heritage every whit,
Yea all ye have, and whatso from elsewhere ye might add to it,
Yet not e'en so from the slaying these hands will I withhold
Ere on the Woers I wreak me for their folly manifold.
—There then it lieth before you to fight me face to face,
Or who so may 'scape the Death-doom to flee from out the place.
Yet no man here, meseemeth, the bitter bane shall shun."

So he spake, and the hearts within them and their knees failed all undone,
But the second time Eurymachus spake forth unto them there:

"O friends, since this man will stay not his hands that none may bear,
And whereas the bow well-shaven he hath, and the quiver withal,
He will shoot from the fair-smoothed threshold until he hath slain us all.
But now let us be mindful of the happy tide of war,
[before And draw forth our swords from the scabbards, and hold up the boards
These shafts with black death laden, and in close array fall on
To drive him from the threshold and the door, if it may be done.
And then go we to the city and in haste send up the cry;
And so shall this man have speeded his last shaft ere he die.”

And e’en as the word he uttered, he drew his keen sword out
Brazen, on each side shearing, and with a fearful shout
Rushed on him; but Odysseus that very while let fly
And smote him with the arrow in the breast, the pap hard by,
And drove the swift shaft to the liver, and adown to the ground fell the
From out of his hand, and doubled he hung above the board, [sword
And staggered; and whirling he fell, and the meat was scattered around,
And the double cup moreover, and his forehead smote the ground;
And his heart was wrung with torment, and with both feet spurning he
The high-seat; and over his eye did the cloud of darkness float. [smote

And then it was Amphinomus, who drew his whetted sword
And fell on, making his onrush ’gainst Odysseus the glorious lord,
If perchance he might get him out-doors: but Telemachus him forewent,
And a cast of the brazen war-spear from behind him therewith sent
Amidmost of his shoulders, that drave through his breast and out,
And clattering he fell, and the earth all the breadth of his forehead smote.

Then a-back Telemachus hastened, and left his long-shaft spear
Still stuck there in Amphinomus, since the onset did he fear
Of some one of those Achaean as the long spear forth he drew,
Who should smite with the sword a down-stroke, or thrust him through
and through.
So he ran and unto his father belovéd his way did he make,
And standing close anigh him a wingèd word he spake:
BOOK XXII.

"O father, forsooth, a war-shield and two spears will I bring thee now, And a helm all brazen-fashioned well fitted to thy brow, And myself will go and arm me and give arms to the swineherd here, And others unto the neatherd; for 'twere better our armour to bear."

But to him then spake and answered Odysseus of many a rede: "Run, bring them while yet are the arrows to ward me in my need, Lest they thrust me off from the doorway, one man 'gainst many here."

So he spake, and Telemachus straightway obeyed his father dear, And ran his ways to the chamber, where the glorious war-gear lay, And thence he took four war-shields, four spears he had away, And four helms brazen-fashioned, and bushed with horses' hair, And he bore them along, and right swiftly came aback to his father dear. Then he the first among them the brass on his body had, And the two thralls in like manner in the lovely arms were clad, And they stood about Odysseus the wise and the diverse of rede. But he, while he yet had the arrows to ward him in his need, Still one by one of the Wooers that yet in his house did dwell He aimed at and shot, and there ever one over another they fell; But when he lacked of arrows for his shaft-speeding hand, He laid by the bow and leaned it against the door-post to stand Of that well-builted feast-hall, 'gainst the shining entrance wall, And he across his shoulders cast the sevenfold shield withal, And the well-wrought helm hair-crested he set on his noble head, And from aloft now nodded the battle-crest of dread, And two spears he took strong-fashioned, and shod with the shining brass.

Now a certain high-up postern mid the well-built wall there was, And thereby at the top of the threshold of that well-builted hall Was a way to the aisle by door-leaves well-fitted and shut withal.
Thereof was Odysseus bidding the swineherd have a care,
And take his stand beside it, for no outgate else was there.

Now amidst them spake Agelaüs, and said to all thereby:
“O friends, now might not some one go up to the postern on high,
And tell the folk, that the rumour and cry all around be cast,
And speedily then would this man have shot his latest and last?”

Then Melanthius the goatherd spake out amidst them there:
“Not so, Zeus-bred Agelaüs, for thereto fearfully near
Are the lovely doors to the forecourt, and the mouth of the aisle is strait,
And e’en one man might ward it, if he were stark and great.
But come now, from the chamber let me bring you battle-gear
To arm you; for meseemeth therein and no otherwhere
Has Odysseus laid his armour, with his well-renowned son.”

And with that word the goatherd, Melanthius, straightway won
Up to Odysseus’ chamber through the windows of the hall,
And thence he gat twelve war-shields and as many spears withal,
And as many brazen war-helms bushed with the horses’ hair,
And therewith ran back swiftly, and gave to the Wooers there.
Loose then grew the knees of Odysseus, and the heart in him grew soft;
When he saw how they donned the hauberk, and in their hands aloft
Were shaking the spears long-shafted, for his work seemed great indeed.
And unto Telemachus straightway a winged word did he speed:

“Telemachus, one of the women about the house I wis
Stirs up ill war against us; or Melanthius else it is.”

Then Telemachus theheedful thus answering fell to say:
“’Twas I myself, O father, that herein went astray,
BOOK XXII. 403

And none else was blameworthy, for the doors that fit aright
Of the chamber I left ajar, and their watch was o'er-keen of sight.
But go thou, good Eumaeus, and the chamber door shut to,
And note if one of the women this deed 'gainst us doth do,
Or Dolius' son Melanthius, whom indeed for the doer I take."

But while unto each other in e'en such wise they spake,
Melanthius the goatherd to the chamber went again
To fetch the goodly war-gear, whom the swineherd good marked plain,
And spake therewith to Odysseus who stood anigh that while:

"O Zeus-bred son of Laertes, Odysseus of many a guile,
Now he, that man of mischief, e'en he whom he deemed was the man,
Is going unto the chamber; so tell me as straight as ye can
Whether I myself shall slay him if the better man I be,
Or shall I bring him hither, that he may pay to thee
For all his many transgressions that he in thine house did devise?"

But to him thus spake in answer Odysseus diversely wise:
"Within the halls here soothly shall Telemachus here with me
Yet hold the high-heart Wooers, for as eager-fierce as they be;
But ye twain, his hands to his feet do ye twist aback and bind,
And cast him into the chamber; and shut ye the doors behind,
And withal make fast unto him a cable twisted well,
And haul him aloft to a pillar anigh the rafters to dwell,
That he a long while living may suffer grievous pain."

So he spake, and straight they hearkened and did his bidding, they twain.
They went their ways to the chamber, and unseen of the man they were,
For within the nook of the chamber he sought about for gear,
While standing each by a doorpost abided there those men:
So Melanthius the goatherd came o'er the threshold then,  
And a war-helm wrought full fairly in one hand did he hold,  
And a broad shield in the other, old now and foul with mould:  
'Twas Laertes the lord who bore it, while yet a youth, in his hands,  
But cast aside had it lain, and all gone were the seams of its bands.

So the twain rushed on and caught him, and hailed him in by the hair,  
And him heart-smitten with anguish they cast on the pavement there,  
And hand to foot they bound him, and sore the bonds they made,  
Hard twisting the limbs behind him, e'en as the master bade,  
The toil-stout goodly Odysseus, the old Laertes' son.  
Then they made him fast to a cable of strands well over-done,  
And hailed him aloft to a pillar close up to the beams of the place.

Then didst thou, O swineherd Eumæus, speak a bitter word to his face:  
"Yea there forsooth, Melanthius, shalt thou watch all through the night  
In a fair and soft bed lying, as for thee is meet and right;  
Nor yet shalt thou miss beholding the gold-throned Mother of Day  
Coming up from the eddies of Ocean as thou bringest thy goats on their  
Up hither to the Woovers, a feast in the house to dight."

There then for that while they left him in grievous bond strained tight,  
And the twain did on their war-weed, and shut the shining door,  
And went their ways to Odysseus, the wise-heart, crafty of lore.

There then all breathing fury those four on the threshold stood,  
And they in the house withinwards were a many men and good;  
But amidst them the Daughter of Zeus, Athene, came standing anigh,  
And like was her body to Mentor's and like was the voice of her cry;  
And Odysseus rejoiced when he saw her, and spake out a word to hear:
"Ward off me the war-play, Mentor! remember thy fellow dear! Who hath done thee good deeds ever; and like-aged thou art unto me."

So he spake, but the people's Uprouser, Athene, he deemed it to be,
But the Wooers amid the feast-hall cried out from the other side,
And Damastor's son Agelaüs, he fell the Maid to chide:

"Mentor, let not Odysseus with words prevail o'er thee,
To fight against the Wooers and his battle-aid to be!
For this our mind and purpose, meseemeth, shall be done;
And whenso these we have slain, the father and the son,
Then thou with them shalt be slain, whereas in the halls of the stead
Such deeds thou art set on doing, for which thou shalt pay with thine head.
But when with the brass we have reft you of the might that once was yours,
Thy goods, yea all that thou holdest in thine house and out a-doors,
We will mingle with those of Odysseus, and neither the sons of thee,
Nor thy daughters will we suffer within the halls to be,
Nor thy trusty wife will we suffer mid the Ithacan folk to go."

So he spake, and exceeding anger in Athene's heart 'gan grow,
And she fell to upbraid Odysseus with bitter words and to say:
"Nought bideth thy might, Odysseus, and thy valour hath no stay,
As when concerning Helen, the white-armed well-begot,
For nine years long with the Troy-folk ye fought and faltered not,
And in the fearful war-play ye slew so many an one,
And the wide-wayed Burg of Priam by thy devise was won;
And now that thou art gotten to thine havings and thine house
Art thou woe that against the Wooers thou must needs be valorous?
Come hither, my weakness! Stand by me and look on the deeds to be
That thou may'st behold the fashion of Mentor Alcimus' son, [done,
How he payeth back well-doing amid the rout of foes!"
So she spake, and yet not wholly gave clear victory unto those,  
For yet a little longer would she try the valour and might,  
Both of the man Odysseus, and his son, the glory of fight;  
But flying aloft, she gat her to the darkling feast-hall’s beam,  
And there sat her adown, and a swallow to look on did she seem.  

Now fell to stir up the Wooers Agelaüs, Damastor’s son,  
And Eurynomus and Amphimedon and Demoptolemus fell on,  
And Peisandrus son of Polyctor, and heart-wise Polybus;  
For these were the best of the Wooers, and by far most valorous  
Of those who yet were living and fought their lives to gain,  
But the rest, the bow had quelled them, and the rush of the arrow-rain.

So amid them cried Agelaüs, and to all spake out the tale:  
"Friends, now shall this man refrain him and his hands that never fail;  
With a word of empty boasting hence now hath Mentor gone,  
And in the first of the doorway are these men left alone.  
Therefore not all together your long spears do ye cast,  
Let but six hurl together; and may Zeus grant us at last  
The smiting of Odysseus, and for us the glory and gain!  
No need to care for the others when he hath fallen slain."

So he spake, and all right eager hurled even as he bade,  
But all the casts Athene but vain and idle made:  
For one, he smote the doorpost of that well-built house,  
And another reached the doorleafes that were fitted well and close,  
And the ashen shaft brass heavy of another smote the wall.

But when the spears of the Wooers they had thus 'scape'd one and all  
Then fell to speech Odysseus, the goodly toil-stout lord:
BOOK XXII.

"O friends, at last I say it, and give to you the word
To hurl into the throng of the Wooers, so sore as now they long
To strip us after the slaughter, and heap up wrong on wrong."

So he spake, and all they forthright the whetted war-spears threw,
Straight aiming: Demoptolemus therewith Odysseus slew,
Telemachus slew Euryades, and the swineherd there did quell
Lord Elatus, and Peisandrus before the neatherd fell.
There all they lay a-grovelling and the wide floor bit withal.

Then aback shrank the throng of the Wooers to the inmost of the hall,
And the others rushed upon them, and drew out the spears from the dead.

Then again the eager Wooers their whetted war-spears sped,
But Athene so wrought that a many thereof in vain should fall,
For one of them smote the doorpost of that well-builted hall,
And another smote the door-leaves well fashioned close to fit,
And the ashen shaft brass-heavy of one the wall did hit.
But Amphimedon smote Telemachus his hand about the wrist,
Where the brass did graze but lightly, and all but barely missed:
And Ctesippus smote Eumeus o'er the shield with a long-shaft spear,
And his shoulder grazed; but the shaft flew on and fell down there.

Then they about Odysseus the heart-wise, diverse of rede,
Amidst the throng of the Wooers their whetted spears did speed.
There city-waster Odysseus smote Eurydamas outright,
And Telemachus Amphimedon, and the swineherd did Polybus smite,
And the man that herded the oxen, Ctesippus, there he smote
Amidmost the breast; and thereover a boasting word did he shout:

"Polytherses' son, taunt-loving, now never any more
Talk big and yield to thy folly, but turn the matter o'er
To the Gods, since they full soothly are better far than thou.
Take this guest-gift for the ox-foot that thou gavest even now
Unto Odysseus the godlike when he begged adown his hall."

Thus the herd of the shambling oxen. But Odysseus therewithal,
Hand to hand with the son of Damastor, with his long spear thrust him
And Telemachus Leocritus, Evenor's son, did undo through,
With a spear-thrust amidst of the belly, and drave the brass right out,
And he fell on his face, and the hall-floor the breadth of his forehead [smote.

But her man-destroying Ægis upheld Athenè then
Aloft from the roof; and fear-struck were the souls of all those men,
And they fled about the feast-hall in such wise as the kine of the herd,
Whom the gadfly the swift-flitting hath fallen upon and scared
In the season of the spring-tide, when long out the day-time draws.
But the others, e'en as vultures hook-nebed, of crooked claws
From out the mountains coming, stoop on the birds that go
Swift hurrying over the plain, from the high clouds cowering a-low,
And those fall on and slaughter, nor is there any might,
Nor ever a way for fleeing; and men in the prey delight:
—In such wise on the Wooers about the house fell those,
And on either hand they smote them, and fearful the groans arose
As the skulls of men were smitten, and in blood did the pavement swim.

But Leiodes ran to Odysseus, and caught the knees of him,
And fell to praying him pity; and such wingèd words spake he:
"By thy knees, I beseech thee, Odysseus, to have compassion on me,
For I tell thee that unto the women that are in thine house and hall
I have said and done nought wanton; but the other Wooers withal
Have I refrained them, whenever of such deeds they had a will,
BOOK XXII.

Though nought to me would they hearken to hold their hands from ill. So now for this wanton folly an ugly fate have they won: But I, their priest of burnt-offering, who nought herein have done, Shall fall, and no grace abideth for doing righteous deed."

But with bent brows looking upon him spake Odysseus of many a rede: "And if the priest of burnt-offering thou be, as thou dost say, Many times in these halls meseemeth wilt thou have been wont to pray That the end of my glad returning might be far away from me, That my wife with thee might be wending and bear her babes for thee. Therefore from the death o'ershadowing thy life thou shalt not save."

Therewith in his hand most mighty he caught up a battle glaive, That lay there fallen from the hand of Agelaüs late slain, And drave it through amidst of his neck and clave it atwain, So that e'en as he was speaking the head with the dust was blent.

But the son of Terpes the minstrel, yet shunning black fate went, E'en Phemius, he who sang perforce to the Woeers' band; And there he stood, yet holding the shrilly harp in hand, Hard by the postern, and pondered in his mind two ways of it, Whether going forth of the feast-hall by the well-wrought altar to sit Of the mighty Zeus of the Garths, whereon Laertes of old And Odysseus had burned the ox-thighs in offerings manifold; Or else to Odysseus running to beseech him by his knees; And, turning it o'er in his mind, it seemed the better of these, The knees of the son of Laertes, Odysseus, to cling around. So therewith the harp wrought hollow he set upon the ground, Midways betwixt the wine-bowl and the high-seat silver-wrought. And he ran straight up to Odysseus, and his knees about he caught, And to him in supplication such wingèd words spake he:
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

"By thy knees I beseech thee, Odysseus, to have compassion on me,
For to thee shall be grief hereafter for the singer's slaughtering
If ye slay me, who unto the Gods and unto menfolk sing;
And myself myself have learned it: and the God in the mind of me
All manner of lays hath planted; and belike I may sing unto thee
As unto a God. So desire not the smiting of my head!
Forsooth by Telemachus also, thy dear son, shall the tale be said,
That unwilling and unlonging in thine house was I harbouring,
Unto the folk of the Wooers amidst their feasts to sing,
For many men, men mightier, brought me here in mine own despite."

So spake, and to him was hearkening Telemachus' holy might,
And straight he came up to his father and thuswise spake thereto;
"Withhold thee, nor yet with the brass this sackless man thrust through!
And the henchman Medon spare we, who in this house evermore
Would cherish me and heed me when a youngling heretofore,
If Philoctetus or the swineherd have slain him not as yet,
Or thee in thine anger raging midst the house he hath not met."

So he spake; and Medon heard him, well learned in wisdom fair,
Who, shunning the black death-doom lay low and cowering there
'Neath a high seat, and wrapped closely in an oxhide newly flayed;
Then straight he arose from the high-seat, and adown the oxhide laid,
And unto Telemachus running his knees he clasped about,
And to him in supplication these wingèd words spake out:

"O friend, I am here! withhold thee! to thy father speak the word,
Lest he in his might undo me with the brass of the whetted sword
In his wrath against the Wooers, who in his house and hall
Have wasted his wealth in their folly, nor honoured him at all."
BOOK XXII.

But Odysseus of much counsel smiled in his face and spake:
"Heart up! since this man spares thee, and thy safeguard thus doth make;
That thou in thine heart may'st know it, and to other men may'st tell
That better than ill-doing are the ways of doing well.
But get ye forth from the feast-hall, to the forecourt make your ways,
And sit there aloof from the murder with the singer of many lays,
While yet in the house I labour at whatso needeth there."

So he spake, but straight without doors and forth of the hall did they fare,
And before the great Zeus' altar they sat them down they twain,
On all sides peering about them, and still expecting bane.

But about his house peered Odysseus, if yet a man there were
Who shunning the black doom-day was left a-lurking there;
But adown in the dust and the blood he beheld them all lying about
Yea, as many as the fishes which the fishers have drawn out
With a net of many meshes from out the hoary sea
Up on to the hollow sea-beach: there heaped up all they be
Cast up upon the sea-sand, desiring the waves of the brine;
But the sun their life is taking with the glory of his shine.
Thus then in heaps the Wooers on one another lay.

Then at last unto Telemachus did all-wise Odysseus say:
"Telemachus, go and call thou the nurse Euryclea here,
That somewhat I may tell her which on my mind I bear."

So he spake, and Telemachus straightway his loved father obeyed,
And smote on the door and a word to the nurse Euryclea said:
"Up hither, O ancient of days, who over the women-thralls
Art ever the ward and the watcher within our house and halls;
Come! for my father calls thee, and hath a word to tell."
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

So he spake; and the word was wingless and by her yet did dwell,
And therewith she opened the doors of the hall of the pleasant place,
And went her ways; but the youngling led on before her face.

And there she found Odysseus amidst the men dead slain,
With blood and gore bedabbled, as a lion stalketh amain,
Who cometh from devouring an ox of the meadowy place,
And all his breast is bloody and either side his face,
And fearful is he fashioned to look upon with eyes:
So befouled were the feet of Odysseus and his hands in e'en such wise.

But she, when she saw the corpses and that abundant blood,
Was setting up a joy-shout, so great seemed the work and so good;
But Odysseus refrained and withheld her, though yearning sore indeed,
And sent his voice out toward her, and this winged word fell to speed:

"Rejoice in thy soul, O goodwife, and thy shout of joy refrain,
For nowise is it righteous to boast above the slain.
But these men the Fate of the Gods and their wanton deeds did quell,
Whereas they honoured no man of men on the earth that dwell,
Were he good or were he evil, whosoever came their way.
So through their wanton folly met they loathly end to-day.
But come! of these home-women do thou tell the tale to me,
Whichso of them have shamed us and whichso sackless be."

Then the loved nurse Euryclea, she spake and answered this:
"To thee, forsooth, my nursling, will I tell the tale as it is;
Within the halls of thine homestead a fifty handmaids dwell,
And to work the work of women have we learned them all right well,
Both the carding of wool and the bearing of thraldom as they may.
Of these there are twelve in all who have trodden the shameful way,
And me they nowise honour, nor yet Penelope."
And Telemachus is but new grown into manhood, nor might it be
That his mother him would suffer to order the women thralls.
But now let me go up aloft to the bright bower of the halls
To tell thy wife: for slumber some God on her hath laid."

But Odysseus of many a rede to her made answer and said:
"Nay, nowise her shalt thou waken: go bid the women here,
E'en they who deeds unseemly have wrought in days that were."

So he spake, and adown the feast-hall therewith did the goodwife go
With the message to the women, to bid them haste thereto.
But Odysseus called unto him Telemachus, and the twain,
The sheatherd and the swineherd, and spake winged words again:

"Fall to and bear out the corpses, and bid the women to aid,
And thereafter all the high seats and the tables lovely-made
With water and with sponges hole-pierced cleanse thoroughly.
But when ye have ordered all things in the house as they shall be,
Then, bringing forth the women from out the well-built hall,
Midways 'twixt the vaulted kitchen and the forecourt's holy wall
With the long-edged sword there smite them, till ye have undone clean
The souls of all, and no longer they remember the love that hath been
That they gat from the Wooers in secret, and mingled with them were."

And e'en as the word he was speaking came the women huddling there,
And bitterly they bewailed them, and fast the tears they shed.
First then they bore out of the feast-hall the bodies of the dead,
And laid them under the cloister of the garth well-walled about,
Each propped against the other, and Odysseus himself gave out
The word, and the work he ordered, and persever the women bare.
And therewithal the high-seats and the tables fashioned fair
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

With water and with sponges hole-pierced they washed all sweet;
But Telemachus and the swineherd, and the herder of the neat,
Throughout the house well-built with shovels scraped the floors,
And the handmaids took the scrapings and bore them out a-doors.

But when the hall of the homestead they had set in order at last,
From out the well-built feast-hall with the women-thralls they passed
To betwixt the vaulted kitchen and the forecourt's holy wall,
And in a strait place shut them whence no outgate was at all.

Then Telemachus to his fellows began, and thus he spake:
"By a clean death nought am I willing the lives from these to take,
Who things so grievous shameful have heaped upon my head,
And also on my mother, and have lain in the Wooers' bed."

So he spake; and therewith the cable of a black-prowed ship he found,
And made fast to a lofty pillar and cast it toward the kitchen around,
And stretched it aloft that no one might touch the earth with her feet;
And e'en as the long-winged thrushes or the doves 'gainst a net may beat,
Which, when unto roost they betake them amidst the boughs is spread,
And verily there are they taken and they come to a loathly bed;
So these held their heads in order, and round their necks each one
Ran the noose, that they might perish by the evilest death undone;
And they writhed with their feet for a little, but their season was but short.

Then did they bring Melanthius through the porch and into the court,
And they cropped with the ruthless brass the ears and the nose from his
And drew out his privy parts for the dogs to eat raw in the place, [face,
And hewed off his hands and his feet in their fierce and fell intent.
Then their hands and their feet they washed, and into the house they went,
And came unto Odysseus, and done was the work of the day.
Then unto the nurse beloved, EURYPELE, did he say:

Then unto the nurse beloved, EURYPELE, did he say:
BOOK XXII.

"Bring brimstone, the cure of evil, goodwife, bring fire unto me,
That I the house may hallow; then bid thou Penelope
That now she get her hither, and her handmaids withal.
Yea, speed hither all the women that serve in our house and hall."

But the dear nurse Euryclea in turn made answer thus:
"Yea, this thou sayest, O nursling, in manner righteous.
But come, a cloak and a kirtle, fair weed let me bring thee to hand,
Nor with broad shoulders huddled in rags thuswise do thou stand
Amidst of our halls, for soothly blameworthy this thing were."

But Odysseus of many a rede thus spake and answered her:
"Nay, first of all I prithee let the fire in our halls be made."

So he spake, and the nurse, beloved Euryclea, nought gainsaid,
But fetched the fire and the brimstone, and Odysseus therewithal
In goodly fashion hallowed the court and the house and the hall.
Then the goodwife went her ways through Odysseus' house the fair
With her message to the women to bid them hasten there,
And they came forth from the chamber, and candle in hand they had,
And they hung about Odysseus, and embraced him and were glad.
And they kissed him and caressed him, his head and his shoulders withal,
And clung to his hand, and sweet longing upon his soul did fall

For weeping and for wailing; for his heart, he knew them all.
BOOK XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

ODYSSEUS MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS WIFE PENELOE.

THEN the old wife, joyfully laughing, to the bower-aloft did fare,
To tell the tale to her mistress that within was her husband dear;
And her knees were brisk, and beneath her her feet went trippingly:
So she stood o'er the head of the Queen, and to her the word spake she:

"Waken, Penelope! waken, dear child! that thou may'st behold
The very thing that thou wouldest, and the hope of thy days of old;
Odysseus hath come! he hath reached his own house, though late it is,
And hath slain the masterful Wooers, who have troubled that house of his,
And have eaten his wealth, and have cowed his son so grievously."

But therewith thus bespake her heart-wise Penelope:

'Stark mad the Gods have made thee, dear nurse, for they have the might
To make a body witless, though full wise she be aright:
And the wanton fool into wisdom they may shift if they have the will;
And thee have they married, who aforetime hadst a heart of wit and skill.
Ah, why then dost thou mock me, and my mind of many an ache
With these wild tales of thy telling, and me why wilt thou wake
From the sweet sleep that hath bound me and wrapped mine eyelids o'er?
Never yet in such sleep have I slumbered since Odysseus went of yore
To seek the Evil Ilios, that none should name at all.
Now therefore get thee downward and wend thy ways to the hall:
For if any one else of the women whom here I have and keep
Had come with such a story to waken me from sleep,
Then back unto the feast-hall had I sent her speedily
In woeful wise: but herein thine eld excuseth thee."

Then the dear nurse Euryclea in such wise answered she:
"Dear child, nowise I mock thee, but in sooth and in verity
Odysseus is here in the house according to my tale;
That guest whom all men soever in the house did bemock and berail;
And Telemachus hath known him in the house this while indeed,
But of his heedful wisdom hath hidden his father's rede,
That the better he might wreak him of the wrong of masterful men."

She spake, and glad grew the other, and leapt from the bedplace then,
And cast her arms about her, and the tears from her eyelids shed;
And therewith her voice she uttered, and wingèd words she said:

"Dear friend, and tellest thou truly a soothfast tale to-day?
And in very truth hath he gotten aback to his house as ye say?
How then upon the Wooers, the shameless, laid he hand,
He one alone, and they ever in their place a steadfast band?"

But the dear nurse Euryclea thus spake to her the word:
"I saw not, nor noted, but only the groans of the dying I heard:
For we, we sat bewildered in the nook of the well-built house,
And the door-leaves meetly fitted therein did hold us close,
Till thy son Telemachus called me, coming out to that end from the hall,
Because indeed his father had sent him forth to call:
There found I Odysseus standing 'mid the corpses of the slain,
While all about on the hall-floor, hard-trodden down amain,
They lay one man on the other. It had gladdened thine heart to see
How with blood and gore bedabbled as a lion there stood he.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

But now all they are gathered in a heap by the door of the close,
And he the while with brimstone now hallows his lovely house,
Having litten a mighty fire, and sends me to call thee thereto.
Come follow, that both ye twain, both the dear hearts of you,
May enter into gladness; for through many a woe have ye passed,
And now the hope long lingering hath come about at last. [still
He hath come back alive to his hearth, and there hath he found thee
And his son in the halls; and those Wooers who have wrought him
wrong and ill,
On all those hath he avenged him within his house and hall."

But to her Penelope answered, and the heart-wise spake withal:
"Dear friend, boast not so bigly, nor laugh aloud outright:
Forsooth, thou wottest how welcome in the house would be this sight
To all, but most unto me, and the son betwixt us begot.
But the tale that thus thou tellest is nowise true I wot;
But rather some one of the Deathless these masterful Wooers hath slain
In his wrath at their grievous outrage, and the ill they have wrought
For no one did they worship of the men that dwell on earth [amain.
Whoso might happen upon them, of worth or of unworth.
So their bane hath their folly brought them: but Odysseus, passed away
To his homefare afar from Achaea, and he is dead to-day."

But the dear nurse Euryclea she answered her, and said:
"Ah, what a word, my nursing, from the wall of thy teeth hath fled!
Whereas thou say'st that thine husband, who standeth down there on the
Shall never come home! Yea, ever of belief in thy soul is dearth. [hearth,
But come now, another token most plain shall I tell thee in sooth:
That scar, which of old the wood-boar once drave with his white tooth,
Did I behold as I washed him, and longed to tell it to thee;
But he caught me, and laid his hand right over the mouth of me,
And suffered not my speaking through his manifold wisdom and wit. 
But follow me; and for my part I will lay my life on it! 
And if I beguile thee, slay me by the evilest death ye may."

So Penelope the heart-wise in answer fell to say:

"Dear friend, the God's own counsels, they that live for evermore, 
'Tis hard for thee to get at, though thou wottest diverse lore. 
Yet wend we now to my son; that we may see the sight 
Of these dead men, the Wooers, and him who hath slain them outright."

Therewith she went down from her bower, and sore the heart in her 
Was wavering, if she should question from aloof her husband dear, 
Or go up and take him, and kiss him on his hands and on his head; 
But when she came and passed over the stone threshold of the stead, 
Then over against Odysseus sat she down by the other wall 
In the light of the fire: but he soothly sat adown by a pillar tall, 
With eyes cast down, expecting till mayhap some speech should arise 
From his bed-fellow the glorious, since she saw him with her eyes. 
But a long while sat she silent, with her heart in all amaze, 
And one while face unto face would she sit, and on him gaze, 
And one while knew not his body for the wretched raiment's sake.

Then Telemachus fell to chide her, and the word therewith he spoke:

"O mother, thou ill mother, that bear'st an unkind heart, 
Why ever from my father dost thou hold thee so apart. 
Nor wilt ask him and seek answer a-sitting by his side? 
No other woman surely so hard-hearted would abide 
To hold her aloof from her lord, who so burdened with bale to bear, 
Hath come back to the land of his fathers at last in the twentieth year. 
But ever the heart within thee is harder than the stone."
Then Penelope the heart-wise thus spake unto her son:
“My child, the heart in my bosom in all amaze is caught,
Nor a word may I speak unto him nor question him of aught,
Nor face to face behold him. But if it be verily so
That this is Odysseus come home, then the surer shall we know
True knowledge of each other: for tokens have we got
That are hidden from all others whereof we twain well wot.”

So she spake, and the goodly Odysseus, the toil-stout, smiled as he heard,
And unto Telemachus straightway he spake a wingèd word:
“Telemachus, suffer thy mother within these halls to try
The man I am; and full knowledge shall she have speedily.
For now whereas I am foul and my body basely clad,
She honours me not, nor deems me to be the man she had.
But now let us look unto it the better way to gain:
For if one amidst of a people one man alone hath slain
Who hath left but a few behind him revenge for him to win,
Yet shall such an one flea, leaving his fatherland and kin;
But a city’s prop have we slaughtered, yea the very flower of the youth
Of the Ithacan folk: so to heed it is my bidding to thee forsooth.”

But Telemachus the heedful thus answered him and spake:
“Dear father, see thou to it! for thy counsel all do take
For the best that is among menfolk, nor would any vie with thee
Whoso may be the other of all mortal men that be;
But we full fain will follow, and this I say outright,
Nought shall we fail of stoutness according to our might.”

But Odysseus of many a rede spake out, and thus said he:
Well, therefore shall I tell thee what seemeth best to me;
For first you men shall wash you, and do on your kirtles withal,
Then bid the handmaids array them throughout the house and hall,
And then let the godlike minstrel, his shrilly harp in hand,
Unto the gamesome dance-play go leading all the band,
So that any would say 'twas a wedding of those who may hear it without,
Were he one on the way a-wending, or a neighbour of hereabout;
Lest the rumour of the slaying of the Wooers should be spread
Broadcast about the city, ere we get us out from the stead,
And unto our land well-wooded, and there may we think of the thing,
What gain the Lord of Olympus unto our hand may bring."  

He spake; and they hearkened and did it, the deed that he bade be done:
For first of all did they wash them, and do their kirtles on,
And the women arrayed them, and therewith did the godlike minstrel take
His hollow harp, and amidst them he smote desire awake
For the dancing-play the happy, and the music honey-sweet,
And the great house groaned around them, and around to the noise of the
Of the dancing men and the women, fair-girdled all about, [feet
And thus would one be saying who heard it from without:

"Now one is a-wedding the Queen that was wooed of many a lord.
Wanton! that might not abide it, the mighty house to ward
Of her wedded man, and be steadfast till he got him aback thereto."

Thuswise would they be saying but nought of the deeds they knew.

But Odysseus the great-hearted, his very house within,
Goodwife Eurynome washed him, and with oil she sleeked his skin,
And about him cast a mantle most fair, and a kirtle meet.
But fairness shed Athene on the man from head to feet [hair,
That taller he showed, and bigger, and she wrought with his head and his
And set thick locks a-curling as the harebell bloom curls fair;
And as when some cunning craftsman o'erlays the silver with gold,
Some man whom Hephaestus hath taught craft-cunning manifold,
And Pallas Athene hath taught him, and lovely work he hath sped,
So loveliness about him on his head and his shoulders she shed,
And as he went up from the bath-vat like the Deathless his body did show,
So he sat him adown on the high-seat whence he had arisen e'en now,
Right over against his helpmeet, and spake, and the word he said:

"Strange woman! surely the people who hold the Olympian stead
Have set hard heart within thee above all womankind!
No other woman surely with such enduring mind
Had held aloof from her husband, who many a grief must bear,
To come back to the land of his fathers at last in the twentieth year.
But come, nurse, strew me a bed that I may lie alone,
For surely the heart within her of iron is fashioned and done."

But Penelope the heart-wise the word unto him spake:

"Strange man! I neither exalt me nor scorn of thee do I make,
Nor amazed am I out of measure, though I know what thou wilt of yore,
When ye from Ithaca wended in the ship of the long-shaft oar.
But come now, Euryclea, strew him the bed close-laid
Without the well-built bride-room which he himself erst made,
Bring there the bed close-furnished, and the bed-gear on it dight,
The fleeces and the mantles and the blankets gleaming bright."

Thus she spake to prove her husband; but Odysseus, grieved at heart,
Spake thus unto his bed-mate well-skilled in gainful art:

"O woman, thou sayest a word exceeding grievous to me!
Who hath otherwhere shifted my bedstead? full hard for him should it be,
For as deef as he were, unless soothly a very God come here,
Who easily, if he willed it, might shift it otherwhere.
BOOK XXIII.

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But no mortal man is living, how strong soe'er in his youth,
Who shall lightly hale it elsewhere, since a mighty wonder forsooth
Is wrought in that fashioned bedstead, and I wrought it, and I alone.
In the close grew a thicket of olive, a long-leaved tree full-grown, 190
That flourished and grew goodly as big as a pillar about,
So round it I built my bride-room, till I did the work right out
With ashlar stones close-fitting; and I roofed it overhead,
And thereto joined doors I made me, well-fitting in their stead.
Then I lopped away the boughs of the long-leafed olive-tree,
And, shearing the bole from the root up full well and cunningly,
I planed it about with the brass, and set the rule thereto,
And shaping thereof a bed-post, with the wimble I bored it through.
So beginning, I wrought out the bedstead, and finished it utterly,
And with gold enwrought it about, and with silver and ivory, 200
And stretched on it a thong of oxhide with the purple dye made bright.
Thus then the sign I have shown thee; nor, woman, know I aight
If my bed yet bideth steadfast, or if to another place
Some man hath moved it, and smitten the olive-bole from its base.”

[breast,

So he spake, and her knees were loosened, and molten the heart in her
When she knew the soothfast tokens that her lord made manifest.
And weeping she ran straight to him, and cast her arms about
Odysseus’ neck, and kissed him on his head, and thus spake out:

“If Lour not on me, Odysseus! since in all things else beside 209
Thou art wisest of men; ’tis the Gods who have given us grief to abide,
For they grudged that we twain together should be dwelling each by each,
In the youth of our days rejoicing till the threshold of eld we should
But prithee be not angry, nor cast thy wrath on me, [reach.
That I held me back from caresses when first I looked on thee,
For ever the soul in my breast is full of shuddering fear
Lest some mortal man come hither and with words beguile me here;  
For many men are devising gains gotten evilly.  
Nor yet would Argive Helen, Daughter of Zeus on high,  
With an alien man have mingled in the bed and the loving deed,  
Had she known that the warrior sons of Achaæans her would lead  
Aback again and homeward to her fatherland beloved.  
Unto doing a deed unseemly the God that woman moved:  
But she laid not to heart beforehand the heavy fateful woe  
From whence the weight of sorrow over our lives too must go.  
But since of our bed such tokens so certain and sure thou hast shown,  
Which no one else of mortals hath seen but we alone,  
Yea thou and I, and one handmaid that Actoris hath to name,  
A thrall that my father gave me when hither home I came,  
Who was door-ward for us of our bride-room built fair and solidly,  
My soul thou overcomest, for as hard as it may be.”

So she spake; and desire of weeping she stirred in him the more,  
As he held his wife well pleasing, the learned in gainful lore;  
And e'en as men a-swimming of the face of earth are faint,  
Whose well-wrought ship Poseidon hath wrecked amidst the main,  
Driven on by the blast of the storm-wind and the over-toppling seas;  
But forth from the hoary salt-sea they have fled, and few are these  
Who have swum ashore, and their bodies with the brine are crusted around,  
But because they have scaped the evil full faint they tread the ground,  
E'en so was she faint of her husband that she looked upon at last;  
Nor wholly his neck would she loosen from her white arms round it cast.  
And the Rosy-fingered Day-dawn on their tears had shone indeed.  
But the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, of other things had heed:  
For the long night she held in his quarter, and the Gold-throned Dawn  
From the yoking of her horses in Ocean did she stay;  
[of Day,  
They, the swift-foot whereby daylight to the sons of men is borne,
BOOK XXIII.

The Gleaner and the Glitterer, the foals that bring the morn.

So at last unto his bedmate spake Odysseus of many a rede:
"Not yet to the end of our labour, O wife, are we gotten indeed;
Abideth toil unmeasured, abundant, hard to be done;
And all this it behoveth that by me it should be won;
For even so the spirit of Tiresias foretold
On the day when I got me adown to the innermost Hades' hold,
That I for myself and my fellows homefare might seek and gain.
Now bedward go we, O woman, that now at last we twain,
Beneath the sweet sleep lying in all delight may be."

But therewith spake unto him heart-wise Penelope:
"The bed for thee there shall be whensry soul shall need, 
Since now at last it befalls that the Gods have given thee speed
Unto thine house well-built and the land of thy fathers of old.
But since God in thy soul had set it, and thereof to me thou hast told,
Come tell me what is the labour, for hereafter it seemeth to me
I shall learn it; and nothing worser to know it as now shall it be."

But the many-counselled Odysseus to answering thus befell:
"Strange one I and why dost thou bid me and egg me on to tell?
Thereof then will I tell thee, nor hide the tale I have had.
But thy soul shall it not make joyous, nor yet thereof am I glad;
For unto many cities of mortals, and many lands
He bade me to go, and to carry a well-shaven oar in my hands,
Until with the men unwitting of the sea at last I meet;
Men who their victuals ever with salt unsavoured eat,
And wot no whit of the ships with the purple cheeks and fair,
Or the well-poised oars which ever are the wings which the ships do bear.
And he gave me a manifest token, which from thee I will not hide,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Whenever another wayfarer I shall meet as I wander wide,
Who shall say that a winnowing fan on my noble shoulder I bear,
He bade me make stay in that land and my ear to set up there,
And there to King Poseidon to hallow fair gifts divine,
A ram and a bull, and a boar which is the mate of the swine;
Then home to wend me, and hallow the gifts an hundredfold
Unto the Gods undying the heavens the wide that hold,
Unto all in order befitting. But my death from out of the sea
Shall come on me full softly, and shall make an end of me,
Worn out by eld the gentle, midst a blithe folk all about.
Such were the things that he told me should befall with never a doubt."

But unto him thus answered heart-wise Penelope:
"If the Gods indeed accomplish a better eld for thee,
Then hope there is ere the ending of delivr'ance from the bale."

So thus to one another they gave and took the tale;
But Eurynome in meanwhile and the nurse the bed did light
With soft and dainty bed-gear by the gleaming torches' light.
But when the good bed they had strewn them in fashion diligent,
Then back again to the chamber to rest the old-wife went;
But Eurynome the bower-maid with torch in hand she led
The twain, as there they wended their ways unto the bed,
And she brought them unto the chamber, and departed, and they twain
Came unto the ancient order of their bed, and they were fain.

But Telemachus, and the heatherd and the swineherd from the play,
Of the dance their feet were staying, and the women did they stay.
And there in the shadowy chambers they gat them unto bed.

But when of love the lovely those twain their joy had fed,
Then they gladdened them with speech-tales that each to other told.
Told the glory of all women all she bore there to behold,
The baleful throng of the menfolk who wooing came thereto;
And how for her sake a many of kine and fat sheep they slew,
And the mighty drawing of wine from the casks that befell them then;
But Odysseus, Zeus-begotten, of the woes he had laid upon men,
And of all the toil he had toiled in, thereof he told her all;
And fain she hearkened his telling, nor yet did slumber fall
On her eyelids as she hearkened, till the tale was told to an end.
First he told how he quelled the Cicons, and how he thence did wend
Unto the fertile acres of the Lotus-eating men:

And all things that the Cyclops wrought him, and how he avenged him then
For his valiant folk devoured, who no pity there could find;
And his coming to Æolus’ dwelling, who took and sped him kind,
Though nowise was he fated to his fatherland to come;
For the storm-wind fell on him, and tore him a long way aloof from his
And over the fishy sea-flood, lamenting mightily:

Then his coming to Telepylus the Laestrygon told he,
By whom was all his ship-host and his well-greaved folk undone,
And Odysseus’ self escaped it in one black ship alone.

Then he told the tale of Circe and her manifold guileful snare;
And of how to the dark dank dwelling of Hades he must fare
In a many-benched ship, to seek aiding of the ghost of the Theban wight,
Tiresias: there of his fellows who had been had he sight,
And therewithal of the mother who bare him erst but young;
And he told of the great-voiced Sirens, how he heard the song they sung:
Of the Wandering Rocks and Charybdis the dire he told the tale,
And of Scylla, whom never have shipmen passed by and shunned her bale;
And how his fellows slaughtered the kine of the very Sun;
And how with his bolt the flame-fraught, the Lofty-thundering One,
E’en Zeus, their swift ship ruined, and how all his fair folk died,
Ye a one and all together, while he 'scape the evil tide;
And of how he came to Ogygia, and the Nymph Calypso the Fair,
Who longed for her lord to have him, and still would hold him there,
In her hollow rocky places; and cherished him, and she
Would make him undying unageing through all the days to be;
Yet nowise she persuaded the heart within his breast.
And he told how he came to Phaeacia, toiling with all unrest,
Where unto their hearts they took him, and him in worship did hold
As a God, and shipped him, and sent him to his fatherland of old,
With gifts of gold and of brass, and abundant woven gear.

And this was his last word spoken, ere sweet Sleep, the Limb-looser,
Fell on him now, and his soul from cares and troubles freed.

But the Goddess, the Grey-eyed Athene, of other things had heed;
For as soon as she deemed that Odysseus was filled to his heart's content
With the very joy of the wife-bed, and his deep desire was spent,
Then straight she aroused from Ocean the Gold-throned Mother of Day,
To bring light to the sons of men; and Odysseus rose whence he lay
Amidst the soft bed, and fell speaking to his wife, and bade her thus:

"O wife, we have had our fill of labours plenteous;
For here hast thou been weeping for my homefare trouble-beset,
While Zeus and the other God-folk with woes have withheld me yet
From the land of the ancient fathers that so sore I desired to gain.
But since to the bed so longed for we are come at last, we twain,
That wealth of mine now heed thou whatso in my halls may be;
But as for the sheep which the Wooers o'erweening have slain for me
Full many a head myself will I lift, and a many more
The Achaens shall give, till our folds be full and running o'er.
Now up to my lands up-country, thick-wooded, will I fare,
BOOK XXIII.

To look on my noble father, who great grief for me doth bear. 
Hereof, O wife, I charge thee, that thou be so wise an one:
For right soon shall arise the rumour with the coming of the sun
Of those same men of the Wooers that e'en now I slew in my halls.
So up to thy bower aloft do thou go with thy women thralls,
And sit, and look forth on no man, nor ask word for any to hear."

So he spake, and over his shoulders did on his goodly gear,
And Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd did he wake,
And bade them all their war-gear at once in hand to take; 
And they nowise disobey him; but their breasts in the brass array,
And then open the doors and go forth; and Odysseus leadeth the way.
And by now was there light on the earth, but Athene hid them about
With night, and then from the city she speedily led them out.
BOOK XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

THE GHOSTS OF THE WOOERS ARE BROUGHT BY HERMES TO THE HOUSE OF HADES. ODYSSEUS MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS FATHER LAERTES. EUPEITHES TAKES UP THE FEUD FOR HIS SON ANTINOÜS: HE IS SLAIN BY LAERTES, AND PEACE IS MADE BY THE WILL OF ZEUS AND ATHENE.

BUT now the ghosts of the men who were of the Wooers' band Called forth Cyllenian Hermes; and he had his staff in hand, Lovely and golden, wherewith he lulleth the eyes of men, Whomsoever he willeth, while others from slumber he rouseth again. Therewith he roused and drove them, who gibbering went along; As when in the inmost ingle of a wondrous den the throng Of night-bats gibbereth fluttering, when one falleth off aloof From their chain, where clustered together they hang from the rocky roof, So fared their flock a-twittering, and Hermes void of wrong Adown the dusky highway led all the band along:

There by the streams of Ocean and the White Rock went their band, By the gates of the Sun they wended and by the dream-folk's land, Till in no long while they were gotten to the meads of asphodel, Wherein the ghosts, the pictures of outworn men-folk, dwell. And there the ghost of Achilles the Peleus child they met, And Patroclus, and Antilochus the hero stainless yet, And Ajax of his body the best of every one Amid the Danaëan people after Peleus' blameless son.
Round him then were they gathered: but drew anigh their host
Agamemnon son of Atreus, and mournful was his ghost;
And with him came others flocking; for all they thronged around
Who with him in the house Ægisthus their doom and death-day found.
So the ghost of the Son of Peleus first spake unto him there:

"Atrides, all we said it that thy days through thou wert dear
To Zeus the Fain-of-thunder above all men of war,
Since over men so many and so valiant, sway ye bore
In the folkland of the Trojans, where Achaæans suffered woes;
But baleful fate, that no man once born on earth foregoes,
Was doomed to fall upon thee amidst thine early day.
Ah! would that all fain of thy glory wherewith thou bearest sway
In the folkland of the Trojans thou hadst met thy death and doom,
Then all the folk of Achaæans for thee had made the tomb,
And unto thy son hereafter had been great fame of thy deed:
But now—a death most piteous for thine ending was decreed."

But to him the ghost of Atrides thus spake a word to hear:
"O happy Son of Peleus! Achilles godhead's peer!
Who didst afar from Argos in Troy; and round thee then
Were slain the sons of the Trojans and Achaæans, best of men,
As over thee they battled: in the dustwhirl didst thou lie,
So mighty, so mightily fallen, all thy horse-lore heed gone by.
Yea, daylong there we battled; nor the battle had we stayed,
But if Zeus with the storm and the whirlwind an end of the fight had made.
So then from out of the battle to the ships we brought thee there,
And on the bed we laid thee, and washed thy body fair
With water warm and ointments, and adown did the Danaæs pour
The hot tears there above thee, and their hair for thee they shore. [sea
And thy mother came up from the seas flood with the deathless maids of the
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

When she had heard of the tidings, and wondrous the wait for thee
Rose up upon the sea-shore; and the Achaens every one
Fell trembling, and a-fleeing on their hollow ships had they gone, 50
Had Nestor not refrained them, who knew all ancient lore,
And whose counsel unto all men had oft seemed best before:
So he spake, that man of wisdom, and in this wise said he:

"'Hold, Argives! Swains of Achaens, hold now and nowise flee!
For now with her deathless sea-maids from out of the deep of the main
Hath the Mother come but to meet him, her son the newly-slain.'

"So he spake: and the high-heart Achaens refrained them of their fear;
And the Daughters of the Elder of the Salt-sea round thee were,
All piteously bewailing, and did on thee deathless weed;
And the Muses nine, none lacking, fell the burial lay to speed 60
With sweet replying voices; and no man without a tear
Might ye mark among the Argives. Rose the shrilly song and clear;
Seven days and ten unbroken, while day and night went by,
We wept, both the deathless Godfolk and the menfolk doomed to die.
The eighteenth to the fire we gave thee, and about thee there we slew
Many sheep of the flock the fattest, and the shambling beesves thereto.
Thou wert burned in the weed of the Gods mid ointments goodly store,
And honey sweet, and a many of Achaean men of war
In arms, both footmen and horsemen, went about the bale wherein
Thy body burned, and hugely all round uprose the din.
But when the flame of Hephaestus had burned thee all away,
Thy white bones, O Achilles, we gleaned at the dawn of the day
Into ointment and wine unwatered, and thy mother brought for thee
A two-eared golden vessel, and she gave it out for to be
The gift of Dionysus by all-famed Hephaestus made;
Therein, O glorious Achilles, the white bones of thee we laid,
Mingled with dead Patroclus, son of Mencetias;
But aloof from Antilochus, he who of thee most worshipped was
Of all thy fellows, saving Patroclus dead and gone.
Then the tomb we heaped around them, a great and a goodly one,
We the holy host of the Argives, and the folk that the battle abide,
On a ness that thrusteth forward o'er Hellespont the wide,
That afar it might be behelden of men that sail the sea,
Both of them that now are living and them that yet shall be.
But thy Mother, the Gods beseeching, laid prizes the goodliest
In the midmost lists for the winning of Achaëans of the best.
— Full oft ere now hast thou happed on a warrior's burying,
When the swains are gathered together about some perished king,
And they gird them there, and array them for the winning of the prize.
But heretofore indeed hadst thou wondered at the sight before thine eyes,
Such prizes and so Gouldy gave the Goddess for thee there,
E'en the silver-footed Thetis: for still to the Gods wert thou dear.
So thy name dieth not with thy dying, but evermore shall abide
Thy fair fame, O Achilles, amongst all men far and wide.
But what joy unto me abideth that I wound up the spindle of strife,
When under the hands of Ægisthus, and of her my baleful wife,
Zeus e'en on the day of my homefare did my baleful bane devise."

But while to one another they spake in e'en such wise
There drew anigh unto them the Flitter, the Argus-bane,
Leading the souls of the Wooers at the hands of Odysseus slain,
And they wondered when they beheld them, and straight they went thereto.
But the ghost of Agamemnon the son of Atreus knew
Melaneus' son belovéd, Amphimedon great of fame;
For his guest had he been when aforetime to his Ithacan house he came.

So the ghost of the Son of Atreus was the first with the speech-word then:
"Amphimedon, what bane brings you, all chosen, like-aged men,  
'Neath the dark earth to journey? No better band than this  
Of the best of men might we choose us of any town that is.  
As ye sailed on the ships did Poseidon o'erwhelm you utterly,  
The bitter winds arousing, and long billows of the sea?  
Or did it befall that the foemen your bane on the mainland gave,  
As ye cut off the herds of their neat or their goodly sheep-flocks drave,  
Or about some city's women would the fight that ye fell in be?  
Come, tell me the tale since I ask it, for I call me the guest-friend of thee.  
For dost thou not remember how I came to thine house and home  
With the godlike Menelaüs, to urge on Odysseus to come,  
And along with us unto Ilios in the well-decked ship to wend?  
Nor over the main had we gotten before a whole month's end,  
Since hardly thereto Odysseus the Waster of Cities we won."

Then unto him fell speaking the ghost of Amphimedon:
"O King of folk, Agamemnon, most glorious Atreus' seed,  
Thou Zeus-child! all thou tellest I remember well indeed,  
And every whit and clearly the tale to thee will I tell  
Of our death and our evil ending, in what wise it befel.

"We wooed the wife of Odysseus, the lord so long away,  
And unto that loathly wedding said she neither yea nor nay,  
But the black doom and the deathday devised for us the while;  
Yea in our heart she devised us moreover this same guile;  
With a web that was great and mighty her loom in the house did she gear,  
A fine web, full of measure, and thus bespake us there:

"'O younglings, ye my Wooers, since the godlike Odysseus is dead,  
Await ye abiding the wedding till I to an end have sped  
This cloth, for fear the warp-threads should waste and come to nought.
BOOK XXIV.

'Tis a shroud for the lord Laertes'gainst the day when he shall be caught
At the last by the baleful doom of Death, the Outstretcher of men:
Lest the women of Achæans through the folk should blame me then,
— Lo the man of many possessions he lieth lacking a shroud!'

"So she spoke, for the while prevailing o'er our hearts the high and proud,
And thenceforth o'er that web the mighty by daylight still she wrought,
But ever by night undid it when the candles thereto she had brought. 140
Three years she beguiled the Achæans, and the thing by guile did hide,
But when came on the fourth year and the seasons came in their tide,
By all the waning of moons and the many days fulfilled,
Then one of the women told us, who in the guile was skilled,
And we found her there unweaving the noble web of cloth;
And so to an end must she bring it perforce and exceeding loth.

"So when she had shown us the cloth, and the great web had woven and
And had washed it, and like to the sun or the moon before us it shone,
In that while some baleful God from somewhither Odysseus led
Unto the lands up-country, where the swineherd dwelt in his stead, 150
Whither came the loved son of Odysseus, the godlike, making the land
In his black ship out from Pylos the country of the sand.
There then the twain for the Wooers did the bale of death forecast
And came on to the glorious city; of whom was Odysseus the last;
But thitherward before him the way did Telemachus lead;
And the swineherd brought on Odysseus all clad in loathly weed,
Most like to a wretched beggar, and a staff-carle very old;
And woeful was the raiment that his body did enfold;
And not one of us might know him, for the man amidst us there
Come to hand upon a sudden, nay, not those that the first-born were.
And with evil words we chid him, and cast at him furthermore
But there in the halls of his house with hardy heart he bore
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

All things for a while; both the pelting of strokes and the bitter word;
Till the counsel of Zeus the Shielded the mind within him stirred,
And, with Telemachus aiding, the lovely arms took he
And laid them by in the chamber, and shut the door with a key.
Then out of his guile exceeding he bade his wife to lay
The bow before the Woers, and therewith the iron grey,
For a strife to us ill-fated, well-spring of bane and bale.
And no man there amongst us o'er the huge bow might prevail
To stretch his string: might failed us a long way for the same.
But when into the hands of Odysseus at last the great bow came,
Then all we cried together, and with our words forbade
To give the bow unto him for all the words he made.
But Telemachus only urged him, and gave him straight command.
And when Odysseus the toil-stout the goodly had got it in hand,
Then lightly the bow he bended, and shot the iron through:[strew,
And leapt up and stood on the threshold: then to earth the shafts did he
Glaring terribly around him: and King Antinoüs
He shot, and then, straight aiming, those shafts the dolorous
He loosed upon the others, and each o'er each they fell.

“And then that one of the Gods was their helper knew we well,
For thereon through all the feast-hall they followed on us close,
And on either hand they slaughtered, and the loathly groans arose,
And the din of the cleaving of skulls, and the blood drowned all the floor:

“So died we, Agamemnon, and our bodies furthermore
In the halls of the house of Odysseus, uncared they lie therein;
For in the house of each one thereof nought kneweth our kin[shed,
That they might wash from off us the black blood that our hurts have
And lay us adown with wailing—all the honour of the dead.”
BOOK XXIV.

But the ghost of the Son of Atreus made answer thereupon:
"O many-wiled Odysseus! Laertes' happy son!
A wife of worth abundant hast thou surely gotten thee;
So good is the heart of the noble, of that Penelope,
Icarus' child; who ever had her lord in memory,
E'en Odysseus: so the glory of her worth shall never die;
But forsooth a lovely story the Deathless Ones shall make
For all the Earth-abiders for Penelope's wise sake.
Nought such was Tyndareus' Daughter, who devised a deed of bale,
To slay her wedded husband: loathly shall be her tale
Amid menfolk, and hereafter yet the ill report shall dwell
On each woman of the women, e'en on her that doeth well."

In such wise with each other held they converse face to face
As they stood in the House of Hades, down in earth's hidden place.
But those others went forth from the city; they quickly came their ways
To the well-arrayed land of Laertes, which he himself in his days
For himself had won: for much toil thereover did he abide,
And there was his house, and about it were the bowers on every side,
Wherein the thralls of his homemen were wont to sleep and dwell,
E'en they who ever wrought him such work as liked him well.
And a goodwife, Sicilian moreover, dwelt underneath that roof,
To have a care of the elder in the field from the city aloof.

So now to his son and the homemen to speech Odysseus fell:
"Do ye yourselves now enter the house that is builded well,
And slaughter at once for your dinner which swine may be best thereto;
But for me, I will make trial of my father, what he will do,
Whether he with his eyes will mark me and know me for his son,
Or know me not, such a long while and so far as I have been gone."
So saying, unto the homemen he gave his battle-gear,
And they hasted into the house. But Odysseus drew anear
The fruit-abounding vineyard the foresaid proof to win:
But down to the great garth going he nowise found therein
Either Dolius, he or his sons, or one homeman; gone were all those
To gather them thorns for a hedge to set round the vineyard close;
And he, Dolius the elder, was leading them all on the road.

So his father he found, who alone in the ordered garth abode,
About a vine-stock digging: in a kirtle foul was he clad,
All patched and right unseemly; and bound round his legs he had
Greaves clouted, wrought of oxhide, the scratching thorns to shun,
And gloves on his hands 'gainst the brambles; and on his head was done
A goatskin hood. In such wise did he eke out sorrow there.

But when the goodly Odysseus, the toil-stout, saw him fare
All worn with eld, and laden with such grief of heart withal,
He shed the tears thereover as he stood 'neath a pear-tree tall.
And then indeed to pondering in his mind and mood he fell,
Whether he should kiss his father, and embrace him about, and tell
All the tale of how he was gotten to his fatherland again;
Or whether of all he should ask him and try him there amain.
And unto him so thinking it seemed the gainfuller part
To try him at first for a while with words that were hard to his heart.

With that thought the goodly Odysseus went up to him speedily,
And he held his head still downward and digged about the tree.
So standing anigh unto him, thus spake his son renowned:
"Old man, no lore thou lackest in digiting thy garden ground,
And well thine heed availeth; for there is nothing here,
No shoot, no fig or vine-stock, no apple-tree or pear,
BOOK XXIV.

And no plot of herbs in the garden, that lacketh the care of thee. But one thing will I tell thee, nor wroth let thy spirit be:
This same good care thou lackest, and both ell thou hast indeed
Full woeful, and art squallid and clad in loathly weed.
Yet thy master's heeding thee nothing is nought for thy sloth, I trow,
For nought thrall-like in thy body and thy bigness dost thou show.
But like to the Kings thou seemest: yea, thou seemest unto me
Like to one who, when he hath washen and eaten as should be,
Should fall to sleeping softly, as meet for elders it is.
But do me to wit of one thing, and straightly tell me this,
Of what man art thou the bondsman, and whose garden tendest thou?
And hereof, too, tell me duly that soothing the thing I may trow,
If verily I am gotten to Ithaca, e'en as he said,
A man that e'en now I fell in with, as I made my way to the stead.
A man scarce wise of his wit; since indeed he endured not I wis
To tell me all, or to hearken my word when I asked him of this,
Concerning my friend, if he liveth and yet abideth to-day,
Or is dead, and unto the houses of Hades hath wended away.
But one thing am I saying, and heed thou my word and hear;
A man erewhile I guested in my fatherland the dear,
Who came to our house: and never a more welcome guest hath come
Of all the guests of the aliens who hath sought unto my home.
But from Ithaca claimed he kinship, and moreover did declare
That Laertes Alceius son was the father of him there.
So him to the house did I lead, and there I guested him well
With heedful love, when a many as then in the house did dwell;
And guest-gifts there I gave him, e'en such as were meet to be given:
Forsooth of gold well fashioned I gave him talents seven;
And a mixing-bowl I gave him all silver and flouery,
And twelve single cloaks moreover, and twelve shifts of tapestry,
And as many goodly mantles and the kirtles longing thereto.
And therewithal four women deft lovely work to do,
And shapely of their bodies, whom he chose out for his own."

Then answered him his father as he shed the tears adown:
"Ye are come to the land, O stranger, whereof thou wouldst be told,
But men insolent and wanton as now the lordship hold.
And those numberless gifts of thy giving but vainly didst thou give.
For if in the Ithacan folkland thou hadst found that man alive,
Then indeed with a good return of thy gifts had he sent thee away,
And with goodly guesting, as meet is for him who beginneth the play.
But come now, tell me of this, and clear let thine answer be:
How many years have worn by since thou guestedst this man with thee,
Thine hapless friend, and my son ill-fated?—if ever he were—
Whom somewhere afar from his friends and his fatherland the dear
In the sea have the fishes devoured, or the birds and the beasts have got
For a prey upon the mainland; and his mother bewailed him not,
Nor shrouded him round, nor his father—e'en we that begat him, e'en
Nor his wife of the many gifts, wise-witted Penelope,
[we!—
Did bewail her lord on his death-bier, as meet and right it is,
Nor close his eyes; and due honour to the dead is even this.
But now do thou tell me truly that I may wot it well,
[ dwell,
Whence art thou of men, thy begetters and the town where thou dost
And where the ship is lying that erewhile brought thee here
Along with thy godlike fellows: or alone perchance didst thou fare
Upon the ship of others who, landing thee, went on their way?"

Then Odysseus the many-counseled thuswise did answer and say:
"Yea, soothly, of all these matters will I tell thee clearly, and well.
Out of Alybas come I, wherein in a noble house I dwell.
The son of Apheidas am I, who was King Polyphemus's son,
And Eperitus have I to name: now some God drave me on
From Sicania to come hither, and all against my will.
By the field far aloof from the city my ship is lying still.
But as for Odysseus, this year is the fifth year come to hand
From the day when thence he departed, and left my father’s land
Ill-fated; yet fair flew the fowl when he went, on the right hand they were.
So fain was I therefore when I sped him forth to fare;
And fain was he departing, and hope in our hearts was alive
To mingle yet in friendship, and glorious gifts to give.”

So he spake; but a black cloud of sorrow wrapped the elder of days around,
And straight he took up two-handed the dusky dust from the ground,
And over his hoar head poured it, groaning full heavily.
But stirred was the heart of Odysseus, and the sharp grief rose on high,
And beat against his nostrils as he looked on his father’s woe,
And he fell on him and embraced him, and kissed him and spake so:

“I am he of whom thou askest, O father! yea, I am here,
Come back to the land of my fathers at last in the twentieth year;
And now refrain thee of wailing, and cease thy tearful woe,
For all straight out will I tell thee, though needs must we hasten now.
Lo now! I have slain the Wooers within our house and hall,
And avenged me of mocking and heart-grief, and their ill deeds once for [all].”

Therewith Laertes answered, and in this wise spake he:
“ If thou art indeed Odysseus, my child, come home to me,
Then tell me a manifest token that in thee I may surely row.”

Spake then the wise Odysseus, and in such wise answered now:

“Lo first this weal I show thee for thine eyen to behold,
Which the boar with his white tooth furrowed when I went on Parnassus of
But thou and my mother beworshipped, ye sent me that journey to make
To Autolycus her father, that I the gifts might take
Which when he came hither he promised, and he swore to give me those.
Then come, till I tell thee the trees in this well-ordered close,
Which thou gavest me erst for mine own, when I but a little one
Was going with thee through the garden, and asking of all that was done,
And through them we went, and thou namedst them, and toldst me all about
And thirteen pear-trees ye gave me, and a half score apple-trees, [these,
And of figs two score; and thou namedst withal the fifty rows
Of vines that thou wouldst give me; and in turn bore each of those,
Because indeed grape-bunches there flourished divers and great
When the seasons of Zeus from the heavens laid on them load of weight."

Therewith failed the knees of the elder, and failed the heart in his breast,
When he knew the soothfast tokens that his son made manifest,
And he cast his arms about him, his child beloved well,
And the toil-stout goodly Odysseus took him, fainting as he fell.
But when his breath he had gotten, and his soul came aback to his heart,
Again with words he bespake him, and answered for his part:

"Zeus father! Still the Gods dwell up in Olympus on high,
If the Wooers indeed have paid us for their wanton mastery;
But sore in my mind I fear me lest they speedily hasten here,
All the Ithacan men, and moreover speed tidings everywhere
Throughout all steads and cities of the Cephalenian men."

But the many-counsell'd Odysseus in this wise answered again:
"Heart up! nor let these matters on thy mind for a trouble lie;
But go we forth to the house that standeth the orchard anigh;
For I sent on Telemachus thither, and the swineherd and herd of the neat,
That they as swiftly as may be should array for us all the meat."
BOOK XXIV.

But with those words they wended along to the houses fair,
And when at last they were gotten to the house well-built there,
Therein Telemachus found they, and the herds of the neat and the swine,
Shearing much flesh into gobbets and blending the dark-red wine.
And that while Laertes the great-heart, within his house and hall
That wife Sicilian washed him, and sleeked him o'er withal,
And did a fair cloak on him; but Athene came to him,
And made that People's Shepherd greater in every limb,
That mightier he was than aforetime, and bigger to look upon.
So up from the bath he wended, and wondered his well-loved son
When he saw him like in aspect to the Gods that never die:
So then he spake unto him, and let the winged words fly:

"O father, now one of the Gods that are for evermore
Hath made thy body and bigness e'en better than heretofore."

Then answered Laertes the heedful, and spake a word to hear:
"Would to Father Zeus and Athene and Apollo that such I were
As when Nericus well-built, the burg on the mainland's head,
I took, and the Cephellenians as their battle-king I led.
That e'en such I had stood beside thee in our own house yesterday,
With war-gear on my shoulders to aid in the battle-play
Against the men of the Wooers! There then in thine house and hall
Had I loosed the knees of many, and rejoiced thine heart withal."

But while each unto the other such things as this they said,
The others toiled and ceased not, and the banquet ready made;
And they set them down in order on bench and high-seat there,
And they laid their hands to the victual. But therewith now drew anear
Dolius the elder, and with him the sons of that elder withal,
From their work afield a-wearied, whom their mother had gone to call,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

That Sicilian wife that gave them their meat, and the home-man old
In diligent fashion cherished, since eald had him in its hold.
But when these saw Odysseus, and their minds considered him well,
They stood in the hall astonished; but to speech Odysseus fell,
And in soothing wise bespake them, and such words before them set:

"Sit down to meat, O elder, and your wonderment forget;
For the meat have we long been yearning to lay hands upon the same,
And here in the hall have abided, expecting till ye came."

So he spake; but forth ran Dolius with both his hands stretched out,
And caught hold of Odysseus and kissed him on his hands and his wrists
And therewithal bespake him, and e'en such words spake he:

"Since thou art come back, beloved, to us that longed for thee,
Yet never looked to see it, and the Gods thy ways have led,
All hail! all hail! may the Godfolk give thee life's goodlihead!
But tell me one thing truly that I may know it well;
Doth Penelope the wise-heart know of this tale to tell,
And how thou art returned, or the tidings shall we speed?"

But therewith spake in answer Odysseus of many a rede:
"Old man, she knoweth already: what need thereof to care?"

So again the other sat him adown in the polished chair.
And in turn the sons of Dolius round Odysseus the mighty stand,
And in words they gave him greeting and clasped him hand in hand,
And then sat them adown in order by their father Dolius there.

Thus then in the halls, of their victual did these men have a care.
BOOK XXIV.

But swift Fame fared as a herald through the city on every side,
With the foul fall of the Wooers and the fate whereby they died;
And men heard it altogether and thronged from everywhere,
And about the house of Odysseus in wail and woe they were;
And they bore out the dead from the house, and each buried his own
And those from other cities, home did they send them all; [withal.
And on the swift ships laid them for the Fisher-folk to bear.
Then flock-meal they fared to the meeting and sore at heart they were.
But when they were gotten together and the meeting of men was made,
Then amidst them arose Euteithes, and the word before them laid.
For unhealable yet in his heart the grief for Antinoüs lay,
His son, whom the goodly Odysseus of the Wooers first did slay;
So he spake in the meeting of men sore weeping because of his son:

"Friends, a great deed 'gainst the Achæans is this that this man hath
For some in his ships he flitted, and valiant and many were they,
And the hollow ships they perished and the people passed away;
And he came here to slaughter others of Cephallenians the best.
So come ye ere this man swiftly get off in Pylos to rest,

Or unto Elis the Holy, where Epeian men are lords.
Wend we, lest shame enduring shall burden us afterwards,
And this thing be for a shame e'en for folk unborn to hear,
That we avenged not the slaying of our sons and our brethren dear:
Then to me at least nought happy would life be unto my heart;
But dying as soon as might be with the dead would I have my part.
Then go we, lest they forgo us, and across to the mainland fare."

So spake he weeping, and pity get hold of the Achæans there.
But now the godlike minstrel and Medon came thereto,
From the feast-hall of Odysseus, now Sleep had let them go.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

And they stood there in the midst and wonder seized each man,
And Medon learned in wisdom thuswise the word began:

"O men of Ithaca, hearken! for not without the will
Of the Deathless Gods did Odysseus these deeds of his fulfil:
Yea, I myself saw an Immortal of the Gods, who stood anear
Odysseus, and like unto Mentor in all wise did it appear.
And this Deathless God, one while in front of Odysseus appeared,
And heartened him on; and again the folk of the Woosers he scared,
To flee through the house in terror; and there each upon each did they
[fall."

So he spake; and at his speaking the pale fear crept o'er all.
But the old lord Halitherses, and Alastor's son was he,
Took up the word; and he only things past and to come could see,
Who now of goodwill bespake them, and a word before them laid:

"Hearken now, Ithacan men, to the word that of me shall be said:
O friends, 'tis your dastard doings made these evil matters to be;
For neither to Mentor the folk-herd would ye hearken, nor yet unto me,
When your sons we would be staying of their witless ways of nought;
Who in their baleful folly deeds huge and monstrous wrought,
Eating the wealth and shaming the wife of the noblest of men,
Whereas ye would still be saying, he shall never come back again.

So thuswise be the matter, and the word of my speaking obey,
Nor go ye, lest any meet evil self-made upon the way."

So he spake; but the more part of them rose up with a mighty cry,
While the others gathered together abode there steadfastly,
For his word they liked in nowise, but Eupeithes did they hear
More gladly: so then straightly they ran to their battle-gear.
BOOK XXIV.

But when upon their bodies the gleaming brass they had done,
Then were they gathered flock-meal before the wide-wayed town,
And the host amidst their folly forth did Eupeithes lead,
For he thought to avenge the slaying of his son: but never indeed Should he get him aback; but thereby should hap on his doom and his [death.

Now to Zeus the son of Cronos Athene speaketh and saith:
"O father, O son of Cronos, O Highest of all that is high,
Tell me, the asker, what hidden in the deep of thine heart doth lie?
Whether ill war yet thou wilt fashion, and the fearful battle din,
Or wilt make loving-kindness between them, and all they to dwell therein?"

Then Zeus the Cloud-pack’s Herder thus fell to answer and speak:
"O child, why ask ye closely, and an answer thus would seek?
For was not this thy counsel, and thine heart’s devising then,
That thither should come Odysseus, and avenge him on these men? So do e’en as thou wilt. But I show the meetest end of the strife:
Since the holy Odysseus hath wreaked him on the Woers of his wife,
Let them strike true oath, and henceforward to the end let him be king:
And the slaying of their children, and their brethren, e’en this thing Shall we make them forget, and in kindness shall they dwell as heretofore; And good peace shall be amongst them and of wealth abundant store."

So he spake, and urged on Athené, who before longed eagerly,
And she went on her ways, down-rushing from Olympus’ peaks on high.

But when of the longing for meat heart-soothing an end those had made,
The toil-stout goodly Odysseus took up the word and said: "Let some one go forth and espy lest anigh they be drawing, those men."
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

So he spake; but a son of Dolius straight did his bidding then,
And went on the threshold and stood there, and saw them all anigh,
And unto Odysseus straightway he let the winged word fly:
"Yea, verily are they at hand; so arm we now in speed."

So therewith, at the word, they arose, and did on their battle-weed:
And Odysseus and his, they were four; and six Dolius sons there were.
And with them Laertes and Dolius did on the battle-gear,
For all that they were hoary, and warriors pressed by need.
But when they had done on their bodies the gleaming brazen weed,
Then they opened the doors and went forth; and Odysseus led the band.
Then came the Daughter of Zeus, Athene, nigh to hand,
In Mentor's very likeness of body and of voice,
Whom the toil-stout valiant Odysseus beholding, failed not to rejoice;
And unto Telemachus spake he, and said to his well-loved son:

"Telemachus, now shalt thou learn it thyself, as thou fallest on,
In the tide when men are battling and the best are chosen of worth,
Not to shame the race of thy fathers; we, who over all the earth
Have excelled all other menfolk in manhood and in might."

But Telemachus the heedful thus answered him forthright:
"O father beloved, if thou willest, in my heart shalt thou look, and see
No shaming of the fathers whereof thou toldest me."

So he spake, and glad was Laertes, and thus he speaketh now:
"Kind Gods! what day is this day, wherein so glad I grow,
Wherein my son and my son's son in manly valour vie!"

Then unto him spake Athene, the Grey-eyed, standing a-nigh:
"Arceius' son, of my fellows the lievest and most dear,
BOOK XXIV.

Unto the Grey-eyed Maiden and Zeus father speed the prayer,
Then swing up thy spear long-shafted, and poise and cast outright."

So spake she, Pallas Athene, and breathed into him great might ;
And unto the Daughter of Zeus the mighty made he his prayer,
And aloft he swung thereafter and cast the long-shaft spear,
And therewith smote Eupèithes on the helm of the cheeks of brass ;
Which kept not out the spear-head ; right through and through did it pass,
And clashing he fell, and above him his war-gear rattled thereon :
And Odysseus set on their forefront along with his glorious son, [play ;
And smote with the edge of the sword and the two-tyned spear in the
And there all those had they slaughtered and taken their homefare away,
But if the Daughter of Zeus, the Lord of the Shield of the Goat,
Had withheld not the folk, and refrained them with the mighty voice
of her shout :

"O Ithacan men, withhold you at last from the bitter war !
That speedily ye may be parted and shed the blood no more!"

So Athene spake, and upon them therewith fell the pale bleak fear,
And from their hands in their terror down dropped the battle-gear,
And unto the earth down tumbled, as the Goddess cried o'er the strife.
Then unto the town they turned them in longing for dear life.
But the toil-stout goodly Odysseus cried out with a dreadful cry
And swooped on, gathered together as the erne that aloft doth fly ;
But even therewith Cronion cast a bolt of flaming fire,
That fell before the Grey-eyed, the Maid of a mighty Sire,
And unto Odysseus the Grey-eyed Athene cried and said :

"Odysseus of many a wile, Laertes' son, Zeus-bred,
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Withhold thee now! with the strife of the balanced battle be done!
Lest Zeus be wroth against thee, the loud-voiced Cronos' son."

So Athene spake, and he hearkened, and glad at heart obeyed.
And oath and troth thereafter betwixt the twain she laid,
She, Pallas Athene, the Daughter of the Lord of the Shield of Fear,
In the likeness of Mentor's body, with a voice like his to hear.

THE END.
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