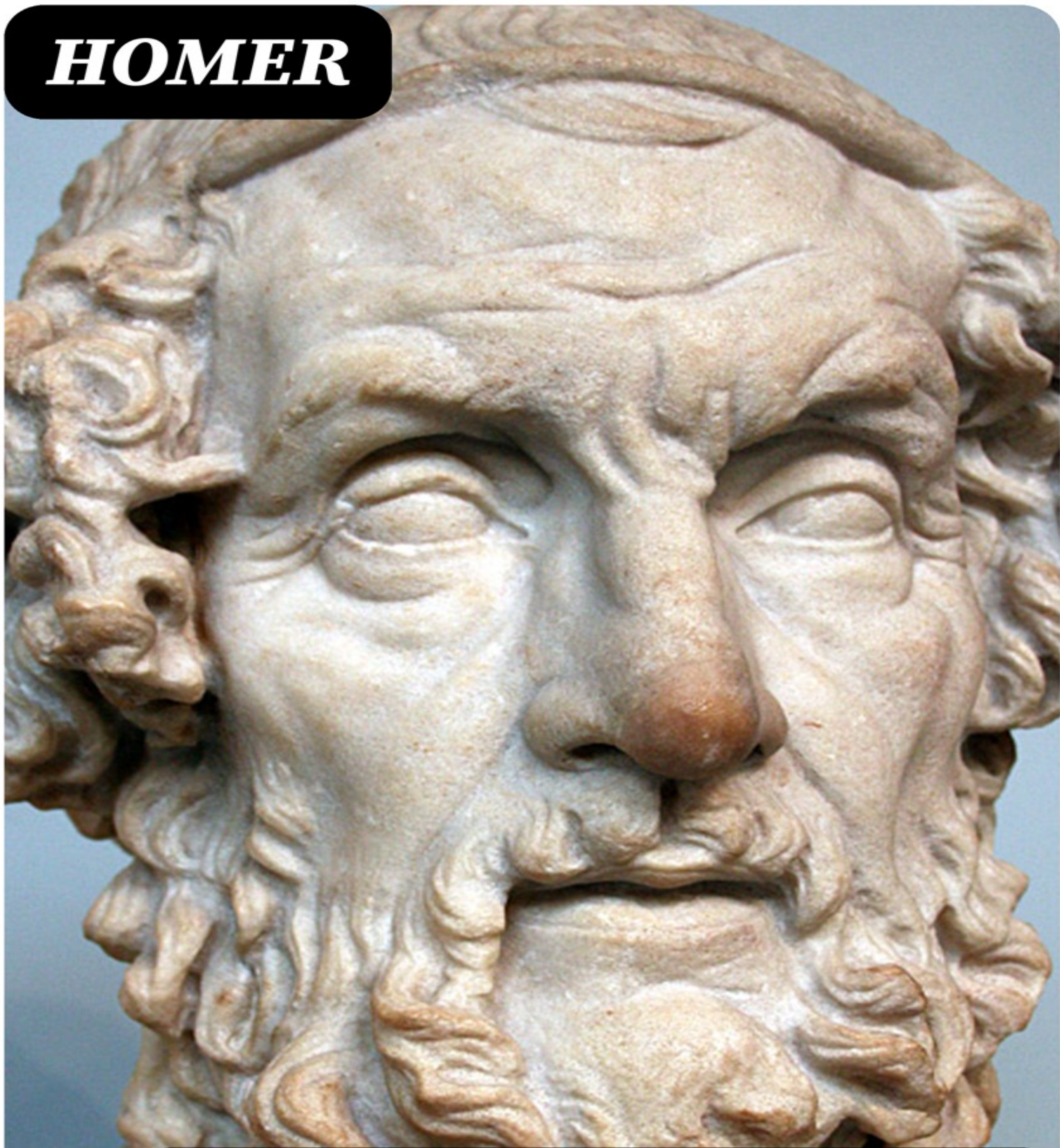
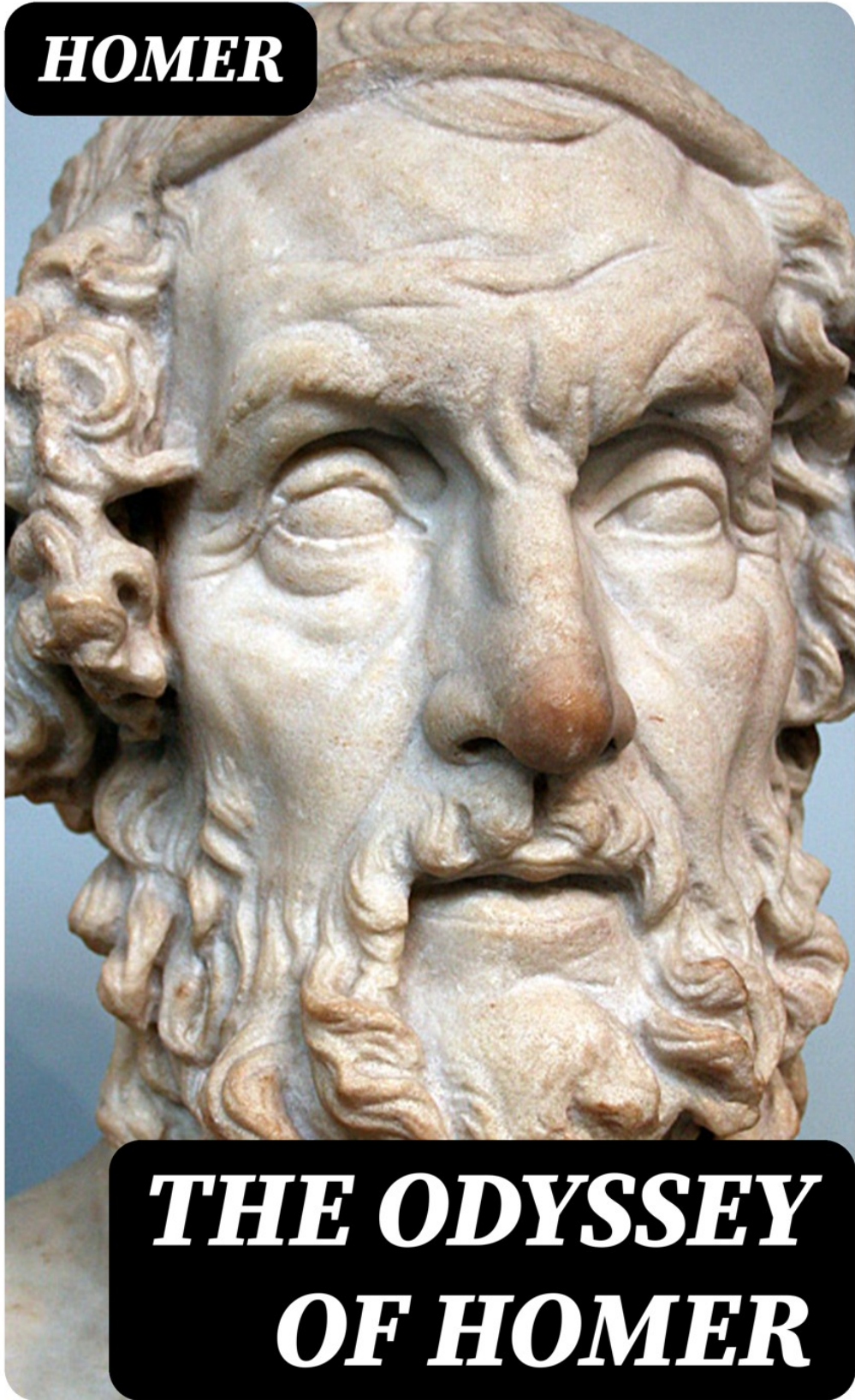


HOMER



***THE ODYSSEY
OF HOMER***

HOMER



***THE ODYSSEY
OF HOMER***

Homer

The Odyssey of Homer

EAN 8596547027614

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH
BLANK VERSE

BOOK I

ARGUMENT

BOOK II

ARGUMENT

BOOK III

ARGUMENT

BOOK IV

ARGUMENT

BOOK V

ARGUMENT

BOOK VI

ARGUMENT

BOOK VII

ARGUMENT

BOOK VIII

ARGUMENT

BOOK IX

ARGUMENT

BOOK X

ARGUMENT

BOOK XI

ARGUMENT

BOOK XII

ARGUMENT

[BOOK XIII](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XIV](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XV](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XVI](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XVII](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XVIII](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XIX](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XX](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XXI](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XXII](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XXIII](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[BOOK XXIV](#)

[ARGUMENT](#)

[EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY](#)

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

[Table of Contents](#)

BOOK I

Table of Contents

ARGUMENT

Table of Contents

In a council of the Gods, Minerva calls their attention to Ulysses, still a wanderer. They resolve to grant him a safe return to Ithaca. Minerva descends to encourage Telemachus, and in the form of Mentis directs him in what manner to proceed. Throughout this book the extravagance and profligacy of the suitors are occasionally suggested.

Muse make the man thy theme, for shrewdness
famed
And genius versatile, who far and wide
A Wand'rer, after Ilium overthrown,
Discover'd various cities, and the mind
And manners learn'd of men, in lands remote.
He num'rous woes on Ocean toss'd, endured,
Anxious to save himself, and to conduct
His followers to their home; yet all his care
Preserved them not; they perish'd self-
destroy'd
By their own fault; infatuate! who devoured 10
The oxen of the all-o'erseeing Sun,
And, punish'd for that crime, return'd no more.
Daughter divine of Jove, these things record,
As it may please thee, even in our ears.
The rest, all those who had perdition 'scaped

By war or on the Deep, dwelt now at home;
Him only, of his country and his wife
Alike desirous, in her hollow grotts
Calypso, Goddess beautiful, detained
Wooing him to her arms. But when, at length,
20

(Many a long year elapsed) the year arrived
Of his return (by the decree of heav'n)
To Ithaca, not even then had he,
Although surrounded by his people, reach'd
The period of his suff'rings and his toils.
Yet all the Gods, with pity moved, beheld
His woes, save Neptune; He alone with wrath
Unceasing and implacable pursued
Godlike Ulysses to his native shores.
But Neptune, now, the Æthiopians fought, 30
(The Æthiopians, utmost of mankind,
These Eastward situate, those toward the West)
Call'd to an hecatomb of bulls and lambs.
There sitting, pleas'd he banqueted; the Gods
In Jove's abode, meantime, assembled all,
'Midst whom the Sire of heav'n and earth
began.

For he recall'd to mind Ægisthus slain
By Agamemnon's celebrated son
Orestes, and retracing in his thought
That dread event, the Immortals thus
address'd. 40

Alas! how prone are human-kind to blame
The Pow'rs of Heav'n! From us, they say,

proceed

The ills which they endure, yet more than Fate
Herself inflicts, by their own crimes incur.

So now Ægisthus, by no force constrained
Of Destiny, Atrides' wedded wife

Took to himself, and him at his return

Slew, not unwarn'd of his own dreadful end

By us: for we commanded Hermes down

The watchful Argicide, who bade him fear 50

Alike, to slay the King, or woo the Queen.

For that Atrides' son Orestes, soon

As grown mature, and eager to assume

His sway imperial, should avenge the deed.

So Hermes spake, but his advice moved not

Ægisthus, on whose head the whole arrear

Of vengeance heap'd, at last, hath therefore
fall'n.

Whom answer'd then Pallas cærulean-eyed.

Oh Jove, Saturnian Sire, o'er all supreme!

And well he merited the death he found; 60

So perish all, who shall, like him, offend.

But with a bosom anguish-rent I view

Ulysses, hapless Chief! who from his friends

Remote, affliction hath long time endured

In yonder wood-land isle, the central boss

Of Ocean. That retreat a Goddess holds,

Daughter of sapient Atlas, who the abyss

Knows to its bottom, and the pillars high

Himself upbears which sep'rate earth from

heav'n.

His daughter, there, the sorrowing Chief
detains, 70
And ever with smooth speech insidious seeks
To wean his heart from Ithaca; meantime
Ulysses, happy might he but behold
The smoke ascending from his native land,
Death covets. Canst thou not, Olympian Jove!
At last relent? Hath not Ulysses oft
With victims slain amid Achaia's fleet
Thee gratified, while yet at Troy he fought?
How hath he then so deep incensed thee, Jove?
To whom, the cloud-assembler God replied. 80
What word hath pass'd thy lips, Daughter
belov'd?
Can I forget Ulysses? Him forget
So noble, who in wisdom all mankind
Excels, and who hath sacrific'd so oft
To us whose dwelling is the boundless heav'n?
Earth-circling Neptune—He it is whose wrath
Pursues him ceaseless for the Cyclops' sake
Polypheme, strongest of the giant race,
Whom of his eye Ulysses hath deprived.
For Him, Thoösa bore, Nymph of the sea 90
From Phorcys sprung, by Ocean's mighty pow'r
Impregnated in caverns of the Deep.
E'er since that day, the Shaker of the shores,
Although he slay him not, yet devious drives
Ulysses from his native isle afar.
Yet come—in full assembly his return
Contrive we now, both means and prosp'rous

end;

So Neptune shall his wrath remit, whose pow'r

In contest with the force of all the Gods

Exerted single, can but strive in vain. 100

To whom Minerva, Goddess azure-eyed.

Oh Jupiter! above all Kings enthroned!

If the Immortals ever-blest ordain

That wise Ulysses to his home return,

Dispatch we then Hermes the Argicide,

Our messenger, hence to Ogygia's isle,

Who shall inform Calypso, nymph divine,

Of this our fixt resolve, that to his home

Ulysses, toil-enduring Chief, repair.

Myself will hence to Ithaca, meantime, 110

His son to animate, and with new force

Inspire, that (the Achaians all convened

In council,) he may, instant, bid depart

The suitors from his home, who, day by day,

His num'rous flocks and fatted herds consume.

And I will send him thence to Sparta forth,

And into sandy Pylus, there to hear

(If hear he may) some tidings of his Sire,

And to procure himself a glorious name.

This said, her golden sandals to her feet 120

She bound, ambrosial, which o'er all the earth

And o'er the moist flood waft her fleet as air,

Then, seizing her strong spear pointed with

brass,

In length and bulk, and weight a matchless

beam,

With which the Jove-born Goddess levels ranks
Of Heroes, against whom her anger burns,
From the Olympian summit down she flew,
And on the threshold of Ulysses' hall
In Ithaca, and within his vestibule
Apparent stood; there, grasping her bright
spear, 130

Mentes¹ she seem'd, the hospitable Chief
Of Taphos' isle—she found the haughty throng
The suitors; they before the palace gate
With iv'ry cubes sported, on num'rous hides
Reclined of oxen which themselves had slain.
The heralds and the busy menials there
Minister'd to them; these their mantling cups
With water slaked; with bibulous sponges those
Made clean the tables, set the banquet on,
And portioned out to each his plenteous share.
140

Long ere the rest Telemachus himself
Mark'd her, for sad amid them all he sat,
Pourtraying in deep thought contemplative
His noble Sire, and questioning if yet
Perchance the Hero might return to chase
From all his palace that imperious herd,
To his own honour lord of his own home.
Amid them musing thus, sudden he saw
The Goddess, and sprang forth, for he abhorr'd
To see a guest's admittance long delay'd; 150
Approaching eager, her right hand he seized,
The brazen spear took from her, and in words

With welcome wing'd Minerva thus address'd.
Stranger, all hail! to share our cordial love
Thou com'st; the banquet finish'd, thou shalt
next

Inform me wherefore thou hast here arrived.
So saying, toward the spacious hall he moved,
Follow'd by Pallas, and, arriving soon
Beneath the lofty roof, placed her bright spear
Within a pillar's cavity, long time 160
The armoury where many a spear had stood,
Bright weapons of his own illustrious Sire.
Then, leading her toward a footstool'd throne
Magnificent, which first he overspread
With linen, there he seated her, apart
From that rude throng, and for himself disposed
A throne of various colours at her side,
Lest, stunn'd with clamour of the lawless band,
The new-arrived should loth perchance to eat,
And that more free he might the stranger's ear
170

With questions of his absent Sire address,
And now a maiden charg'd with golden ew'r,
And with an argent laver, pouring first
Pure water on their hands, supplied them, next,
With a resplendent table, which the chaste
Directress of the stores furnish'd with bread
And dainties, remnants of the last regale.
Then, in his turn, the sewer² with sav'ry meats,
Dish after dish, served them, of various kinds,
And golden cups beside the chargers placed,

180

Which the attendant herald fill'd with wine.
Ere long, in rush'd the suitors, and the thrones
And couches occupied, on all whose hands
The heralds pour'd pure water; then the maids
Attended them with bread in baskets heap'd,
And eager they assail'd the ready feast.
At length, when neither thirst nor hunger more
They felt unsatisfied, to new delights
Their thoughts they turn'd, to song and
sprightly dance,
Enlivening sequel of the banquet's joys. 190
An herald, then, to Phemius' hand consign'd
His beauteous lyre; he through constraint
regaled
The suitors with his song, and while the chords
He struck in prelude to his pleasant strains,
Telemachus his head inclining nigh
To Pallas' ear, lest others should his words
Witness, the blue-eyed Goddess thus bespake.
My inmate and my friend! far from my lips
Be ev'ry word that might displease thine ear!
The song—the harp,—what can they less than
charm 200
These wantons? who the bread unpurchased
eat
Of one whose bones on yonder continent
Lie mould'ring, drench'd by all the show'rs of
heaven,
Or roll at random in the billowy deep.

Ah! could they see him once to his own isle
Restored, both gold and raiment they would
wish

Far less, and nimbleness of foot instead.

But He, alas! hath by a wretched fate,
Past question perish'd, and what news soe'er

We hear of his return, kindles no hope 210

In us, convinced that he returns no more.

But answer undissembling; tell me true;

Who art thou? whence? where stands thy city?
where

Thy father's mansion? In what kind of ship

Cam'st thou? Why steer'd the mariners their
course

To Ithaca, and of what land are they?

For that on foot thou found'st us not, is sure.

This also tell me, hast thou now arrived

New to our isle, or wast thou heretofore

My father's guest? Since many to our house
220

Resorted in those happier days, for he

Drew pow'rful to himself the hearts of all.

Then Pallas thus, Goddess cærulean-eyed.

I will with all simplicity of truth

Thy questions satisfy. Behold in me

Mentes, the offspring of a Chief renown'd

In war, Anchialus; and I rule, myself,

An island race, the Taphians oar-expert.

With ship and mariners I now arrive,

Seeking a people of another tongue 230

Athwart the gloomy flood, in quest of brass
For which I barter steel, ploughing the waves
To Temesa. My ship beneath the woods
Of Neïus, at yonder field that skirts
Your city, in the haven Rhethrus rides.
We are hereditary guests; our Sires
Were friends long since; as, when thou seest
him next,
The Hero old Laertes will avouch,
Of whom, I learn, that he frequents no more
The city now, but in sequester'd scenes 240
Dwells sorrowful, and by an antient dame
With food and drink supplied oft as he feels
Refreshment needful to him, while he creeps
Between the rows of his luxuriant vines.
But I have come drawn hither by report,
Which spake thy Sire arrived, though still it
seems
The adverse Gods his homeward course retard.
For not yet breathless lies the noble Chief,
But in some island of the boundless flood
Resides a prisoner, by barbarous force 250
Of some rude race detained reluctant there.
And I will now foreshow thee what the Gods
Teach me, and what, though neither augur
skill'd
Nor prophet, I yet trust shall come to pass.
He shall not, henceforth, live an exile long
From his own shores, no, not although in bands
Of iron held, but will ere long contrive

His own return; for in expedients, framed
With wond'rous ingenuity, he abounds.
But tell me true; art thou, in stature such, 260
Son of himself Ulysses? for thy face
And eyes bright-sparkling, strongly indicate
Ulysses in thee. Frequent have we both
Conversed together thus, thy Sire and I,
Ere yet he went to Troy, the mark to which
So many Princes of Achaia steer'd.
Him since I saw not, nor Ulysses me.
To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.
Stranger! I tell thee true; my mother's voice
Affirms me his, but since no mortal knows 270
His derivation, I affirm it not.
Would I had been son of some happier Sire,
Ordain'd in calm possession of his own
To reach the verge of life. But now, report
Proclaims me his, whom I of all mankind
Unhappiest deem.—Thy question is resolved.
Then answer thus Pallas blue-eyed return'd.
From no ignoble race, in future days,
The Gods shall prove thee sprung, whom so
endow'd
With ev'ry grace Penelope hath borne. 280
But tell me true. What festival is this?
This throng—whence are they? wherefore hast
thou need
Of such a multitude? Behold I here
A banquet, or a nuptial? for these
Meet not by contribution³ to regale,

With such brutality and din they hold
Their riotous banquet! a wise man and good
Arriving, now, among them, at the sight
Of such enormities would much be wroth.
To whom replied Telemachus discrete. 290
Since, stranger! thou hast ask'd, learn also this.
While yet Ulysses, with his people dwelt,
His presence warranted the hope that here
Virtue should dwell and opulence; but heav'n
Hath cast for us, at length, a diff'rent lot,
And he is lost, as never man before.
For I should less lament even his death,
Had he among his friends at Ilium fall'n,
Or in the arms of his companions died,
Troy's siege accomplish'd. Then his tomb the
Greeks 300
Of ev'ry tribe had built, and for his son,
He had immortal glory atchieved; but now,
By harpies torn inglorious, beyond reach
Of eye or ear he lies; and hath to me
Grief only, and unceasing sighs bequeath'd.
Nor mourn I for his sake alone; the Gods
Have plann'd for me still many a woe beside;
For all the rulers of the neighbour isles,
Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
Zacynthus, others also, rulers here 310
In craggy Ithaca, my mother seek
In marriage, and my household stores
consume.
But neither she those nuptial rites abhorr'd,

Refuses absolute, nor yet consents
To end them; they my patrimony waste
Meantime, and will not long spare even me.
To whom, with deep commiseration pang'd,
Pallas replied. Alas! great need hast thou
Of thy long absent father to avenge
These num'rous wrongs; for could he now
appear 320

There, at yon portal, arm'd with helmet, shield,
And grasping his two spears, such as when first
I saw him drinking joyous at our board,
From Ilus son of Mermeris, who dwelt
In distant Ephyre, just then return'd,
(For thither also had Ulysses gone
In his swift bark, seeking some pois'nous drug
Wherewith to taint his brazen arrows keen,
Which drug through fear of the eternal Gods
Ilus refused him, and my father free 330
Gave to him, for he loved him past belief)
Could now, Ulysses, clad in arms as then,
Mix with these suitors, short his date of life
To each, and bitter should his nuptials prove.
But these events, whether he shall return
To take just vengeance under his own roof,
Or whether not, lie all in the Gods lap.
Meantime I counsel thee, thyself to think
By what means likeliest thou shalt expel
These from thy doors. Now mark me: close
attend. 340

To-morrow, summoning the Grecian Chiefs

To council, speak to them, and call the Gods
To witness that solemnity. Bid go
The suitors hence, each to his own abode.
Thy mother—if her purpose be resolved
On marriage, let her to the house return
Of her own potent father, who, himself,
Shall furnish forth her matrimonial rites,
And ample dow'r, such as it well becomes
A darling daughter to receive, bestow. 350
But hear me now; thyself I thus advise.
The prime of all thy ships preparing, mann'd
With twenty rowers, voyage hence to seek
Intelligence of thy long-absent Sire.
Some mortal may inform thee, or a word,⁴
Perchance, by Jove directed (safest source
Of notice to mankind) may reach thine ear.
First voyaging to Pylus, there enquire
Of noble Nestor; thence to Sparta tend,
To question Menelaus amber-hair'd, 360
Latest arrived of all the host of Greece.
There should'st thou learn that still thy father
lives,
And hope of his return, although
Distress'd, thou wilt be patient yet a year.
But should'st thou there hear tidings that he
breathes
No longer, to thy native isle return'd,
First heap his tomb; then with such pomp
perform
His funeral rites as his great name demands,

And make thy mother's spousals, next, thy
care.

These duties satisfied, delib'rate last 370
Whether thou shalt these troublers of thy
house

By stratagem, or by assault, destroy.

For thou art now no child, nor longer may'st
Sport like one. Hast thou not the proud report
Heard, how Orestes hath renown acquired
With all mankind, his father's murtherer
Ægisthus slaying, the deceiver base

Who slaughter'd Agamemnon? Oh my friend!
(For with delight thy vig'rous growth I view,
And just proportion) be thou also bold, 380
And merit praise from ages yet to come.

But I will to my vessel now repair,
And to my mariners, whom, absent long,
I may perchance have troubled. Weigh thou
well

My counsel; let not my advice be lost.

To whom Telemachus discrete replied.

Stranger! thy words bespeak thee much my
friend,

Who, as a father teaches his own son,
Hast taught me, and I never will forget.

But, though in haste thy voyage to pursue, 390
Yet stay, that in the bath refreshing first
Thy limbs now weary, thou may'st sprightlier
seek

Thy gallant bark, charged with some noble gift

Of finish'd workmanship, which thou shalt keep
As my memorial ever; such a boon
As men confer on guests whom much they
love.

Then Pallas thus, Goddess cærulean-eyed.
Retard me not, for go I must; the gift
Which liberal thou desirest to bestow,
Give me at my return, that I may bear 400
The treasure home; and, in exchange, thyself
Expect some gift equivalent from me.
She spake, and as with eagle-wings upborne,
Vanish'd incontinent, but him inspired
With daring fortitude, and on his heart
Dearer remembrance of his Sire impress'd
Than ever. Conscious of the wond'rous change,
Amazed he stood, and, in his secret thought
Revolving all, believed his guest a God.
The youthful Hero to the suitors then 410
Repair'd; they silent, listen'd to the song
Of the illustrious Bard: he the return
Deplorable of the Achaian host
From Ilium by command of Pallas, sang.
Penelope, Icarius' daughter, mark'd
Meantime the song celestial, where she sat
In the superior palace; down she came,
By all the num'rous steps of her abode;
Not sole, for two fair handmaids follow'd her.
She then, divinest of her sex, arrived 420
In presence of that lawless throng, beneath
The portal of her stately mansion stood,

Between her maidens, with her lucid veil
Her lovely features mantling. There, profuse
She wept, and thus the sacred bard bespake.
Phemius! for many a sorrow-soothing strain
Thou know'st beside, such as exploits record
Of Gods and men, the poet's frequent theme;
Give them of those a song, and let themselves
Their wine drink noiseless; but this mournful
strain 430

Break off, unfriendly to my bosom's peace,
And which of all hearts nearest touches mine,
With such regret my dearest Lord I mourn,
Rememb'ring still an husband praised from side
To side, and in the very heart of Greece.
Then answer thus Telemachus return'd.
My mother! wherefore should it give thee pain
If the delightful bard that theme pursue
To which he feels his mind impell'd? the bard
Blame not, but rather Jove, who, as he wills,
440

Materials for poetic art supplies.
No fault is his, if the disastrous fate
He sing of the Achaians, for the song
Wins ever from the hearers most applause
That has been least in use. Of all who fought
At Troy, Ulysses hath not lost, alone,
His day of glad return; but many a Chief
Hath perish'd also. Seek thou then again
Thy own apartment, spindle ply and loom,
And task thy maidens; management belongs

450

To men of joys convivial, and of men

Especially to me, chief ruler here.

She heard astonish'd; and the prudent speech

Reposing of her son deep in her heart,

Again with her attendant maidens sought

Her upper chamber. There arrived, she wept

Her lost Ulysses, till Minerva bathed

Her weary lids in dewy sleep profound.

Then echoed through the palace dark-

bedimm'd

With evening shades the suitors boist'rous roar,

460

For each the royal bed burn'd to partake,

Whom thus Telemachus discrete address'd.

All ye my mother's suitors, though addict

To contumacious wrangling fierce, suspend

Your clamour, for a course to me it seems

More decent far, when such a bard as this,

Godlike, for sweetness, sings, to hear his song.

To-morrow meet we in full council all,

That I may plainly warn you to depart

From this our mansion. Seek ye where ye may

470

Your feasts; consume your own; alternate feed

Each at the other's cost; but if it seem

Wisest in your account and best, to eat

Voracious thus the patrimonial goods

Of one man, rend'ring no account of all,⁵

Bite to the roots; but know that I will cry

Ceaseless to the eternal Gods, in hope
That Jove, for retribution of the wrong,
Shall doom you, where ye have intruded, there
To bleed, and of your blood ask no account.⁵

480

He ended, and each gnaw'd his lip, aghast
At his undaunted hardiness of speech.

Then thus Antinoüs spake, Eupithes' son.
Telemachus! the Gods, methinks, themselves

Teach thee sublimity, and to pronounce
Thy matter fearless. Ah forbid it, Jove!

That one so eloquent should with the weight
Of kingly cares in Ithaca be charged,

A realm, by claim hereditary, thine.

Then prudent thus Telemachus replied. 490

Although my speech Antinoüs may, perchance,

Provoke thee, know that I am not averse

From kingly cares, if Jove appoint me such.

Seems it to thee a burthen to be fear'd

By men above all others? trust me, no,

There is no ill in royalty; the man

So station'd, waits not long ere he obtain

Riches and honour. But I grant that Kings

Of the Achaians may no few be found

In sea-girt Ithaca both young and old, 500

Of whom since great Ulysses is no more,

Reign whoso may; but King, myself, I am

In my own house, and over all my own

Domestics, by Ulysses gained for me.

To whom Eurymachus replied, the son

Of Polybus. What Grecian Chief shall reign
In sea-girt Ithaca, must be referr'd
To the Gods' will, Telemachus! meantime
Thou hast unquestionable right to keep
Thy own, and to command in thy own house.
510

May never that man on her shores arrive,
While an inhabitant shall yet be left
In Ithaca, who shall by violence wrest
Thine from thee. But permit me, noble Sir!
To ask thee of thy guest. Whence came the
man?

What country claims him? Where are to be
found

His kindred and his patrimonial fields?
Brings he glad tidings of thy Sire's approach
Homeward? or came he to receive a debt
Due to himself? How swift he disappear'd! 520

Nor opportunity to know him gave
To those who wish'd it; for his face and air
Him speak not of Plebeian birth obscure.

Whom answered thus Telemachus discrete.
Eurymachus! my father comes no more.

I can no longer now tidings believe,
If such arrive; nor he'd I more the song
Of sooth-sayers whom my mother may consult.
But this my guest hath known in other days
My father, and he came from Taphos, son 530
Of brave Anchialus, Mentis by name,
And Chief of the sea-practis'd Taphian race.

So spake Telemachus, but in his heart
Knew well his guest a Goddess from the skies.
Then they to dance and heart-enlivening song
Turn'd joyous, waiting the approach of eve,
And dusky evening found them joyous still.
Then each, to his own house retiring, sought
Needful repose. Meantime Telemachus
To his own lofty chamber, built in view 540
Of the wide hall, retired; but with a heart
In various musings occupied intense.
Sage Euryclea, bearing in each hand
A torch, preceded him; her sire was Ops,
Pisenor's son, and, in her early prime,
At his own cost Laertes made her his,
Paying with twenty beeves her purchase-price,
Nor in less honour than his spotless wife
He held her ever, but his consort's wrath
Fearing, at no time call'd her to his bed. 550
She bore the torches, and with truer heart
Loved him than any of the female train,
For she had nurs'd him in his infant years.
He open'd his broad chamber-valves, and sat
On his couch-side: then putting off his vest
Of softest texture, placed it in the hands
Of the attendant dame discrete, who first
Folding it with exactest care, beside
His bed suspended it, and, going forth,
Drew by its silver ring the portal close, 560
And fasten'd it with bolt and brace secure.
There lay Telemachus, on finest wool

Reposed, contemplating all night his course
Prescribed by Pallas to the Pylian shore.

1 We are told that Homer was under obligations to Mentès, who had frequently given him a passage in his ship to different countries which he wished to see, for which reason he has here immortalised him.

2 Milton uses the word—Sewers and seneschals.

3 Ἔρανος, a convivial meeting, at which every man paid his proportion, at least contributed something; but it seems to have been a meeting at which strict sobriety was observed, else Pallas would not have inferred from the noise and riot of this, that it was not such a one.

4 Οσσα—a word spoken, with respect to the speaker, casually; but with reference to the inquirer supposed to be sent for his information by the especial appointment and providential favour of the Gods.

5 There is in the Original an evident stress laid on the word Νήπιονοι, which is used in both places. It was a sort of Lex Talionis which Telemachus hoped might be put in force against them; and that Jove would demand no satisfaction for the lives of those who made him none for the waste of his property.

BOOK II

Table of Contents

ARGUMENT

Table of Contents

Telemachus having convened an assembly of the Grecians, publicly calls on the Suitors to relinquish the house of Ulysses. During the continuance of the Council he has much to suffer from the petulance of the Suitors, from whom, having informed them of his design to undertake a voyage in hope to obtain news of Ulysses, he asks a ship, with all things necessary for the purpose. He is refused, but is afterwards furnished with what he wants by Minerva, in the form of Mentor. He embarks in the evening without the privity of his mother, and the Goddess sails with him.

Aurora, rosy daughter of the dawn,
Now ting'd the East, when habited again,
Uprose Ulysses' offspring from his bed.
Athwart his back his faulchion keen he flung,
His sandals bound to his unsullied feet,
And, godlike, issued from his chamber-door.
At once the clear-voic'd heralds he enjoin'd
To call the Greeks to council; they aloud
Gave forth the summons, and the throng
began.
When all were gather'd, and the assembly full,
10
Himself, his hand arm'd with a brazen spear,