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**The Odyssey Of Homer**

Translated from the Greek

**Homerus**

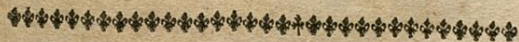
**London, 1726**

The Twenty-Second Book Of The Odyssey.

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THE  
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
OF THE  
ODYSSEY.



The





## The ARGUMENT.

### *The Death of the Suitors.*

Ulysses begins the slaughter of the Suitors by the death of Antinous. He declares himself, and lets fly his arrows at the rest. Telemachus assists, and brings arms for his father, himself, Eumæus and Philætius. Melanthius does the same for the Wooers. Minerva encourages Ulysses in the shape of Mentor. The Suitors are all slain, only Medon and Phemius are spared. Melanthius and the unfaithful servants are executed. The rest acknowledge their Master with all demonstrations of joy.

THE

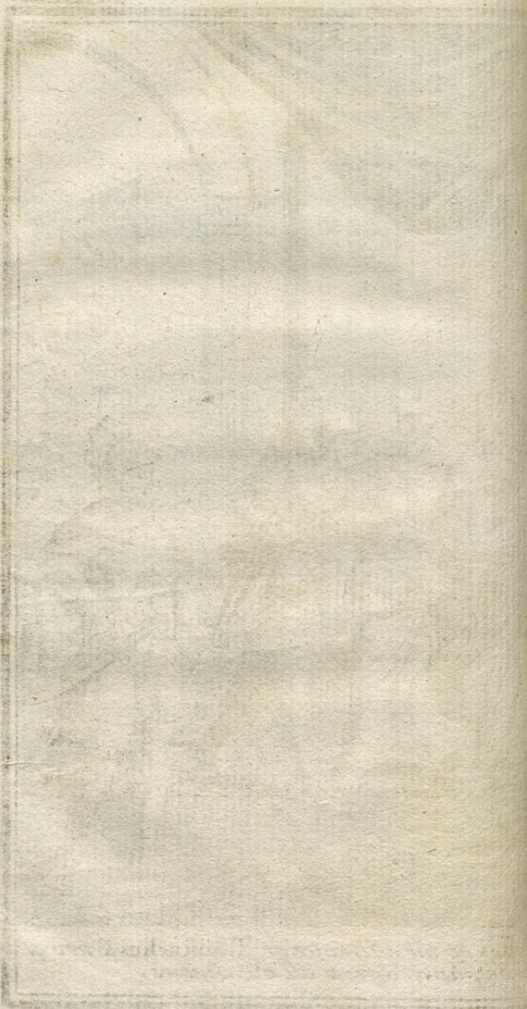




*Ulysses by the assistance of Telemachus & two of  
their Shepherds defeats all the Suitors.*

*P. Fowdrinier sculp.*

HYX N



THE  
 TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
 OF THE  
 ODYSSEY.

**T**HEN fierce the Heroe o'er the threſhold ſtrode;  
 Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a God.  
 Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,  
 And quiver'd deaths, a formidable ſtore;

Before

NOTES.

We are now come to the great event or Cataſtrophe of the *Odyssey*, which is the Deſtruction of the Suitors. The manner by which the Poet conducts it, has been prais'd and cenſur'd, by ſome as noble and heroic, by others as romantic and incredible: It is therefore highly neceſſary to vindicate *Homer* in the chief action of the whole Poem, that he may not be found culpable, in the place where he ought to be the moſt exact and draw his Heroe to the beſt advantage. The Objection made againſt this deciſive action is, that the Poet makes *Ulyſſes* perform impoſſibilities; no one perſon, with ſuch ſmall aſſiſtance, being able to deſtroy above an



5 Before his feet the rattling show'r he threw,  
And thus terrific, to the Sutor crew,

On

an hundred Enemies. It is no answer to say that *Pallas* descended to aid *Ulysses*, for it has been already prov'd, that all incidents which require a divine probability, should be so disengag'd from the action, that they may be subtracted from it without destroying it; whereas this action is essential to it. No less a Critic than *Longinus*, Chap. 7. condemns *Homer*; for enumerating the faults of the *Odyssey*, he thus proceeds: "To these may be added the absurdities he commits, in the account of the destruction of *Penelope's Sutors*." And *Scaliger*, Lib. 5. of his *Poetics* is of the same opinion: *Ulysses interfecit arcu procas, inter quos & ipsam tantillum esset intervalli: Quare omnes simul in eum impetum miferunt?* The strength of this Objection lies in the omission of the Sutors in not rushing at once upon *Ulysses* in an united Body: Now this was impossible, he stood upon the threshold in a narrow pass, and by this advantage he was able to make it good against a great inequality of numbers. It is not difficult to bring instances of a like nature from undoubted history: *Coles* alone defended the bridge over the *Tyber* against the whole army of *Pe-sena*, and stood unmoveable till the *Romans* broke it down behind him. And *Leonidas* the *Spartan* General defended the Pass of *Thermopyla* with a small number, against three millions of *Pe-sans* led by *Xerxes*; and if he had not been betray'd, he would have probably defeated his whole army. In both these instances there was a greater inequality of numbers, than between *Ulysses* and the Sutors. The Reader will be reconcil'd to the probability of these relations, if he considers that the whole business of war was antiently decided by mere strength of body: Fire-arms now set all men upon a nearer Level; but in these early ages, the strongest person was the greatest Heroe; a man of superior and uncommon strength drove his enemies before him like an army of boys, and with as much facility. From this observation it is evident that *Homer* scarce transgresses the bounds of historic truth, when he describes *Achilles* chasing whole Squadrons of *Trojans*. He wrote according to the manners of his times, and drew after the life, tho' sometimes he improv'd a feature to give grace to the picture of his Heroe: Thus in the Scripture, from the mere advantage of strength, we see a single *Goliath* defy the whole armies of *Israel*.

Rep

One vent'rous game this hand has won to-day,  
Another, Princes! yet remains to play;

Another

*Rapin* commends the conduct of *Homer* in bringing about the destruction of the Suitors. The unravelling the whole *Odyssey* (says that Author) by their Deaths, is very great, and very becoming an Heroe; that whole story is drefs'd up in colours so decent, and at the same time so noble, that antiquity can hardly match any part of the narration; here *Homer* has display'd himself to the best advantage. I with *Rapin* had given his reasons, and not run into a general commendation: But we shall be sufficiently convinc'd of the judgment of *Homer* in describing the Suitors falling chiefly by *Ulysses*, if we consider the nature of Epic Poetry. The chief action is to be perform'd by the Heroe of the Poem: thus *Hector* falls by *Achilles*, *Turnus* by *Aeneas*: The death of the Suitors is the chief action of the *Odyssey*, and therefore it is necessarily to be executed by *Ulysses*; for if any other person had perform'd it, that person would have done an action more noble than the Heroe of the Poem, and eclipsed his glory. It is for the same reason that the Poet refuses all easie methods to re-establish *Ulysses*: he throws him into difficulties which he is to surmount by his own prowess and magnanimity. *Homer* might easily have rais'd an army, and plac'd *Ulysses* at the head of it; but the more difficult way being most conducive to his honour, he rejects all easie methods, shews him struggling with infinite hazards, out of which he extricates himself personally by his wisdom and courage. By these means he compleats the character of his Heroe, leaves a noble image of his worth upon the minds of the Spectators, and makes him go off the stage with the utmost applause.

v. 1. *Then fierce the Heroe o'er the threshold strode, &c.*] *Plato* was particularly struck with the beauty of these lines: In his Dialogue intituled *Ion*, p. 145. *Socrates* thus speaks: "When you repeat the Verses of *Homer* emphatically, and ravish the whole Audience, whether it be the passage where he sings how *Ulysses* leaps upon the threshold, discovers himself to the Suitors, and pours his arrows before his feet; or where *Achilles* rushes upon *Hector*; or where he paints the Lamentations of *Hecuba*, *Priam*, or *Andromache*; tell me, are you any longer master of your own passions? are you not transported? and ravish'd with divine fury, think your self present at the very actions, either in *Ithaca* or *Troy*?" It must indeed be allow'd, that

*Homer*



Another mark our arrow must attain.

☉ Phœbus assist! nor be the labour vain,

Swift

Homer here paints to the Life; we see *Ulysses*, his motion, his attitude, and the noble fury with which he begins the onset. The Poet interests us in the cause of his Heroe, and we fight on his side against his enemies.

*Eustathius* observes that instead of *πάχος* the *Æolians* wrote *φάκος*; an observation of too little importance to have been regarded, if he had not given us a fragment of *Sappho* as a proof of it.

Τὴν δ' ἀγροῦστος δίδυμι νόον  
 Ὅσον ἰστιαμένῃ τὰ φάκου ἔχουσι  
 Ἐπὶ τῶν σφυρῶν; —————

which he thus explains,

*What rustic beauty dress'd in awkward charms  
 Detains my lover from his Sappho's arms?*

The circumstance of throwing the arrows before his feet is not inserted without a reason; *Ulysses* could reach them from thence with more facility and expedition, than if they had hung at his shoulder in the Quiver.

v. 10. Phœbus assist!] *Ulysses* addresses a pray'r to *Apollo* to give success to his present enterprize; he directs it to him, because he is the God of Archery; and he concludes in four words, in compliance with the exigence of the time, which will not permit him to speak at large. This prayer to *Apollo* confirms my observation, that *Penelope* propos'd the tryal of the Bow in honour of that Deity, and we find that it was customary from a remarkable passage in the *Iliad*, Lib. 4.

*But first to speed thy shaft, address thy vow  
 To Lycian Phœbus with the silver bow;  
 And swear the firslings of the flock to pay  
 On Zelia's altars, to the God of day.*

Swift as the word the parting arrow sings,  
 And bears thy fate, *Antinous*, on its wings:  
 Wretch that he was, of unprophetic soul!  
 High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl;  
 15 Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;  
 Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:  
 For Fate who fear'd amidst a feastful band?  
 And Fate to numbers by a single hand.  
 Full thro' his throat *Ulysses'* weapon past,  
 20 And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his last.  
 The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,  
 A stream of gore burst spouting from his nose;

Grim

It is from the urgency of the time that the speech of *Ulysses*, as well as the prayer, is concise: It would have been very injudicious, when he was ready to assault his enemies unexpectedly, to have prefac'd the onset with a long oration; this would have given them an alarm, and time to make an opposition.

v. 18. *And Fate to numbers by a single hand.*] This particular is very artful; the Poet while he writes, seems to be surpriz'd at the difficulty of the enterprize he is about to relate. He is in doubt of the great event, and stands still in admiration of it. This has a double effect; it sets the courage of *Ulysses* in a strong point of light, who executes what might be almost thought an impossibility; and at the same time it excellently contributes to make the story credible; for *Homer* appears to be held in suspense by the greatness of the action; an intimation that nothing but the real truth and deference to veracity could extort from him a belief of it: thus by seeming to make the relation improbable, the Poet establishes the probability of it. *Enstathius*.

v. 22. *A stream of gore burst spouting* ————— ] The word in the original is *αὐδὸς*, which commonly signifies a pipe or musical instrument: The Antients (observes *Enstathius*) used it to denote

Grim in convulsive agonies he sprawls:  
Before him spurn'd, the loaded table falls,

25 And spreads the pavement with a mingled flood  
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood,  
Amaz'd, confounded, as they saw him fall,  
Uprose the throngs tumultuous round the hall;  
O'er all the dome they cast a haggard eye,

30 Each look'd for arms in vain; no arms were nigh:  
Aim'ft thou at Princes? (all amaz'd they said)  
Thy last of games unhappy hast thou play'd;  
Thy erring shaft has made our bravest bleed,  
And death, unlucky guest, attends thy deed.

35 Vulturs shall tear thee——Thus incens'd they spoke,  
While each to Chance ascrib'd the wond'rous stroke,

Blind

note a fountain; here therefore it implies a flux or fountain of blood, *κρηδὸς ἰκανήσιμα ἀμαυρὸς*, the word therefore very happily paints the blood spouting from the Nostrils, as from a fountain; and in this sense, it gives us a full image of the nature of the wound; the blood sprung as from a pipe, through the mouth of the wound, or from the veins, through the nostrils.

v. 35.

——thus incens'd they spoke,

While each to Chance ascrib'd the wond'rous stroke.]

This passage was look'd upon as spurious by the Antients; for they thought it impossible that all the Suitors should speak the same sentiment, as by compact, like a *Chorus* in a Tragedy; they appeal'd to the custom of *Homer* himself, who continually wrote

ἄλλοι τὴν εὐχόμενον.

Eustathius



- Blind as they were; for death ev'n now invades  
 His destin'd prey, and wraps them all in shades;  
 Then grimly frowning with a dreadful look,  
 40 That wither'd all their hearts, *Ulysses* spoke.  
 Dogs, ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more  
*Ulysses* vengeful from the *Trojan* shore;  
 While your lust and spoil a guardless prey,  
 Our house, our wealth, our helpless handmaids lay:  
 45 Not so content, with bolder frenzy fir'd,  
 Ev'n to our bed presumptuous you aspir'd:  
 Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,  
 Or shame of men, or dread of Gods above;  
 Heedless alike of infamy or praise,  
 50 Or Fame's eternal voice in future days:

*Enstathius* answers, that the Poet speaks thus confusedly, to represent the confusion of the Suitors at the death of *Antinous*. *Dacier* defends him by saying, that all the Suitors imagin'd that *Antinous* was slain by accident, and therefore the whole assembly having the same sentiment, the Poet might ascribe to every member of it the same expression. Either of these solutions explains the difficulty.

v. 42. *Ulysses vengeful from the Trojan shore.*] The mention of the return of *Ulysses* from *Troy* is not inserted casually: He speaks thus to intimidate his enemies, by recalling to their minds all the brave actions that he perform'd before it. Were not this his intention, he would have varied his expression, for in reality he has been absent from *Troy* near ten years, and returns from the *Phaasian*, not the *Trojan* shores. *Enstathius*.



The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,  
Impending Fate is yours, and instant doom.

Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the Suitors stood,  
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood;  
55 Trembling they sought their guilty heads to hide,  
Alone the bold *Eurymachus* reply'd,

If, as thy words import, (he thus began)  
*Ulysses* lives, and thou the mighty man,  
Great are thy wrongs, and much hast thou sustain'd  
60 In thy spoil'd Palace, and exhausted land;  
The cause and author of those guilty deeds,  
Lo! at thy feet unjust *Antinous* bleeds.

Not love, but wild ambition was his guide,  
To slay thy son, thy kingdoms to divide,  
65 These were his aims, but juster *Jove* deny'd.

v. 64. *To slay thy son, thy kingdoms to divide.*] This expression is judiciously inserted, and with good reason put into the mouth of one of the Suitors, namely *Eurymachus*. The Poet is now punishing them for their crimes; it is therefore very necessary that the Reader should be satisfy'd that they deserve punishment; for if it be not an act of justice, it is murder. The Poet therefore brings them all confessing themselves guilty by the mouth of *Eurymachus*; their crime is the intended murder of *Telemachus* and the usurpation of the throne of *Ulysses*. If this had not been plain in a clear light, there might have been room for a suspicion that *Ulysses* inflicted a punishment too great for the guilt of the Suitors. For was it a crime that deserv'd death, to aim at the marriage of *Penelope*? this is not to be suppos'd; for they took her to be a widow, and might therefore without a crime ask her in marriage.

Since cold in death th' offender lies; oh spare

Thy suppliant people, and receive their pray'r!

Brafs, gold, and treasures shall the spoil defray,

Two hundred oxen ev'ry Prince shall pay:

70 The waste of years refunded in a day.

'Till then thy wrath is just——*Ulysses* burn'd

With high disdain, and sternly thus return'd.

All, all the treasures that enrich'd our throne

Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,

75 If offer'd, vainly should for mercy call;

'Tis you that offer, and I scorn them all;

Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,

'Till pale as yonder wretch each Suitor lies.

Hence with those coward terms; Or fight or fly,

80 This choice is left ye, to resist or die;

Was death due for the waste and profusion of the riches of *Ulysses*? This might have been redress'd, by a full repayment, and a just equivalent. *Homer* therefore, to shew that there is a cause for the severity of the punishment, sets their crimes in open view, which are an intentional murder, and an actual treason. The place likewise where he inserts this circumstance is well chosen, *viz.* in the place where the punishment is related; and by this method we acknowledge the equity of it. 'Tis true, *Eurymachus* throws the guilt upon *Antinous* as the chief offender; but all the Suitors have been his associates, and approv'd of all his violent and bloody designs thro' the *Odyssey*, and therefore are justly involv'd in the same punishment; so that *Ulysses* punishes rebellious subjects by the authority of a King. *Homer* likewise observes justice in the death of *Antinous*; he is the first in guilt, and the first that falls by his Hero's hands.

And die I trust ye shall.——He sternly spoke:  
With guilty fears the pale assembly shook.

Alone *Eurymachus* exhorts the train:

Yon Archer, comrades, will not shoot in vain;

85 But from the threshold shall his darts be sped,  
(Who-e'er he be) 'till ev'ry Prince lie dead.  
Be mindful of your selves, draw forth your swords,  
And to your shafts obtend these ample boards,  
(So need compells.) Then all united strive

90 The bold invader from his post to drive;  
The City rouz'd shall to our rescue haste,  
And this mad Archer soon have shot his last.

Swift as he spoke, he drew his traitor sword,  
And like a lion rush'd against his Lord:

v. 88. *And to his shafts obtend these ample boards.*] *Eurymachus* exhorts the Suitors to make use of the tables to oppose *Ulysses* in the manner of shields; from whence, observes *Eustathius*, it may be gather'd that every Suitor had a peculiar table. This may be confirm'd from this book; for when *Antinous* falls he overturns a Table; which, if there had been but one, would have been too large to be thus overthrown: besides he speaks in the plural number, *τραπέζας*.

v. 91. *The City rouz'd shall to our rescue haste.*] It is impossible but that the Suitors must have many friends amongst the *Ithacans*. Interest or ill-humour engages men in factions; but this is not the full import of the sense of *Homer*: The *Ithacans* were ignorant that *Ulysses* was return'd, and no wonder therefore if they engag'd in defence of the Princes of their land, against a stranger and a beggar; for such in appearance was *Ulysses*.

- 95 The wary Chief the rushing foe repress,  
 Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breast:  
 His failing hand deserts the lifted sword,  
 And prone he falls extended o'er the board!  
 Before him wide, in mixt effusion roll
- 100 Th'untasted viands, and the jovial bowl.  
 Full thro' his liver past the mortal wound,  
 With dying rage his forehead beats the ground,  
 He spurn'd the seat with fury as he fell,  
 And the fierce soul to darkness div'd, and hell.
- 105 Next bold *Amphinomus* his arm extends  
 To force the pass: the god-like man defends,  
 Thy spear, *Telemachus*! prevents th' attack,  
 The brazen weapon driving thro' his back,

Thence

v. 108. *The brazen weapon driving thro' his back.*] *Eustathius*, and *Spondanus* from him, interpret this passage very much to the disadvantage of the courage of *Telemachus*: They observe that he is yet new to the horrors of war, and therefore wanting the heart to meet his enemy in the front, gives him this wound between the shoulders: That as soon as he has given the blow, out of fear he leaves the spear in the wound; an action as disreputable, as to throw away the shield in battle; and lastly, that it is fear that suggests to his mind the expedient to fetch the arms, a pretext to be distant from danger. But it is not difficult to defend *Telemachus*. *Amphinomus* was assaulting *Ulysses*, and consequently his back was turn'd towards *Telemachus*, and this occasions the wound in that part. This combat is not a combat of honour, where points of ceremony are observ'd; *Telemachus* was therefore at liberty to destroy his enemy by any methods, without any imputation of cowardice; especially considering the inequality of the parties.



- Thence thro' his breast its bloody passage tore;  
 110 Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor,  
 And his crush'd forehead marks the stone with gore.  
 He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear  
 The long incumbrance of the weighty spear  
 To the fierce foe advantage might afford,  
 115 To rush between, and use the shorten'd sword.  
 With speedy ardour to his Sire he flies,  
 And, Arm, great father ! arm (in haste he cries)

parties. Neither is it out of fear that he quits his spear; but from a dictate of wisdom: he is afraid lest some of the Suitors should attack him while he is disengaging it, and take him at an advantage, while he has no weapon to use in his own defence; besides, he has no farther occasion for it, he hastes away to provide other arms; not only for himself, but for *Ulysses* and his friends; and this is so far from being the suggestion of fear, that it is the result of wisdom.

There is some difficulty in the expression *προσπίπτει τριβῶν*, the meaning of it is, Left he should receive a descending blow: The word is an adjective, and *Eustathius* tells us that *χαρι* is to be understood; I should rather chuse *καταπίπτει*, which immediately precedes, it being as good sense to say, A wound is given by a descending sword, as a descending hand.

v. 117. ——— arm (in haste he cries)] *Homer* almost constantly gives the epithet *πτερόντα το ἔπος*; winged words, *Plutarch* in his treatise upon Garrulity gives us the meaning of it. A word (says that Author) while it remains unspoken is a secret, but being communicated, it changes its name into common rumour; it is then *flown* from us; and this is the reason why *Homer* calls words *winged*: He that lets a bird fly from his hand, does not easily catch it again; and he that lets a word slip from his tongue cannot recall it; it flies abroad, and flutters from place to place every moment. It has indeed in some passages a still closer meaning; when a person speaks with precipitation, the epithet expresses the swiftness of the speech, the words are wing'd; it

Book XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 101

- Lo hence I run for other arms to wield,  
For missile jav'lins, and for helm and shield;  
120 Fast by our side let either faithful swain  
In arms attend us, and their part sustain.  
Haste and return (*Ulysses* made reply)  
While yet th' auxiliar shafts this hand supply;  
Left thus alone, encountred by an host,  
125 Driv'n from the gate, th' important pass be lost.  
With speed *Telemachus* obeys, and flies  
Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;  
Four brazen helmets, eight refulgent spears,  
And four broad bucklers, to his Sire he bears.  
130 At once in brazen Panoply they shone,  
At once each servant brac'd his armour on;  
Around their King a faithful guard they stand,  
While yet each shaft flew deathful from his hand:  
Chief after Chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,  
135 And swell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground.  
Soon as his store of flying fates was spent,  
Against the wall he set the bow unbent:

And

It is here apply'd with particular propriety; *Telemachus* asks a question in the compass of four lines, and receives an answer in two from *Ulysses*; the time not allowing any delay.

v. 137. *Against the wall he set the bow unbent.*] The Poet may be thought too circumstantial in the disposal of the bow; but



And now his shoulders bear the maffy shield,  
 And now his hands two beamy jav'lins wield;  
 140 He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd  
 O'er the high creft, and caft a dreadful fhade.

There flood a window near, whence looking down  
 From o'er the porch, appear'd the fubject town.

A double

there is a reafon for it; he fhews *Ulyffes* plac'd it out of the reach of the Suitors, who, if they had feized the bow, might have furnifhed themfelves with arrows from the dead bodies of their friends, and employ'd them againft *Ulyffes*: This caution was therefore neceffary. *Eufthathius*.

v. 142. *There flood a window near, whence looking down,  
 From o'er the porch, appear'd the fubject town.*

The word in the Greek is *εἰσοθύρη*, *janua fuperior*, and it is likewife ufed a little lower. It has given great trouble to the Commentators to explain the fituation of thefe two Paflages. *Dacier* imagines that by the former there was a defcent into the court-yard and fo to the ftreer; but this cannot be true: For *Agelaus* exhorting his associates to feize this paflage, makes ufe of the word *ἀναβαίνας*, which fignifies to *afcend*, and not to *defcend* into the court-yard: Befides, he bids them raife the people by *fhouting to them*, which feems to imply, that this place overlook'd the ftreets, from whence a fhout might be heard by the people. *Οραθῆναι* (obferves *Eufthathius*) is *ὄψιν εἰς ἢ ἔρουσαι τῆς πόλεως ἰδέναι ἐπιθυμῆναι*, that is, *a door by which a perfon afcends to obtain a profpect*: This probably led to the roof of the porch of the palace fronting the ftreets, from whence a perfon ftanding in the open air and fhouting might raife the City; or as for greater clearnefs it is here tranflated a window, which answers all thefe purpofes.

But there is ftill a difficulty arifing from the word *λαύρη*, which is thus folved by *Eufthathius*, *λαύρη ἐστὶν ὁ πρὸς τὴν ἑσοθύρην ἀγῶν στενωπός*, that is, a narrow paflage leading to this private window or door, and he afterwards interprets it by *σπῆν ἑδός*.

From what has been obferv'd, it appears evidently that there was another paflage to the upper apartments of the palace; for this was guarded by *Etoneus*, and was inaccessible, and confequently *Melanthis* conveys the arms to the Suitors by fome other ftair-

A double strength of valves secur'd the place,  
 145 A high and narrow, but the only pass:  
 The cautious King, with all-preventing care,  
 To guard that outlet, plac'd *Eumæus* there:  
 When *Agelaus* thus: Has none the sense  
 To mount yon window, and alarm from thence  
 150 The neighbour town? the town shall force the door  
 And this bold Archer soon shall shoot no more.  
*Melanthius* then: That outlet to the gate  
 So near adjoins, that one may guard the frait.

stair-case. This *Homer* expresses by *ἀναψάλγας πυλάδας*; the former word is very well explained by *Hesychius*, it signifies the passages of the palace leading from chamber to chamber, or the divisions of the apartments. *Πύλη* properly denotes a rupture, and here represents the openings of the passages from room to room. The Antients thought this whole passage so obscure, that they drew a plan of these inward passages of the palace, as *Eustathius* informs us; in this they figur'd the porch, the higher aperture, the other stair case, and the room where the arms were laid. But *Dacier* starts another difficulty: If *Melanthius* could go up to the room where the arms lay, why could he not go from thence into the courts of the palace, and raise the city? The answer is, because the arms were plac'd in an inward apartment, and there was no passage from thence into the palace yards. Her mistake arose from her opinion that there was an entry into the palace by the *εὐρυθύρα*, which opinion is refuted in the beginning of this annotation. If indeed *Telemachus* had brought down the arms this way, then there must have been a passage for *Melanthius* to the place from whence *Agelaus* bids him raise the city; for if *Telemachus* had passed to the armory by it, why might not *Melanthius* from it? But this is not the case; for this door or window is not mentioned till *Telemachus* has furnished *Ulysses* and his Friends with armour; and consequently *Homer* cannot intend that we should understand that *Telemachus* ascended to the armory by it.

- But other methods of defence remain,  
 155 My self with arms can furnish all the train;  
 Stores from the royal magazine I bring,  
 And their own darts shall pierce the Prince and King.  
 He said; and mounting up the lofty stairs,  
 Twelve shields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears:  
 160 All arm, and sudden round the hall appears  
 A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of spears.  
 The Heroe stands opprest with mighty woe,  
 On ev'ry side he sees the labour grow:  
 Oh curst event! and oh unlook'd-for aid!  
 165 *Melanthius* or the women have betray'd——  
 Oh my dear son!——The father wish a sigh!  
 Then ceas'd; the filial virtue made reply.  
 Falshood is folly, and 'tis just to own  
 The fault committed; this was mine alone;  
 170 My haste neglected yonder door to bar,  
 And hence the villain has supply'd their war.

v. 159. *Twelve shields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears.* *Aristarchus*, remarks *Ensiathius*, blamed this description as incredible; for how could one person be able to carry such a load of armour at one time? But we are not to make this supposition; the Poet speaks indefinitely, and leaves us at liberty to conjecture that *Melanthius* brought them at several times; thus a little lower we find him going again for arms to furnish the rest of the Suitors.

Run good *Eumæus* then, and (what before  
I thoughtless err'd in) well secure that door:  
Learn if by female fraud this deed were done,

175 Or (as my thought misgives) by *Dolius*' son.

While yet they spoke, in quest of arms again  
To the high chamber stole the faithless swain.

Not unobserv'd. *Eumæus* watchful ey'd,

And thus address'd *Ulysses* near his side.

180 The miscreant we suspected takes that way;

Him, if this arm be pow'rful, shall I slay?

v. 172. Run good *Eumæus*, &c.] This passage, where *Telemachus* bids *Eumæus* go and see who brings the arms, proves that *Telemachus* did not before absent himself from the battle out of cowardice; Here he chuses to partake the danger with *Ulysses*, and sends *Eumæus* and *Philæus* to execute his orders; a sign that he does not consult his safety at the expence of his honour. *Eustathius*.

But it may seem extraordinary, that *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* should be in doubt to know the person who brought the arms to the Suitors; especially when *Agæus* had held a publick conference with *Melanthius* in order to it; but, answers *Eustathius*, they spoke with a low voice, and at a proper distance from *Ulysses*. It may also be objected that *Melanthius* could not possibly bring the arms without the observation of *Ulysses* and his friends. To solve this difficulty we must have recourse to the second private door, or *εὐχέλυσον*, mentioned in a former annotation: by this passage he ascends and descends without a discovery; that passage standing in such a situation, as not to be visible to those who were on the opposite side of the palace. What may seem to contradict this observation is, what *Homer* afterwards adds, for he directly tells us, that *Eumæus* observ'd that the person who brought the arms was *Melanthius*; but that expression may only imply, that he saw *Melanthius* going from the rest of the company, and hastening toward that ascent, and therefore justly concludes him to be the Person.



Or drive him hither, to receive the meed  
From thy own hand, of this detested deed?

Not so (reply'd *Ulysses*) leave him there,

185 For us sufficient is another care:

Within the stricture of this palace wall

To keep inclos'd his masters till they fall,

Go you and seize the felon; backward bind

His arms and legs, and fix a plank behind;

190 On this, his body by strong cords extend,

And on a column near the roof suspend;

So study'd tortures his vile days shall end.

The ready swains obey'd with joyful haste,

Behind the felon unperceiv'd they past,

195 As round the room in quest of arms he goes:

(The half-shut door conceal'd his lurking foes)

v. 187. *To keep inclos'd his masters* ———] It may be ask'd, when *Eumæus* retires from the guard of the passage, what hinders the Suitors from seizing it, and by it giving notice to the city of their danger? What *Ulysses* here says obviates this objection. He tells *Eumæus*, that he and *Telemachus* will defend it against all the efforts of his enemies: By this expression he gives us to understand, that *Telemachus* shall post himself in the place of *Eumæus*, and make it good till he has executed justice upon *Aethantheus*.

One hand sustain'd a helm, and one the shield  
 Which old *Laertes* wont in youth to wield,  
 Cover'd with dust, with dryness chapt and worn,  
 200 The brass corroded, and the leather torn:  
 Thus laden, o'er the threshold as he stept,  
 Fierce on the villain from each side they leapt,  
 Back by the hair the trembling dastard drew,  
 And down reluctant on the pavement threw.  
 205 Active and pleas'd, the zealous swains fulfil  
 At ev'ry point their master's rigid will:  
 First, fast behind, his hands and feet they bound,  
 Then streighten'd cords involv'd his body round,  
 So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,  
 210 The howling felon swung from side to side.

v. 197. *One hand sustain'd a helm, and one the shield.* We see *Melanthius* after a diligent search finds only one helm and one shield; and the shield is described as almost spoil'd with age: From hence *Enphathus* gathers that there were no more left in the armory; for it is probable that *Melanthius* would not have return'd with so few arms if he could have found more; nor would he have brought the decay'd shield, if he could have supply'd himself with a stronger; so that all the arms of *Ulysses* were seventeen helmets, twelve at first deliver'd to the Suitors by *Melanthius*, one more he was now bringing, and *Ulysses* and his friends were in possession of four: There were the same number of shields, and twenty spears, twelve given to the Suitors, and eight to the assistants of *Ulysses*. This was his private armory for the defence of his palace: and we are not to conclude, that these were the whole arms of the nation; there probably was a public repository for armour for the publick use of their armies against their enemies.





*Eumæus* scoffing, then with keen disdain :

There pass thy pleasing night, oh gentle swain!

On that soft pillow, from that envy'd height

First may'st thou see the springing dawn of light;

215 So timely rise, when morning streaks the east,

To drive thy victims to the Suitors feast.

This said, they left him, tortur'd as he lay,

Secur'd the door, and hasty strode away :

Each, breathing death, resum'd his dang'rous post

220 Near great *Ulysses*; Four against an host.

When lo! descending to her Heroe's aid

*Jove's* daughter *Pallas*, War's triumphant maid:

In *Mentor's* friendly form she join'd his side;

*Ulysses* saw, and thus with transport cry'd,

225 Come, ever welcome, and thy succour lend ;

Oh ev'ry sacred name in one! my friend!

Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown:

What-e'er thro' life's whole series I have done

Or good, or grateful, now to mind recall,

230 And aiding this one hour, repay it all.

Thus he; but pleasing hopes his bosom warm

Of *Pallas* latent in the friendly form.

The adverse host the phantom warrior ey'd,

And first loud-threatning, *Agelaüs* cry'd.

235 *Mentor* beware, nor let that tongue persuade  
 Thy frantic arm to lend *Ulysses* aid;  
 Our force successful shall our threat make good;  
 And with the fire's and son's commix thy blood.  
 What hop'st thou here? Thee first the sword shall slay;  
 240 Then lop thy whole posterity away;  
 Far hence thy banish'd comfort shall we send;  
 With his, thy forfeit lands and treasures blend;  
 Thus, and thus only, shalt thou join thy friend.  
 His barb'rous insult ev'n the Goddesses fires,  
 245 Who thus the warrior to revenge inspires.  
 Art thou *Ulysses*? where then shall we find  
 The patient body and the constant mind?

That

v. 246. *Art thou Ulysses, &c.*] *Pallas* is here an allegorical Deity, and represents the courage and wisdom which was exerted by *Ulysses* in the destruction of the Suitors: The Poet puts the words into the mouth of a Goddess, to give ornament and dignity to his Poetry; but they are only the suggestions of his own heart, which reproaches him for being so slow in punishing the insolence of his adversaries. If we take them in this sense they will be in the nature of a soliloquy: The Poet indeed was obliged to introduce a Deity, to give importance to the decisive action of his whole Poem: Thus *Jupiter* assists *Aeneas* in *Virgil*; *Minerva*, *Achilles* in the *Iliad*, and the same Goddess *Ulysses* here in the *Odyssey*. I very well know that all these passages have been blam'd by some Critics, as derogatory to the courage of these Heroes, who cannot conquer their enemies but thro' the assistance of a Deity. The Reader may be pleas'd to look back for a full vindication of *Homer* and *Virgil*, to *Lib. 3. Note 43. of the Odyssey.*

We



- That courage, once the *Trojans* daily dread,  
 Known nine long years, and felt by Heroes dead?  
 250 And where that conduct, which reveng'd the lust  
 Of *Priam's* race, and lay'd proud *Troy* in dust?  
 If this when *Helen* was the cause, were done,  
 What for thy country now, thy Queen, thy son?  
 Rise then in combat, at my side attend;  
 255 Observe what vigour Gratitude can lend,  
 And foes how weak, oppos'd against a friend!  
 She spoke; but willing longer to survey  
 The fire and son's great acts, with-held the day;  
 By farther toils decreed the brave to try,  
 260 And level'd pois'd the wings of Victory:  
 Then with a change of form eludes their sight,  
 Perch'd like a swallow on a rafter's height,  
 And unperceiv'd, enjoys the rising fight.

*Da.*  
 We may observe that a Deity descends to assist *Ulysses*, but that the Suitors are left to their own Conduct: This furnishes us with a very just and pious moral, and teaches us that Heaven guards and assists good men in adversity, but abandons the wicked, and lets them perish for their follies.

v. 262. *Perch'd like a swallow* ——— ] We have seen the Deities, both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, changing themselves into the shape of birds: thus, *Lib. 7. v. 67.* of the *Iliad*,

*Th' Athenian maid, and glorious God of day*  
*With silent joy the settling hosts survey,*  
*In form like vulturs, on the beech's height*  
*Thy sit conceal'd, and wait the future fight.* This

Book XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 111

*Damastor's* son, bold *Agelaus*, leads  
265 The guilty war; *Eurynomus* succeeds;  
With these, *Pisander* great *Polyctor's* son,  
Sage *Polybus*, and stern *Amphimedon*,  
With *Demoptolemus*: these six survive,  
The best of all the shafts had left alive.  
270 Amidst the carnage desp'rate as they stand,  
Thus *Agelaus* rouz'd the lagging band.

The hour is come, when yon' fierce man no more  
With bleeding Princes shall bestrow the floor:  
Lo! *Mentor* leaves him with an empty boast;  
275 The four remain, but four against an host.  
Let each at once discharge the deadly dart,  
One sure of six shall reach *Ulysses'* heart:  
Thus shall one stroke the glory lost regain:  
The rest must perish, their great leader slain.

This perhaps may be the occasion of all such fictions. The superstition of the heathen world induc'd the Antients to believe that the appearance of any Bird in a critical hour, was a sign of the presence of a Divinity, and by degrees they began to persuade themselves, that the Gods appear'd to them in the form of those birds. Hence arose all the honours paid to Augurs, and the reliance upon divination drawn from the flight of birds: and almost every Deity had a bird sacred to him. The Eagle to *Jupiter*, the Peacock to *Juno*, &c. *Pallas* here takes the form of a swallow, because it is a domestic Bird, and therefore may be said to appear within the walls of the palace with most probability.

Thes



- 280 Then all at once their mingled lances threw,  
 And thirsty all of one man's blood they flew;  
 In vain! *Minerva* turn'd them in her breath,  
 And scatter'd short, or wide, the points of death;  
 With deaden'd sound, one on the threshold falls,
- 285 One strikes the gate, one rings against the walls;  
 The storm past innocent. The godlike man  
 Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began.  
 'Tis now (brave friends) our turn, at once to throw  
 (So speed 'em heav'n) our jav'lines at the foe.
- 290 That impious race to all their past misdeeds  
 Would add our blood. Injustice still proceeds.  
 He spoke: at once their fiery lances flew:  
 Great *Demoptolemus*, *Ulysses* slew;  
*Euryades* receiv'd the Prince's dart;
- 295 The Goatherd's quiver'd in *Pisander's* heart;  
 Fierce *Elatas* by thine, *Eumæus*, falls;  
 Their fall in thunder echoes round the walls.  
 The rest retreat: the victors now advance,  
 Each from the dead resumes his bloody lance.

Again

v. 298.

———the Victors now advance.  
 Each from the dead resumes his bloody lance.]

The danger beginning to abate by the fall of the chief of the enemy, *Ulysses* advances from his stand: There was a necessity for this conduct: *Ulysses* and his three assistants had kill'd four enemies

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- 300 Again the foe discharge the steely show'r;  
Again made frustrate by the virgin pow'r.  
Some, turn'd by *Pallas*, on the threshold fall,  
Some wound the gate, some ring against the wall;  
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,  
305 Drop harmless, on the pavement sounding dead.  
Then bold *Amphimedon* his jav'lin cast;  
Thy hand *Telemachus*, it lightly raz'd;  
And from *Ctesippus*' arm the spear elanc'd  
On good *Eumæus*' shield and shoulder glanc'd;  
310 Not lessen'd of their force (so slight the wound)  
Each sung along, and drop'd upon the ground.  
Fate doom'd thee next, *Eurydamas*, to bear  
Thy death, ennobled by *Ulysses*' spear.  
By the bold son *Amphimedon* was slain:  
315 And *Polybus* renown'd the faithful swain.  
Pierc'd thro' the breast the rude *Ctesippus* bled,  
And thus *Philetius* gloried o'er the dead.  
There end thy pompous vaunts, and high disdain;  
Oh sharp in scandal, voluble and vain!

mies with their spears; and consequently the Poet was obliged to supply them with fresh weapons, otherwise, if they had discharged their spears once more, they must have been left naked and defenceless, having only two a-piece brought by *Telemachus*. This observation shews the exactness which *Homer* maintains in his relation.

How



- 320 How weak is mortal pride! To heav'n alone  
 Th'event of actions and our fates are known:  
 Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear:  
 The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear:  
*Ulysses* brandish'd high his vengeful steel,
- 325 And *Damastorides* that instant fell;  
 Fast by, *Leocritus* expiring lay,  
 The Prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way  
 Thro' all his bowels: down he tumbles prone;  
 His batter'd front and brains besmear the stone.
- 330 Now *Pallas* shines confes'd; aloft she spreads  
 The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads;

v. 323. *The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear.*] This refers to a passage in the latter end of the twentieth Book of the *Odyssey*, where *Ctesippus* throws the foot of a bullock at *Ulysses*. *Philostratus* here gives him a mortal wound with his spear, and tells him it is a return for the foot of the bullock. *Eufrastinus* informs us that this became a Proverb, *ἄπο τοῦ ἀντι ποδὸς ξενίου*, to express a return of evil for evil; the like may be observed of the death of *Antinous*, who was killed as he lifted the bowl to drink.

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κνήκος καὶ χεῖρος ἄνθρωπου.

Which is exactly render'd by our Proverb, *Many things happen between the cup and the lip*. Thus likewise the kindness of *Cyclops* was used proverbially, to denote a severe injury disguised under a seeming civility; that Monster having promis'd *Ulysses* mercy, but it was only the mercy to devour him last. These little instances prove the great veneration the Antients had for *Homer*.

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 115

The dreadful *Ægis* blazes in their eye;  
 Amaz'd they see, they tremble, and they fly:  
 Confus'd, distract'd, thro' the rooms they fling,

335 Like oxen madden'd by the breeze's sting,  
 When sultry days, and long, succeed the gentle spring.

Not

v. 332. *The dreadful Ægis* ——— ] This shield is at large describ'd, Lib. 5. of the *Iliad*.

————— round the margin roll'd.  
*A fringe of serpents, hissing, guard the gold;*  
*Here all the terrors of grim war appear;*  
*Here rages Force, here tremble Flight and Fear;*  
*Here storm'd Contention, and here fury frown'd,*  
*And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.*

We see the terrible effects which the shield causes are created by the Poet into a kind of Beings, and animated to fight on the side of his Heroe.

v. 335. *Like oxen, &c.*] The fury of the battle being now over, Homer pauses with the action; and letting his fancy rove in search of foreign ornaments, beautifies and enlivens the horrors of it with two similitudes, drawn from subjects very distant from the terrors they are brought to illustrate. The former of an herd of cattle, represents the confusion and affright of the Suitors; the latter of the birds, their weakness and unavailing flight. The Gadfly shews the fury and close pursuit of *Ulysses* and his assistants, the Hawks their courage, and superior power. *Ensatibus*, *Virgil* at large describes this Breeze fly. *Georg.* 3.

*About th' Alburnian groves, with holly green,*  
*Of winged insects mighty swarms are seen:*  
*This flying plague, to mark its quality,*  
*Oestros the Grecians call, Asylus, we:*  
*A fierce loud buzzing Breeze: their stings draw blood;*  
*And drive the cattle gadding thro' the wood,*  
*Seiz'd with unusual pains they loudly cry, &c.*

Dryden,  
 This



Not half so keen, fierce vulturs of the chace  
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race.

When

This description shews that this is no ill-chosen similitude; it very well paints the Suitors flying in an herd, and *Ulysses* wounding them as they fly.

The latter simile from the Hawks, affords some curiosity in regard to the ancient manner of that sport. It is evident, says *Dacier*, that this passage is an instance, that flying of birds of prey, in the nature of our hawking, was practis'd by the Antients: The nets call'd by *Homer* *νερα*, were fix'd in the plain ground; the fowlers with their falcons took their station upon the adjoining eminences; when the birds, driven from this rising ground, flew to the plain, they met with the nets, and endeavouring to escape them, crowded into flocks; Then the Hawk or Vultur was loos'd, and descending upon his prey, slew them in multitudes; for the birds were incapable of resisting, and at the same time were afraid of the nets, and therefore could not escape: This is the reason why the fowlers are said to rejoice at the sport: A plain indication, that the Poet intended to describe the sportman's flying his bird at the prey. That the word *νερα* signifies Nets, is evident from *Aristophanes*, *μα νεφλας, μα δικτυα*, that is, I swear by my nets: *Hesychius* is of the same opinion; *νερα*, says that Author, signifies the Clouds, *και λινα θηρατικα*, *Hunters Nets*. *Eustathius* directly affirms, that in his time this sport was practis'd in many countries; and the place where the nets were fixed was call'd *νεμελοσασια*. That Author construes these words *νερα πλωσσομαι ισθλαι*, as if *ισθλαι* were to be understood, to express the rushing of the birds against the net; but there is no occasion for this violence to the text, for by joining *νερα* with *πλωσσομαι* the period will be plain, and signify, that thro' fear of the net they fly with violence to avoid it. *Monsieur Dacier* has a pretty observation upon this sport; and shews us that the Antients were used to take even deer with nets, by flying at them birds of prey, in conformity to this description of *Homer*: This is manifest from a passage in *Arrian*, *lib. 2. c. 1.* where he speaks of men placing their fears where they have nothing to fear: *Λιπτόν ημείς τὸ τῶν ἔλαφον πάσχομεν ὅτε φοβῆναι φεύγουσι αἱ ἔλαφοι τὰ πτενά, πῆ τρέπομαι; καὶ πρὸς τινὰ (τίπον) ἀναχωροῦσι ὡς ἀσφαλῆ; πρὸς τὰ δικτυα, καὶ ὅπως ἀπὸλλυνται, ἐναλλαζομαι τὰ φοβερά καὶ τὰ θαρραλέα;* "For what remains, we are like deer, for they fearing the birds that are flown at them, what course do they take? To what place

When the wide field extended snares beset,  
 340 With conscious dread they shun the quiv'ring net:  
 No help, no flight; but wounded ev'ry way,  
 Headlong they drop: the fowlers seize the prey.  
 On all sides thus they double wound on wound,  
 In prostrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,  
 345 Unmanly shrieks precede each dying groan,  
 And a red deluge floats the reeking stone.

*Liodes* first before the victor falls:  
 The wretched Augur thus for mercy calls.

O gracious

"place of refuge do they run to be in security? To the nets, and so  
 "perish, mistaking their danger for their greatest safety." *Minerva*  
 in this similitude is the bird of prey descending from the mountain,  
 for she it is who scatters the Suitors by displaying her *Egis* from  
 the roof of the palace: This is the opinion of *Eusebius*: But in  
 the winding up of the comparison, *Homer* plainly by the vultur  
 denotes *Ulysses* and his assistants (tho' perhaps not exclusively of  
 the Goddess) for in the application he writes:

Ὡς ἄρα τοὶ μνηστήρας ἑπιστάμενοι κατὰ δῶμα  
 Τυφίον.

v. 347. *Liodes* first before the Victor falls:

The wretched Augur

This *Liodes* is the last person who survives of the Suitors; he  
 was an Augur and a Prophet, and ought therefore to have fol-  
 low'd wiser counsels: He tells *Ulysses* that he endeavour'd to re-  
 strain the Suitors from their insolence; but he himself aspir'd to  
 the bed of *Penelope*, and consequently was an associate in their con-  
 spiracies. *Liodes* falls without resistance; and indeed it would have  
 been very improper to have represented him encountering *Ulysses*  
 in a single combat, when above an hundred had not been able to  
 stand before him: besides, fighting is out of the character of

*Liodes*;

- O gracious bear, nor let thy suppliant bleed:  
 350 Still undishonour'd or by word or deed  
 Thy house, for me, remains; by me repress'd  
 Full oft was check'd th' injustice of the rest:  
 Averse they heard me when I counsell'd well,  
 Their hearts were harden'd, and they justly fell,  
 355 Oh spare an Augur's consecrated head,  
 Nor add the blameless to the guilty dead.  
 Priest as thou art! for that detested band  
 Thy lying prophecies deceiv'd the land:  
 Against *Ulysses* have thy vows been made;  
 360 For them, thy daily orisons were paid:  
 Yet more, ev'n to our bed thy pride aspires:  
 One common crime o're common fate requires.  
 Thus speaking, from the ground the sword he took  
 Which *Agelaus*' dying hand forsook;  
 365 Full thro' his neck the weighty faulchion sped:  
 Along the pavement roll'd the mutt'ring head.  
*Phemius* alone the hand of vengeance spar'd,  
*Phemius* the sweet, the heav'n-instructed bard.

*Liodes*; he was not a man of the sword: but an Augur: It would therefore have been contrary to his function, to have drawn his engaging *Ulysses*; and consequently it is with great propriety that he is describ'd falling not as a warrior, but as a suppliant.



Befide the gate the rev'rend minstrel stands;  
 370 The lyre, now silent, trembling in his hands;  
 Dabious to supplicate the chief, or fly  
 To Jove's inviolable altar nigh,

Where

v. 372. *Dubious* ——— if to fly.

To Jove's inviolable altar nigh, &c.]

This altar of *Jupiter Hercæus* stood in the Palace-yard; so call'd from *ἑρκος*, the out-wall enclosing the Court-yard. It stood in the open air, where they sacrific'd to *Jupiter* the Guardian, or Protector; and within the Palace to *Zeus ἑρκύος*.

*Jupiter* was worshipp'd under the same name by the *Romans*. Thus *Ovid*,

*Cui nihil Hercæi profuit ara Jovis.*

The Altar mention'd by *Virgil*, *Æneid*. 2. was of the same nature: To which *Priam* fled at the taking of *Troy*.

Uncover'd but by Heav'n, there stood in view

An Altar; near the hearth a laurel grew,

Dodder'd with age; whose boughs encompass round

The household Gods, and shade the holy ground.

These Altars were places of sanctuary, and by flying to them the person was thought to be under the immediate protection of the Deity, and therefore in some cases inviolable. The same practice prevail'd amongst the *Jews*, for we find frequently in the scriptures that it was customary to fly to the Altar as to a place of refuge, which is evident from the expression of laying hold on the horns of the Altar. This is the reason why *Pheonius* entertains an intention to fly to the Altar of *Jupiter Hercæus*. *Plutarch*, in his treatise upon Music, informs us, that *Demodocus* was reported to have wrote a Poem, intitled, *The destruction of Troy*: And *Pheonius* another, call'd *The return of the Grecian Captains*: But by these Poets, *Homer* probably means only himself, who was Author of two Poems, the *Iliad*, and the *Odyssey*. *Homer* (remarks *Eustathius*) plainly shews us the notion he had of the great qualifications that were necessary to form a good Poet,



Where oft *Laertes* holy vows had paid,  
And oft *Ulysses* smoking victims laid.

His

Poet. He must sing of men and Gods: that is, be thoroughly acquainted with all things, both human and divine; he must be *αὐτοδίδακτος*, or *self-taught*; that is, as we express it, he must be a Genius; he must have a natural ability, which is indeed to be improv'd, but not capable of being learn'd, by study: He adds, that besides this felicity of nature, he must have an heavenly inspiration; this implies that he must have a kind of enthusiasm, an elevation of soul which is not to be obtain'd by labour and industry, and consequently is the gift of heav'n. Thus *Pindar*,

————— σοφῆς ὁ πολ-

λά εἰδὼς φύσιν.

Μαδόντες δὲ, λάβροι

Παύλασσις, κόρακες ἄς,

Ἄκραντα γαργάνου.

*The bards, whom true poetic flame inspires,  
Receive from nature more than human fires;  
In vain from arts alone they tune the voice,  
Like crows they croak, nor is it song, but noise.*

This is the *Mens Divinior* of *Horace*: By industry men may become great Scholars and Philosophers; but no man was ever a great Poet, without being in the strictest sense a great Genius. I will only add, that *Aristotle* in his *Rhet.* 1. 7. quotes this *Hemistic αὐτοδίδακτος*, &c. as an instance that natural are more excellent than acquir'd abilities; he gives the reason of it; namely, because they are more uncommon, and not to be obtain'd by human industry. *Maximus Tyrius* has a criticism upon it. How (objects that Author) can it be said that the Poet is self-taught, if the Gods teach him to sing? The answer is easy, *Homer* means that he has no human instructor, and only opposes natural to acquir'd abilities. It is observable that *Maximus Tyrius* erroneously quotes the verse. *Dissert.* 22. for he writes, *Θεὸς δὲ μοι ἄψαυαν ὀμνῆν*, instead of

————— Θεὸς δὲ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν ὀμνῆς

Ἰαγρέας ἀνέφυσιν —————

He

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- 375 His honour'd harp with care he first set down;  
Between the laver and the silver throne;  
Then prostrate stretch'd before the dreadful man,  
Persuasive, thus, with accent soft began,  
O King! to mercy be thy soul inclin'd,  
380 And spare the Poet's ever-gentle kind,  
A deed like this thy future fame would wrong;  
For dear to Gods and Men is sacred song,  
Self-taught I sing; by heav'n, and heav'n alone  
The genuine seeds of Poesy are sown;  
385 And (what the Gods bestow) the lofty lay,  
To Gods alone, and god-like worth, we pay.  
Save then the Poet, and thy self reward;  
'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record.  
That here I sung, was force and not desire;  
390 This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire,  
And let thy son attest, nor sordid pay  
Nor servile flattery stain'd the moral lay.

He likewise puts the words in the mouth of *Demodocus*, which are here spoken by *Phemius*; he undoubtedly quoted by memory.

What *Homer* adds after all this, to raise the character of his Poet, is very remarkably moral. That he never turned his talents to flattery, nor was it voluntarily that he served or entertain'd unworthy men, but was merely compell'd to it by their violence.



The moving words *Telemachus* attends,  
 His fire approaches, and the bard defends.  
 395 Oh mix not, Father, with those impious dead  
 The man divine; forbear that sacred head;  
*Medon* the herald too our arms may spare,  
*Medon*, who made my infancy his care;  
 If yet he breathes, permit thy son to give  
 400 Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live.  
 Beneath a table, trembling with dismay,  
 Couch'd close to earth, unhappy *Medon* lay,  
 Wrapt in a new-slain Oxe's ample hide:  
 Swift at the word he cast his skreen aside,  
 405 Sprung to the Prince, embrac'd his knee with tears;  
 And thus with grateful voice address'd his ears:  
 O Prince! O Friend! lo here thy *Medon* stands;  
 Ah stop the Heroe's unresist'd hands,  
 Incens'd too justly by that impious brood,  
 410 Whose guilty glories now are set in blood.  
 To whom *Ulysses* with a pleasing eye:  
 Be bold, on friendship and my son rely;

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Live, an example for the world to read,  
How much more safe the good than evil deed:

415 Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace resort  
From blood and carnage to yon open court:

Me other work requires——With tim'rous awe  
From the dire scene th' exempted two withdraw;  
Scarce sure of life, look round, and trembling move

420 To the bright altars of Protector Jove.

Mean-while *Ulysses* search'd the dome, to find  
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.

Not one! compleat the bloody tale he found,

All steep'd in blood, all gasping on the ground.

v. 413. *Live, an example for the world to read*

*How much more safe the good than evil deed.]*

The moral intended to be taught by the fable of the *Odyssey* is, to shew virtue, tho' long in distress, at length triumphant; and vice, tho' long successful, unfortunate in the conclusion: It is to this effect that *Ulysses* here speaks; and to give his words more weight, he throws them into a sentence. It is with excellent judgment that it is here plac'd by *Homer*: The punishment is no sooner over but *Ulysses* declares the equity of it; he speaks to all mankind, and lays it down as an universal truth that virtue is to be prefer'd before vice, and invites us to the practice of the former, by shewing the success of it in his own victory; and deters us from the latter, by representing the ill consequences of it in the destruction of the Suitors.

F 2

So,





425 So, when by hollow shores the fisher train  
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main,  
And scarce the meshy toils the copious draught contain,  
All naked of their element, and bare,  
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;  
430 Wide o'er the sands are spread the stiff'ning prey  
Till the warm sun exhales their soul away.

And now the King commands his son to call  
Old *Euryclea*, to the deathful hall:

The son observant not a moment stays; /

435 The aged Governess with speed obeys:  
The founding portals instant they display;  
The matron moves, the Prince directs the way.  
On heaps of death the stern *Ulysses* stood,  
All black with dust and cover'd thick with blood.

v. 425. So, when by hollow shores the fisher train  
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main.]  
The Antients, remarks *Eustatius*, observ'd that this is the only  
place where *Homer* manifestly speaks of catching fish with nets;  
For those words, lib. 5. v. 595. of the *Iliad*,

————— and sweep away  
*Sons, Sires, and Wives, an undistinguish'd prey;*

which in the *Greek* is express'd by ἀΐσι λίνα ἀόσις πανάγρις, may  
be apply'd to the taking of beasts or birds by nets, and conse-  
quently ought not to be appropriated to fishing. Thus it is evi-  
dent that this art was practis'd very antiently amongst the *Greeks*;  
it was likewise known early to the *Hebrews* and *Egyptians*.

440 So the grim Lion from the slaughter comes,

Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,

His breast with marks of carnage painted o'er,

His jaws all dropping with the bull's black gore,

Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,

445 The guilty fall'n, the mighty deed compleat;

A scream of joy her feeble voice essay'd:

The Heroe check'd her, and compos'dly said,

Woman, experienc'd as thou art, controul

Indecent joy, and feast thy secret soul.

*ant.* Thus *Isaiah* xix. 8. *The fishers (of Egypt) shall mourn, all they that cast the angle into the brook shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.* And that they fish'd the seas with nets is evident from *Ezekiel* xxvi. 5. *It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea.* The comparison is very just; and the last line of it gives a peculiar honour and distinction to *Ulysses*: That Heroe is the Sun who kills the Suitors, in application of the similitude.

v. 440. *So the grim Lion, &c.*] *Eustathius* agrees with an observation which has been made concerning the similitudes of the *Odyssey*, lib. 16. He here remarks that comparisons are as rare in the *Odyssey* as they are frequent in the *Iliad*; and that the difference arises from the difference of the subjects: The subject of the *Iliad* is great, and therefore properly illustrated by noble Images, and a variety of sublime comparisons: The subject of the *Odyssey* requires to be related in a less exalted style, and with greater simplicity. This Book is an undeniable testimony of the truth of this observation: the story of it approaches nearer to the nature of the *Iliad* than any other book of the *Odyssey*, and we find it is more adorn'd with comparisons than almost all the rest of the Poem.

450 T'insult the dead is cruel and unjust;  
 Fate, and their crime, have sunk them to the dust;  
 Nor heeded these the censure of mankind,  
 The good and bad were equal in their mind.

Justly

v. 450. *T' insult the dead is cruel and unjust.*] The word in the original is ἐδάμνα, and here signifies a voice of joy. In other places it is used to denote a sorrowful lamentation. See Note 49. of the third *Odyssey*. I am wonderfully pleas'd with the noble sentiment of *Ulysses* contained in these lines. It is full of piety and humanity: good-nature feels for the sufferings of any of its fellow-creatures. Even in punishment we are to remember, that those we punish are men, and inflict it as a necessary justice, not as a triumph. Such here is the conduct of *Ulysses*; he is so far from rejoicing in his success, that he restrains others from it; and seems to be a mourner at the funeral of his enemies. He falls into the same thought with *Job xxxi. 29.* *If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up my self when evil found him, If I suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to his soul, &c.*

Were a Prince, who makes war for glory, to stand upon a field of battle immediately after victory, amidst the horrors of the dead, and the groans of the dying; it would surely mortify his ambition to see such horrible monuments of his glory. If the death of thousands of brave men were weighed in a scale against a name, a popular empty breath of a multitude, and if reason held the balance, how easily would the disproportion be discovered?

v. 453. *The good and bad were equal in their mind.*] There is some obscurity in these words, *they neither respected the good nor the bad man*; or as *Homer* expresses it,

Οὐ κακὸν εἰδὲ μὲν ἐστλὲν.

A reverence is due to a good man, and consequently it is a crime to deny it; but why should it be objected to the Suitors as a fault that they despis'd the bad man, whose actions deserve to be despis'd? *Enstatius* answers, κακός may signify ταπεινός, or a person of a low condition, the poor man, or the stranger; and this justifies the assertion: But perhaps the Poet uses it to shew that they

Justly the price of worthlessness they paid,  
 455 And each now wails an unlamented shade.

But thou sincere! Oh *Euryclæa*, say,  
 What maids dishonour us, and what obey?

Then she. In these thy kingly walls remain  
 (My son) full fifty of the handmaid train,  
 460 Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave,  
 And servitude with pleasing tasks deceive;  
 Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way,  
 Nor me nor chaste *Penelope* obey;  
 Nor fits it that *Telemachus* command  
 465 (Young as he is) his mother's female band.

Hence

they despis'd and outrag'd all men universally without distinction, whether persons of probity or dishonesty; they consider'd not the condition of others, but were insolent to all mankind.

v. 462. *Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way.*] It is remarkable, observes Monsieur *Bayle*, that of fifty women, so few as twelve only should yield to the desires of the Suitors. But it is not indeed affirm'd that the rest were ever tempted by any importunities. *Plutarch*, in his treatise of Education, informs us that *Bion* wittily apply'd this passage to the study of the sciences: When the Suitors fail'd in their attempts upon *Penelope*, they condescended to address her maids: so men who are not capable of understanding Philosophy, busy themselves with studies of no value.

v. 464. *Nor fits it that Telemachus command*

(*Young as he is*) his mother's female band.]

This, remarks *Eustathius*, is an instance of the maternal wisdom of *Penelope*; and at the same time a vindication of *Telemachus* for not restraining the insolence and immodesty of these female servants; They were out of his jurisdiction, and immediately under the protection of *Penelope*. But is not this removal of the

Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,  
 Where slumbers soft now close the royal eye;  
 There wake her with the news——The matron cry'd;  
 Not so (*Ulysses* more sedate reply'd)  
 470 Bring first the crew who wrought these guilty deeds.  
 In haste the matron parts: The King proceeds.  
 Now to dispose the dead, the care remains  
 To you, my son, and you, my faithful swains;

fault from *Telemachus*, an imputation upon the Queen? and if the son wanted an excuse for not punishing their crimes, is the mother unblameable, who not only permits the disorder of their lives, but forbids *Telemachus* to redress it? Is it to be supposed that this chaste matron was more indulgent to female frailty than *Telemachus*? The true reason is, *Telemachus* could not, and *Penelope* durst not, shew a just resentment against these criminals: they had too great an interest in the chief of the Suitors to stand in awe of the Queen, or fear her vengeance. This is evident, for *Penelope* her self was in a great measure in their power, and the same authority that supported the Suitors in their insolence against the Queen, would support these females against her revenge for their immodesty.

v. 469. *Not so* (*Ulysses* more sedate reply'd.)] *Ulysses* gives this injunction, because he is unwilling to wound the eyes of *Penelope* with a spectacle of such horror as the dead bodies and blood of the Suitors. It was indeed necessary to find some reasonable pretext for not introducing the Queen immediately; this might be expected from the fondness and affection of an husband towards a beloved wife, and therefore *Ulysses* makes even his fondness for her a reason why he delays his discovery, namely, his care not to grieve her with such a terrible scene of slaughter. Besides, the death of the female servants is to succeed, and it would have been indecent to have made her assisting or present at their execution. The Poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct; for by it he introduces the discovery to *Penelope*, in a time of leisure, and finds an opportunity to describe at large that surprizing and tender incident.

Th' offending females to that task we doom,

475 To wash, to scent, and purify the room.

These (ev'ry table cleans'd, and ev'ry throne,

And all the melancholy labour done)

Drive to yon' court, without the Palace wall,

There the revenging sword shall smite them all;

v. 477. ——— the melancholy labour done

Drive to yon' court

It would in these ages, observes *Dacier*, be thought barbarous in a King to command his son to perform an execution of so much horror; but antiently it was thought no dishonour: Thus in the Scriptures *Gideon* having taken *Zeba* and *Salmana*, two *Midian* Kings, commands his son to kill them with the sword in his presence: But, continues that Author, I with *Homer* had deviated from this custom, that he had given both *Ulysses* and *Telamachus* sentiments of more humanity, and spar'd his Reader a description of such a terrible execution. I am not delighted with any thing that has a tendency to Inhumanity more than that Lady; but it may be answer'd, that *Homer* was oblig'd to write according to the custom of the age. *Virgil* has ascrib'd an act more cruel to the pious *Aeneas*, who sacrifices several unfortunate young men who were his captives. *Æn.* II. v. 15.

Then, pinion'd with their hands behind, appear

Th' unhappy captives, marching in the rear;

Appointed offerings in the victor's name,

To sprinkle with their blood the funeral flame;

This act is to be ascribed to the manner of the ages, and the customs of war in the days of *Aeneas*, and not to his inhumanity: But here it may seem essential to the very nature of Epic Poetry to relate this act of justice: The moral of it is, to see the good rewarded and the wicked punished; in the conclusion of the *Iliad*. These criminals had been as guilty in their several capacities as the Suitors themselves; it was therefore necessary that their punishment should be set before the Reader, as well as that of the Suitors.

- 480 So with the Suitors let them mix in dust,  
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their lust.  
He said: The lamentable train appear,  
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;  
Each'd heav'd her mournful burthen, and beneath  
485 The porch, depos'd the ghastly heaps of death.  
The Chief severe, compelling each to move,  
Urg'd the dire task imperious from above.  
With thirsty sponge they rub the tables o'er,  
(The swains unite their toil) the walls, the floor  
490 Wash, with th' effusive wave, are purg'd of gore.  
Once more the palace set in fair array,  
To the base court the females take their way;  
There compass'd close between the dome and wall,  
(Their life's last scene) they trembling wait their fall.  
495 Then thus the Prince. To these shall we afford  
A fate so pure, as by the martial sword?  
To these, the nightly prostitutes to shame,  
And base revilers of our house and name?  
Thus speaking, on the circling wall he strung  
500 A ship's tough cable, from a column hung;  
Near the high top he strain'd it strongly round,  
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.



Their heads above, connected in a row,  
 They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below:  
 505 Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare,  
 The doves or thrushes flap their wings in air,  
 Soon fled the soul impure, and left behind  
 The empty corse to waver with the wind.  
 Then forth they led *Melanthius*, and began  
 510 Their bloody work: They lopp'd away the man,  
 Morfel for dogs! then trimm'd with brazen sheers—  
 The wretch, and shorten'd of his nose and ears;  
 His hands and feet last felt the cruel steel:  
 He roar'd, and torments gave his soul to hell—  
 515 They wash, and to *Ulysses* take their way,  
 So ends the bloody business of the day.

v. 505. *Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare.*] Nothing can better represent to us the Image of these sufferers than this similitude of a bird taken by the neck in a gin or snare. *Hobbs* in his version has omitted it; and *Dacier* has abridg'd the whole description.

*Enstathius* is pleasant upon the death of these wantons. What a certain person, says he, once spoke of a fig-tree, on which his clamorous wife had hang'd herself, viz. *I wish all trees bore such fruit*; may be apply'd to these ropes, *It were to be wish'd that all nooses could catch such birds.* This remark has escap'd the notice of *Madam Dacier*, because the race of clamorous women has been long extinct, and therefore there was no occasion to prescribe a remedy for a disease unknown to these happy ages.



To *Euryclea* then address the King;  
 Bring hither fire, and hither sulphur bring,  
 To purge the palace: then the Queen attend;  
 320 And let her with her matron-train descend;  
 The matron-train with all the virgin band  
 Assemble here, to learn their Lord's command:  
 Then *Euryclea*; Joyful I obey,  
 But cast those mean dishonest rags away;  
 325 Permit me first thy royal robes to bring;  
 Ill suits this garb the shoulders of a King.  
 "Bring sulphur frait and fire (the Monarch cries)  
 She hears, and at the word obedient flies.

v. 327. *Bring sulphur frait and fire.*—] The reason why *Ulysses* orders sulphur to be brought, is, because every thing was thought to be polluted by a dead body, and he uses it by way of purification. The same opinion prevail'd amongst the *Hebrews* as well as *Greeks*, as the Scriptures inform us. Thus also in *Job* it is said, *Bringstone shall be scattered upon his habitation*, xviii. 15. which is thought to allude to this custom. *Livy* mentions this practice amongst the *Romans*, lib. 30. c. 15. *Habet & in religionibus locum ad expiandas suffu- ras domus.*

*Homer* describes the female servants descending with torches; this is done to shew the exact time of the action of this book, which is comprehended in the Evening of the fortieth day.

*Ulysses* forbids *Euryclea* to bring a better Garment; this particularity is inserted with judgment; for the disguise of *Ulysses* in the garb of a beggar contributes to encrease the incredulity of *Penelope*, and consequently to all those doubts and fears, and that struggle between the love of a Husband and the dread of an Impostor, which are the subject of the succeeding Book.

With

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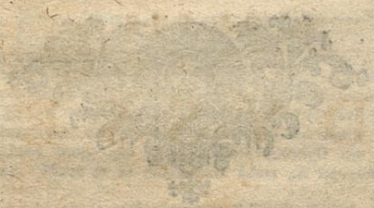
With fire and sulphur, cure of noxious fumes,  
330 He purg'd the walls and blood-polluted rooms.  
Again the matron springs with eager pace,  
And spreads her Lord's return from place to place;  
They hear, rush forth, and instant round him stand,  
A gazing throng, a torch in ev'ry hand.  
335 They saw, they knew him, and with fond embrace  
Each humbly kist his knee, or hand, or face;  
He knows them all; in all such truth appears,  
Ev'n he indulges the sweet joy of tears.



THE

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With this and other fine of various kinds,  
In which the walls and sides pointed round,  
There the motion change with every breeze,  
And the birds that bold & bold place to place  
They their nests build, and others found their food,  
Flying through a forest in every part,  
That now they have built, and with their hands  
The forest is full of birds, and  
The birds are full of birds, and  
The birds are full of birds, and



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