OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TWENTY-THIRD BOOK.

FAMILIAR BOOK

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I.



THIS book contains the Diſcovery of *Ulyſſes* to *Penelope*. Monſieur *Rapin* is very ſevere upon ſome parts of it; whoſe objections I ſhall here recite.

The diſcovery of *Ulyſſes* to his Queen was the moſt favourable occaſion imaginable for the Poet to give us ſome of the niceſt touches of his art; but as he has manag'd it, it has nothing but faint and weak ſurprizes, cold and languiſhing aſtoniſhments, and very little of that delicacy and exquiſiteneſs which ought to expreſs a conjugal tenderneſs: He leaves his wife too long in doubt and diſtruſt, and ſhe is too cautious and circumſpect; the formalities ſhe obſerves in being fully aſſur'd, and her care to act with ſecurity, are ſet down in number and meaſure, leſt ſhe ſhould fall into any miſtake; and this particularity makes the ſtory dull, in a place that ſo much requires briskneſs and livelineſs. Ought not the ſecret inſtinct of her love

to have inſpir'd her with other ſentiments? and ſhould not her heart have told her, what her eyes could not? Love is penetrating, and whiſpers more to us than the ſenſes can convey; but *Homer* underſtood not this Philoſophy: *Virgil*, who makes *Dido* foreſee that *Æneas* deſigns to leave her, would have made better advantage of this favourable opportunity.

The ſtrength of this objection conſiſts chiefly in the long incredulity of *Penelope*, and the ſlowneſs ſhe uſes to make an undeniable diſcovery: This *Rapin* judges to be contrary to the paſſion of love, and conſequently that the Poet writes unnaturally.

There is ſomewhat of the *Frenchman* in this Criticiſm: *Homer* in his opinion wants vivacity; and if *Rapin* had been to have drawn *Ulyſſes*, we had ſeen him all tranſport and ecſtaſy. But where there is moſt fancy, there is often the leaſt judgment. *Penelope* thought *Ulyſſes* to be dead; he had been abſent twenty years; and thro' abſence and his preſent diſguiſe, he was another perſon from that *Ulyſſes* whom ſhe knew, when he ſail'd to *Troy*; ſo that he was become an abſolute ſtranger. From this obſervation we may appeal to the Reader's judgment, if *Penelope*, without full conviction, ought to be perſuaded that this perſon was the real *Ulyſſes?* And how could ſhe be convinc'd, but by asking many queſtions, and deſcending to particularities, which muſt neceſſarily occaſion delay in the diſcovery? If indeed *Ulyſſes* and *Penelope* had met after a ſhorter abſence, when one view would have aſſured her that he was her real husband, then too much tranſport could not have been expreſs'd by the Poet; but this is not the caſe, ſhe is firſt to know her husband, before ſhe could or ought expreſs her fondneſs for his return, otherwiſe ſhe might be in danger of miſplacing it upon an impoſtor: But ſhe is no ſooner convinced that *Ulyſſes* is actually returned, but ſhe receives him with as much fondneſs as can be expreſſed, or as *Rapin* could require.

While yet he ſpeaks, her pow'rs of life decay,
She ſickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:

At length recov'ring, to his arms ſhe flew,
And ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt ſhe grew.

'Till this moment the diſcovery was not evidently made, and her paſſion would have been unſeaſonable; but this is no ſooner done, but ſhe falls into an agony of affection. If ſhe had here appear'd cool and indifferent, there had been weight in *Rapin*'s objections. Beſides, *Ariſtotle* informs us, that there was a Play, call'd *the Falſe* Ulyſſes: It was form'd upon a ſtory of a perſon who deſign'd to ſurprize *Penelope*, and told her, that he was her husband; and to confirm it, pretended to remember a Bow, which he uſed before he went to the ſiege of *Troy*. This ſhews that *Penelope* had been in danger from impoſtors, and it is therefore very prudent in her to be upon the guard, and not to yield without full conviction.

But there is a diſpute of a different nature mention'd by Monſieur *Bayle*; namely, whether if *Penelope* had yielded to an impoſtor, believing him to be really *Ulyſſes*, ſhe had been guilty of adultery? Monſieur *Baſnage* thus argues: "Let us ſuppoſe a "wife tranſported with love for an husband, running eagerly to "the perſon ſhe miſtakes for him: This woman has no deſign "to be deceived, one cannot blame her ardor; it is lawful, if he "proves her real husband: in ſhort, her ignorance is involuntary, "and occaſion'd ſolely by a laudable paſſion for her husband: "Yet, if this perſon prove an adulterer, is the wife entirely ex"cuſable? ought her eagerneſs and precipitation to give her "no uneaſineſs? Undoubtedly it ought, becauſe ſhe is ſuppos'd to "act precipitately, without a full examination: her paſſion is "ſtronger than her reaſon, and therefore ſhe is blameable." The Author of the General Critique on *Maimbourg* is more indulgent: He judges that if a woman does not refuſe a ſtrict examination out of a blameable motive, ſhe is excuſable, tho' ſhe happens to oblige an impoſtor. "If a wife, deceived by the re"ſemblance between her husband and an impoſtor, ſhall allow "the latter all the privileges of the marriage-bed, this action is "no ſtain to her chaſtity; and the husband would be the moſt

" unreaſonable creature breathing, ſhould he blame it as a breach " of conjugal fidelity, provided ſhe is no way acceſſary to the " impoſition." So that according to this Author, tho' the wife is betray'd by her precipitation, yet ſhe is to be accounted innocent; becauſe the precipitation is occaſion'd by a vehemence of love for her husband. But I fear few husbands who ſhould take their wives in ſuch circumſtances would excuſe them, or believe that they had us'd due circumſpection. In ſhort, Monſieur *Bayle* rightly decides the queſtion, by ſaying, that every perſon who acts precipitately is culpable; and that no perſon can act rationally, without a full and ſatisfactory examination. And indeed if this rule were obſerv'd, there would ſcarce be any room for the aforeſaid ſuppoſition. The reſemblance between man and man is never ſo perfect, but the difference upon a ſtrict obſervation is diſcernible; we may therefore conclude, that a wife who ſhould ſuffer ſuch a deceit, was not very unwilling to be deceiv'd; eſpecially when there muſt be between a man and wife a thouſand particularities, which could only be known to the wife and husband, which upon a due ſcrutiny would diſcover the impoſture.

I fear I ſhall be tedious to the Reader, by mentioning another difficulty of a ſimilar nature ſtarted by *Seneca*. " If any " perſon ſhould make an aſſignation with his own wife in diſ- " guiſe, ſuppoſing her to be the wife of another perſon, would " he be guilty of adultery?" He anſwers in the affirmative; tho' the wife her ſelf would be innocent; for he is guilty intentionally. This may be illuſtrated by the example of *Jacob*, who was blameleſs when he was deceiv'd by *Leah*, who perſonated his wife *Rachel*; but *Leah* was culpable, tho' *Jacob* was innocent, for ſhe very well knew that ſhe was not wife to *Jacob*. But this is the province of a Caſuiſt, not of a Commentator.

II.

VERSE 6. Ulyſſes *lives!*---Ulyſſes *comes!*] In the *Greek* it is literally, *Ulyſſes* is come, he is at length come to his Palace. This laſt circumſtance is not a tautology; for, obſerves *Euſtathi-*

us,

us, a perſon may be return'd to his country, and yet never arrive at his family: Thus *Agamemnon* reach'd his dominions in ſafety, but was aſſaſſinated before he came to his Palace. We may obſerve in general, that *Euryclea* and *Penelope* thro' their whole conference ſpeak with brevity; *Homer* was too good a judge of human nature, to repreſent them ſpeaking with prolixity. Paſſion is always in haſte, and delivers itſelf with precipitation; and this is very well painted in this interview: *Euryclea* is in a tranſport of joy for the return of *Ulyſſes*, and *Penelope* has all her affections awaken'd at the news of it.

III.

VERSE 15. *The righteous pow'rs who tread the ſtarry skies,*
The weak enlighten, and confound the wiſe.]

This is an admirable ſentiment: it is conſonant to many expreſſions in the holy Scriptures. God is the Lord of ſpirits, and gives and takes away as ſeems beſt to his infinite wiſdom. The thoughts of man, as well as his life, are equally in the power of the Almighty.

IV.

VERSE 21. *Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy*, &c.] *Homer*, obſerves *Euſtathius*, very judiciouſly mentions this profound ſleep of *Penelope*; for it might have been thought improbable, that ſhe ſhould not wake at the noiſe and confuſion of the battle. It was ſolely to reconcile it to credibility, that in a preceding book *Pallas* was introduced to throw her into it: beſides, the womens apartment was always in the upper part of the houſe, and was from thence call'd ὑπερῷον: and conſequently *Penelope* was at a ſufficient diſtance from the place of the combat, and may be eaſily ſuppos'd not to be wak'd by it.

The circumſtance of *Penelope*'s not being awak'd by the cries of the Suitors, furniſhes us with a reaſon why they are not heard by the *Ithacans* that liv'd near the Palace: for if ſhe who is within

in the Palace is not diſturb'd by noiſe, it is credible enough, that the *Greeks* who liv'd at ſome diſtance from the Palace ſhould not hear it.

V.

VERSE 35. ------*The Queen in tranſport ſprung*
Swift from the couch-----]

We are not to gather from this tranſport of *Penelope*, that ſhe is fully convinc'd of the return of *Ulyſſes*: She is yet incredulous; but ſhe muſt have been inſenſible if ſhe had continu'd unmov'd at the mention of the arrival of an husband, whoſe return has been deſcrib'd thro' the whole *Odyſſey* as the chief object of all her deſires. Beſides, ſhe receives the death of the Suitors with joy; ſhe cannot disbelieve the teſtimony of *Euryclea* concerning their deaths; but thinking it impoſſible that they ſhould be ſlain by any one perſon, ſhe aſcribes their deſtruction not to *Ulyſſes*, but a Deity. But then is not ſuch a ſuppoſition extravagant? and can it be reconcil'd to probability, that a God ſhould really be ſuppos'd to deſcend to work their deſtruction? It may be anſwer'd, that the exceſs of the aſſertion ought to be aſcrib'd to the exceſs of joy in the ſpeaker: *Penelope* is in a tranſport, and no wonder if ſhe ſpeaks with amplification: ſhe judges it impoſſible that ſuch a great event ſhould be wrought by a mortal hand; and it is therefore very natural, while ſhe is under a ſurprize, and her thoughts rais'd above the bounds of calm Reaſon, to aſcribe it to a Deity.

It has been believ'd that all the notions of good and bad Dæmons that prevail'd among the Ancients were borrow'd from truth, and that they received them by tradition from the offices of good and bad Angels: If I might be allow'd to make this ſuppoſition, then what *Penelope* here ſpeaks may be reconcil'd to ſtrict verity; then we may find a reaſon why ſhe may without extravagance aſcribe the Suitors deaths to a Dæmon, or Deity. Thus, 2 *Kings*, *cap.* xix. *v.* 35. *That night the Angel of the Lord went out and ſmote in the camp of the Aſſyrians an hundred four-*

ſcore

ſcore and five thouſand. If this ſuppoſition be thought diſallowable, the former will be a ſufficient vindication. I will only add that the Poet artfully turns the incredulity of *Penelope* to the praiſe of *Ulyſſes*; the exploit was ſo great, that no mortal was brave enough to perform it; it muſt therefore be wrought by a God; but this God is at length diſcover'd to be *Ulyſſes*.

VI.

VERSE 83. *The works of Gods what mortal can ſurvey?*] This aſſertion is made with great judgment. *Euryclea* had given almoſt a demonſtrative proof that ſhe was not miſtaken in the perſon of *Ulyſſes:* ſhe had inſtanced in the ſcar which he received by a boar on mount *Parnaſſus*; and this ſeem'd to be an undeniable evidence of her veracity: what method then could the Poet take to carry on *Penelope*'s incredulity, and give her room to reſiſt ſuch evidence with any appearance of reaſon? This is very well explain'd by *Euſtathius*. *Penelope* (obſerves that Author) anſwers with profound wiſdom; her words are ſhort, but contain excellent truth and morality: This is her meaning: "*Euryclea*, "you appeal to your ſenſes for the truth of your affirmation: "you ſaw the wound, and touch'd it as you bath'd him; and "he forbad you to make a diſcovery of his perſon: from hence "you conclude, that it is *Ulyſſes* who has ſlain the Suitors; not "remembring that the Gods are able thus to ſhew themſelves "to man, and aſſume at their pleaſure ſuch diſguiſes: How then "do you know but this is a God? Are you able to know the "ways of a Deity?" To this *Euryclea* makes no reply; from whence we may gather, that it was believ'd to be an undeniable truth, that the divine Beings ſometimes aſſum'd the ſhape of man, and appear'd viſibly upon earth. Such expreſſions as theſe might almoſt perſuade us of the reality of a former conjecture, that theſe notions were borrow'd from a tradition of the appearances of Angels; they being ſo conſonant to the teſtimony of the holy Scriptures, and ſo agreeable to the manifeſtations of thoſe cœleſtial Beings.

VERSE

VII.

VERSE 89. *At ev'ry step debates, her Lord to prove,*
Or rushing to his arms, confess her love.]

Penelope apprehends that the person mentioned by *Euryclea* is not *Ulysses*; yet her apprehensions are not so strong as to exclude all hopes that he is her husband; in this state of uncertainty she descends, doubtful whether to meet him as such, or first to prove him whether he be the real *Ulysses*; and this explains her conduct in this place: If he evidently were *Ulysses*, she ought to receive him with transport; but if he be not *Ulysses*, then all such advances would be acts of immodesty, and a reproach to her prudence. Ladies are best judges of what is decent amongst Ladies, and Madam *Dacier* affirms, that the point of decency is well maintain'd by *Homer* thro' this whole interview; and that Antiquity can shew nothing wherein a severity of manners is better observ'd. And indeed it must be allow'd that in this respect *Penelope* proceeds with no more than a necessary caution; it would have been very absurd to have describ'd her flying to the embraces of a stranger, merely upon the testimony of *Euryclea*, without waiting for a personal and ocular demonstration.

VIII.

VERSE 93. *The Monarch, by a column high enthron'd.*] The circumstance of persons of figure being plac'd by a column occurs frequently in the *Odyssey*, it may therefore be necessary to explain it: it is mention'd twice in the eighth book, πρὸς κίονα μακρὸν ἐρείσας, but being there apply'd to *Demodocus* who was blind, it may be thought to mean only that he lean'd against the pillar by reason of his blindness: but this is not the full import of the words, they denote dignity; and a seat erected near the column was a seat of distinction. Thus 2 *Kings* xi. 14. *Behold the King stood by a pillar,* ἐπὶ τῦ σύλυ, *as the manner was, and the Princes, &c. by the King.* Thus we see the Royal station

station was by some remarkable Pillar; *Josephus* expresses it by ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, which probably is a *corruption*; it ought to be ἐπὶ τῆς στήλης, *juxta columnam*: Thus again, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 3. *And the King stood by a pillar, and made a covenant,* &c. So that by this expression of *Ulysses* being seated by a column, we are to understand that he receiv'd *Penelope* as a King; he took the royal seat, to convince her that he was the real *Ulysses*.

IX.

VERSE 94. ------*withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;*
Curious to hear his Queen the silence break.]

We have all along been vindicating the conduct of *Penelope*, for not immediately acknowledging *Ulysses*. Her ignorance of his person is her vindication; but how then is *Ulysses* to be justify'd, who is in no doubt about *Penelope*? Why does not he fly with transport to the wife of his affection? The reason is very evident: he very well knows that *Penelope* is uncertain about his person; he therefore forbears to offer violence to her modesty by any caresses, while she is in this state of uncertainty, and which decency requires her to refuse, till she is assur'd that the person who offers them is *Ulysses*.

Homer tells us, that *Ulysses* turn'd his eyes toward the ground. *Eustathius* imagines, that he does it that *Penelope* may not immediately discover him; but perhaps the Poet intended no more than to draw *Ulysses* here, as he drew him in the *Iliad, Lib.* 3. and describe him according to his usual behaviour.

-----*In thought profound,*
His modest eyes he fix'd upon the ground.

Thus also he is represented by *Ovid, Metam. lib.* 13.

Astitit atque oculos paulum tellure moratos,
Sustulit -----

Then from his ſeat aroſe Laertes' *ſon,*
Look'd down a-while, and paus'd ere he begun. Dryden.

X.

VERSE 96. *Amaz'd ſhe ſate, and impotent to ſpeak.*] The Reader will certainly be curious to know how *Penelope* accoſts *Ulyſſes* in this firſt interview, and the Poet manages it with excellent judgment: She muſt be ſuppos'd to be under a great ſurprize and confuſion of thought, this ſurprize takes away her ſpeech; ſhe is toſt between hopes and fears, and conſequently it is very natural, before ſhe ſpeaks, to examine him with her eyes.

XI.

VERSE 106. *The Gods have form'd that rigid heart of ſtone.*] It has been objected that *Telemachus* here makes too free a remonſtrance to *Penelope*; and that he is wanting in reverence towards his mother. *Euſtathius* anſwers, that he ſpeaks no more than *Ulyſſes* ſays himſelf, in the proceſs of the ſtory, and conſequently he is no more blameable. But the caſe is not the ſame, there is a difference between a ſon and a husband, and what is decent in the mouth of the latter would be irreverent in the former. *Spondanus* is of opinion, that he offends againſt decency, *juveniliter nimis inſultavit*; and *Ulyſſes* ſeems to repreſs his ardor.

Indulge, my ſon, the cautions of the wiſe---
No more-----

Dacier anſwers, that *Telemachus* being fully aſſur'd that it is the real *Ulyſſes*, ſeems ſhock'd at the indifference of *Penelope*. And indeed the warmth of the expreſſion is to be imputed to the emotion of the ſpeaker; ſo that we are not to look upon it as an outrage of decency toward *Penelope*, but a warm expoſtulation occaſion'd by his zeal for *Ulyſſes*.

VERSE

XII.

VERSE 116. *The garb of Poverty belies the King.*] This expreſſion furniſhes another cauſe for the incredulity of *Penelope*; *Ulyſſes* imputes it to his diſguiſe, and is far from reſenting it as a want of conjugal affection. I muſt confeſs, that here may ſeem to be an unſeaſonable tranſition: *Homer* brings *Ulyſſes* and *Penelope* together, raiſes our expectations to ſee a warm and tender deſcription at the diſcovery of the husband to the wife, and all of a ſudden he ſtarts from the ſubject, and leaves us under an uncertainty equal to that of *Penelope*. The ſcene cloſes too abruptly, and *Homer* acts like one who invites his gueſts to an entertainment, and when they were ſate down with an eager appetite, takes away their dinner. But then it may be anſwer'd, that the occaſion preſſes: *Ulyſſes* finds it neceſſary to provide for his own ſafety, before the people of *Ithaca* are inform'd of the ſlaughter of the Suitors; this is the dictate of good ſenſe; he firſt acts the wiſe man, by guarding againſt an imminent danger; and then ſhews the tender husband, by his affection to *Penelope*: and this is the reaſon why he adjourns the diſcovery. Beſides, this interval, which is very ſhort, gives time to *Penelope* to recollect her ſpirits from ſurprize, and makes her miſtreſs of her own thoughts. In that view the Reader is to look upon this break, like a pauſe between the acts in a Tragedy, and as an artful interruption to introduce the unravelling more naturally, and with greater probability.

XIII.

VERSE 119. *If one man's blood*——] *Ulyſſes* here argues very concluſively: If the perſon who has ſhed one man's blood only, and that man of inferior ſtation; if he is yet oblig'd to fly into baniſhment, leſt he ſhould be ſlain by any of the dead perſon's relations or friends; what have they to fear, who have not only ſlain one man, but above an hundred, and theſe not

Plebeians, but Princes? They muſt neceſſarily have many avengers, who will be ready to purſue our lives.

But it may be objected, that *Ulyſſes* is a King, and therefore above apprehenſions of puniſhment. 'Tis true, *Ulyſſes* is a King, yet ſubject to the laws; his government was not ſo deſpotic, as to have no reaſon to fear the reſentments of the chief families of his ſubjects, whoſe heirs were ſlain by his hand. I cannot entirely agree with *Dacier* in this laſt ſentiment: *Ulyſſes* had only done an act of juſtice upon theſe offenders, and had tranſgreſs'd no law by it, and ought therefore to apprehend no vengeance from the law. I ſhould rather aſcribe the apprehenſions of *Ulyſſes* to a fear of a ſudden aſſault from the friends of the Suitors before he could diſcover himſelf to be the real *Ulyſſes*. He is afraid of an aſſaſſination, not a legal puniſhment; the rage of the people, not the juſtice of the law.

XIV.

VERSE 121. *Th' important deed our whole attention calls.*] *Ulyſſes*, to prove *Telemachus*, and to form a judgment of his wiſdom, asks his advice upon the preſent emergence; but the Poet in his anſwer obſerves a due decency: *Telemachus* pays a laudable deference to the ſuperior wiſdom of *Ulyſſes*, and modeſtly ſubmits to his judgment. What we are to gather from this conduct is, that no perſon ſhould be ſo ſelf-confiding in his own judgment, as to deſpiſe that of other men, tho' thoſe men are inferior in wiſdom.

XV.

VERSE 135. *That hence th' eluded paſſengers may ſay,*
Lo! the Queen weds-----]

This is an inſtance of the art of *Ulyſſes*, eſſential to his character, and maintain'd thro' the whole *Odyſſey*. *Euſtathius* excellently explains the reaſon of this conduct: The Suitors had been accuſtomed to retire from the Palace, and ſleep in other places by night:

it

it would therefore have alarm'd the whole city, and made them apprehenſive that ſome calamity had befallen them, if there had not appeared a ſeeming reaſon why they return'd not to their ſeveral houſes as uſual: *Ulyſſes* therefore invents this ſtratagem to deceive them into an opinion that they ſtay'd to celebrate the Queen's nuptials. But there appears to be a ſtrong objection againſt this part of the relation; we have already ſeen the Suitors ſlain, without being heard by the *Ithacans* of the city; is it then probable that the ſound of the muſic ſhould be heard abroad, when the cries, ſhouts and groans, during the fight were not heard out of the Palace? Was the muſic louder than theſe united noiſes? It is not eaſy to ſolve this difficulty, unleſs we are allow'd to imagine that the more than uſual ſtay of the Suitors in the Palace had rais'd the curioſity of ſome of the *Ithacans* to enquire the reaſon of it; who conſequently approaching the Palace might hear the muſic and dancing, and conclude that it was occaſion'd by the Queen's marriage. Beſides, in the ſtillneſs of the night, a lower ſound may be further heard, than one more loud, during the noiſe and hurry of the day: it being evident from the preceding book, that the fight was by day.

XVI.

VERSE 137. ------*'Till we remove*
Far from the court -----]

It may be ask'd, what occaſions this receſs of *Ulyſſes*? Will he be better able to reſiſt his enemies in the country than in the city? The anſwer is, he withdraws that he may avoid the firſt reſentments of the *Ithacans*, upon the diſcovery of the death of the Suitors: Beſides, it is by this method in his power to conceal his perſon, till the violence of the people is ſettled; or raiſe a party to reſiſt their efforts: at the worſt, he is certain to ſecure his flight, if his affairs ſhould be reduc'd to extremities.

VERSE

XVII.

VERSE 171. *Diſpatchful ſpread*
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.]

Theſe words have given occaſion of cenſure from Monſieur *de la Mothe de Vayer*: According to whom the precaution of *Penelope* is not much to be admir'd; "*Ulyſſes* made himſelf ſuſpicious by expreſſing ſo much eagerneſs to go to bed with *Penelope*; ſhe was ſo far from having time enough to know him, that ſhe had ſcarce ſpoke three words to him, but he bluntly commands *Euryclea* to get the bed ready for them." So that, according to this Author, *Penelope* miſtruſts his impatience; ſhe imagines the reaſon why he is ſo haſty, is becauſe he fears that a longer time would diſcover his impoſture, and fruſtrate his deſires: And indeed if *Ulyſſes* had given ſuch a command, the objection had not been without a foundation. But *La Mothe is* deceiv'd: *Ulyſſes* does not ask a bed for himſelf and *Penelope*, but for himſelf alone, becauſe his wife vouchſaf'd not to come near him, and uſed him with a ſeeming cruelty.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι μαῖα στόρεσον λέχος ὄφρα καὶ αὐτὸς
Λέξομαι ----

which is literally enough render'd in the tranſlation.

Haſte Euryclea, *and diſpatchful ſpread*
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed.

XVIII.

VERSE 175. *Ah no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,*
A foe to pride; no adamant is there.]

It is not eaſy to tranſlate this paſſage literally.

--- 87

------ὅτ᾽ ἄρτι μεγαλίζομαι, οὐδ᾽ ἀθερίζω,
Οὐδ᾽ ἔτι λίην ἄγαμαι.

Euſtathius explains μεγαλίζομαι to ſignifie, *I am not of a proud heart*; ἀθερίζω, *I deſpiſe not your poverty*; ἄγαμαι, *I am no longer under an aſtoniſhment*; or, οὐδ᾽ ἔτι λίην ἐκπλήττομαι, *I ceaſe to be ſurpriz'd at what I ſee and hear.* Thus *Penelope* ſpeaks negatively, and the meaning of her words are, that ſhe is not influenced by pride or cruelty, to perſiſt in her incredulity, but by a laudable care and caution. *Euſtathius* propoſes *Penelope* as a pattern to all women upon the like occaſion: her own eyes perſuade her that the perſon with whom ſhe confers is *Ulyſſes*; *Euryclea* acknowledges her maſter; *Telemachus* his father; yet ſhe dares not immediately credit her own eyes, *Euryclea*, or *Telemachus*: and the ſame Author concludes with a pretty obſervation, that *Ulyſſes* found it eaſier to ſubdue above an hundred enemies than the diffidence and incredulity of *Penelope*.

XIX.

VERSE 183. *Thus ſpeaks the Queen, ſtill dubious*----] It muſt be allow'd that this is a very artful turn of thought in *Penelope*. *Ulyſſes* commands a bed to be prepar'd, *Penelope* catches the word, and ſeeming to conſent, orders *Euryclea* to carry the bed out of the bridal apartment, and prepare it. Now this bed was of ſuch a nature as to be inwrought into the ſubſtance of the apartment it ſelf, and could not be remov'd; if therefore *Ulyſſes* had acquieſc'd in the injunction given by *Penelope*, and not diſcover'd the impoſſibility of it, ſhe might very juſtly have concluded him an impoſtor, being manifeſtly ignorant of the ſecret of his own marriage-bed.

But *Euſtathius* ſtarts an objection againſt this whole proceſs of the diſcovery, which he calls inſolvible; and indeed if *Homer* fails in the unravelling of his Poem, he is to be ſeverely blam'd: *Tully* is of this opinion, *Illic enim debet toto animo a poetâ in diſſolutionem*

lutionem nodi agi; eaque præcipua fabulæ pars eſt, quæ requirit diligentiam. The difficulty rais'd by *Euſtathius* is as follows: *Penelope* imagines that the perſon who pretends to be her husband, is not really *Ulyſſes*, but a God, who not only aſſumes his form, but, to favour the impoſture, the reſemblance of the wound receiv'd from the boar: Now if he be a God, how is it poſſible ſhe ſhould conceive him to be ignorant of the ſecret of the marriage-bed, and conſequently how can ſhe be convinc'd of the reality of *Ulyſſes* from his knowledge of it, when it muſt neceſſarily be known to a God, as well as to the real *Ulyſſes?* all that ſhe ought to gather from it is, that the perſon with whom ſhe ſpeaks is *Ulyſſes*, or a God. *Euſtathius* replies, that *Penelope* upon the diſcovery of the ſecret makes no ſcruple to yield; becauſe whether it be *Ulyſſes*, or a God, her caſe is happy: if he prove to be *Ulyſſes*, ſhe has her wiſhes; if a God, it is no ſmall piece of good fortune. *Dacier* condemns this ſolution, and tells us, that *Penelope* was ſo faithful to her husband, that ſhe would not have receiv'd even a God into the place of *Ulyſſes*: The true anſwer (continues that Author) is to be drawn from the Pagan Theology, according to which the inferior Deities were ſuppos'd to have a finite knowledge, and conſequently *Penelope* might think the diſcovery of the nature of the nuptial-bed a full conviction of the reality of *Ulyſſes*, it being ſo great a ſecret that even a God might be ignorant of it. But this is all fancy; for allowing this perſon to be a God, why might not *Penelope* imagine him to be a Deity of the ſuperior order, and for that reaſon well acquainted with the ſecrets of this nuptial bow'r? eſpecially becauſe *Jupiter* himſelf was notorious for ſuch amorous illuſions. *Dacier* her ſelf confeſſes this to be no juſt ſolution, but gives a very different reaſon: How is it poſſible (ſays ſhe) that this bed and whole apartment ſhould be built by the ſingle hand of *Ulyſſes*, without being ſeen by any perſon while he builds it? or how can any one be aſſured that a ſecret that is known to a third perſon (*Actoris*) is not thro' weakneſs or intereſt diſcovered to others? 'Tis true, the manner of the diſcovery entirely depends upon the choice of the Poet, but I could wiſh that he had choſen a method more

probable

probable than this of the nuptial bed, which in my judgment (continues the ſame Author) is unworthy of the *Odyſſey*. I am perſuaded that this is one of the places where (as *Horace* writes) *Homer* nods.

I will lay together what occurs to me by way of reply. The firſt objection is, that *Penelope* imagines *Ulyſſes* to be a God, and conſequently his knowledge of the nuptial bed ought not to have induc'd her to believe him to be the real *Ulyſſes*: The anſwer is, *Penelope* thought him a God only during her firſt tranſport; it is to be imputed to her ſurprize, that ſhe at all thinks him a Deity: This is very evident, for from the moment ſhe ſaw him, the thought of his divinity vaniſhes, and ſhe never mentions one word concerning ſuch a ſuppoſition, nay from the firſt glance ſhe almoſt believes him to be the real *Ulyſſes*.

O'er all the man her eyes ſhe rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.

She is ſo far from thinking him a Deity, that ſhe is almoſt perſuaded that he is her husband. If this be allow'd, the firſt difficulty ceaſes: For granting her belief that the perſon before her is a real man, and that no man but *Ulyſſes* was acquainted with the nuptial bed; it follows, that this man is the real *Ulyſſes*, and that this incident is not ill choſen by the Poet, in the diſcovery of *Ulyſſes*.

Dacier objects, that this apartment could not poſſibly be erected without being known to other perſons; but we have ſeen *Ulyſſes* build a ſhip in a ſolitary Iſland, without the aſſiſtance of any man, in the fifth *Odyſſey*; and why may he not then be allow'd to do the ſame, with reſpect to this nuptial bower? All kind of arts in Mechanics were anciently practis'd by the greateſt perſonages, and their knowledge and dexterity in them was eſteem'd a glory. This conſideration may perhaps reconcile the Reader to this part of the diſcovery.

The only difficulty that now remains is this: *Actoris*, a female ſervant, is allow'd to be in the ſecret; how then can *Penelope* be

aſſur'd that ſhe has not betray'd it? *Homer* himſelf obviates this objection; he has in a very ſolemn manner told us, that only twelve of all the female train were guilty of a breach of truſt, and therefore *Penelope* may ſafely rely upon the fidelity of *Actoris*. Beſides, it adds no ſmall weight to this vindication of *Homer*, to obſerve, that the whole procedure of the diſcovery is accidental; how could *Ulyſſes* fore-know that the proof of his veracity would depend upon his knowledge of the bridal bower? and conſequently it is not to be imagin'd that he ſhould have made any clandeſtine enquiries about it: It may be added, that *Ulyſſes* has been no more than five days upon the *Ithacan* ſhores, and probably had never ſeen *Actoris*, who alone was acquainted with the nature of this bed: no perſon was anciently permitted to enter the womens apartment, but fathers, husbands, or brothers; this therefore was the greateſt ſecret in all families; this ſecret *Penelope* propoſes in the tryal of *Ulyſſes*, and upon his knowledge of it receives him as her husband. To inſtance almoſt in a parallel caſe; *Oreſtes* in *Euripides* tells *Iphigenia*, that the lance which *Pelops* uſed in the combat againſt *Ænomaus* was lodg'd in her apartment; this circumſtance convinces her that the perſon who knew this ſecret muſt be her brother *Oreſtes*, no perſons of a more diſtant relation being admitted into ſuch privacies.

XX.

VERSE 193. *Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk on high*
The huge trunc roſe----]

I will not promiſe that the Reader will be pleas'd with this deſcription of the nuptial bower: the *Greek* is noble, and the words ſounding and harmonious; an happineſs that is wanting in our language. In this and the like caſes the tranſlator muſt ſay with *Lucretius* upon a like occaſion,

------Graiorum obſcura reperta
Difficile illuſtrare Latinis verſibus eſſe,
Propter Egeſtatem linguæ, & rerum novitatem.

Beſides,

Beſides, it muſt be allow'd that the relation it ſelf is very wonderful; for it is not eaſy to conceive that the bole of an olive-tree ſhould be ſo large as to contain upon the dimenſions of it a whole bedſted. I would willingly imagine that it is only a ſupporter of it. It is likewiſe ſomewhat extraordinary that this olive-tree is not fell'd, or cut up from the roots; for *Euſtathius* informs us, that πελάμων ſignifies *to cut aſunder at ſome diſtance from the earth*; ſo that a great part of the trunc is left ſtanding, upon which *Ulyſſes* builds his bridal bed. What occurs to me upon this incident is, that *Homer* muſt be imagin'd to write according to the cuſtoms of the age in which he liv'd, unleſs we can ſuppoſe he unneceſſarily invented an abſurdity; I therefore doubt not but there were anciently ſuch beds as this of *Ulyſſes*. Beſides, the more wonderful this bed is, the better it ſerves for the purpoſe of *Homer*, in convincing us that the perſon who was acquainted with a matter ſo uncommon muſt be the real *Ulyſſes*, and not an impoſtor; it is for this purpoſe that the Poet deſcribes the bower built round the olive-tree, before the framing of the bed is at all mention'd.

Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r,
And roof'd defenſive of the ſtorm and ſhow'r;
Then lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and ſmooth'd the ſhining grain.

This I ſay is particularly deſcrib'd by *Homer*, to convince us that the place where the bed ſtood was entirely ſecret; it being clos'd up from obſervation before this partic ular apartment was undertaken, and therefore the knowledge of it was a ſtrong argument that the perſon who was acquainted with it muſt be the real *Ulyſſes*.

XXI.

VERSE 231. *Like me had* Helen *fear'd* ----] This paſſage occaſioned great diſputes amongſt the ancient Critics; ſome contended for the common punctuation; others thus read it,

Εἰ ἤδη. -----

Then the meaning of the paſſage is thus to be underſtood. *Helen* would not have yielded to a ſtranger, if ſhe had known that ſtranger. εἰ ἤδη. ἀνδρὶ is to be underſtood according to this interpretation. The ſame Critics thus conſtrue the following words,

Ὅ μιν αὖτις ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν, &c.

Ὅ is the ſame with δι' ὃ, *propter hanc cauſam*, and the whole paſſage is thus to be tranſlated, *If* Helen *had known the ſtranger, ſhe would not have yielded to him; therefore the* Greeks *roſe in arms to free her from the impoſtor.* They defend this application by having recourſe to a tradition, that *Paris could never have* obtain'd the conſent of *Helen* if *Venus* had not given him the reſemblance of *Menelaus*, in whoſe form he prevail'd upon that fatal beauty: otherwiſe the inſtance is no way paralel; for if *Helen* was not deceived, how can her example be brought to induce *Penelope* to act with caution, leſt ſhe take an impoſtor to her bed inſtead of an husband? I confeſs this conſtruction of the *Greek* appears to me very obſcure; contrary to the ſtyle of *Homer*, which is always clear and natural. Beſides, it contradicts the whole ſtory of *Helen* thro' the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*, and ſhe herſelf no where alledges this deceit as her excuſe, but frequently condemns her own conduct in forſaking the bed of *Menelaus*. But granting that ſhe was thus deceiv'd originally, the deceit muſt neceſſarily ſoon appear, and yet ſhe voluntarily cohabits many years with *Paris*. The other interpretation may therefore perhaps be preferable; namely, if *Helen* had conſider'd what evils might enſue from her injury to *Menelaus*, ſhe would have acted more wiſely: This *Penelope* introduces to vindicate her conduct in acting with ſo much caution; ſhe oppoſes her warineſs to the inconſiderateneſs of *Helen*, and aſcribes all the calamities of *Greece* to it.

VERSE

XXII.

VERSE 260. *But* Pallas *backward held the riſing day.*] We are not to look upon this merely as a poetical ornament, there is no neceſſity for it. The battle between the Suitors and *Ulyſſes* happen'd in the evening; ſince then we have ſeen the Palace purify'd, the dead Suitors carried away, and the female ſervants puniſh'd; *Euryclea* has held a long conference with *Penelope*, there has been ſinging and dancing in the Palace, and an interview at large deſcribed between *Ulyſſes* and *Penelope*; then the Poet proceeds to re-capitulate the ſtory of the whole *Odyſſey*: Now all theſe incidents could not be comprehended in the compaſs of one night: *Homer* therefore, to reconcile it to probability, introduces *Minerva* to protract it, and make the time proportionable to the incidents. But perhaps it may be thought a violent machine, and contrary to the eſtabliſh'd laws of Nature, to ſuppoſe the courſe of the night alterable: the anſwer is, Poets are allow'd to write according to common fame, and what *Homer* here relates could not ſhock the ears of the Ancients, who had before heard of the like ſtory at the conception of *Hercules*. I will only obſerve, that *Homer* gives no more than two horſes to *Aurora*'s Chariot, *Lampus* and *Phaethon*; whereas the Chariot of the ſun is deſcrib'd with four: Thus *Ovid*,

Interea volucres Pyroeis, Eous, & Æthon,
Solis equi, quartuſque Phlegon.

XXIII.

VERSE 278. *Knowledge may grieve, but fear diſtracts the heart.*] *Ulyſſes* had ſaid in the ſentence immediately preceding,

A labour long, and hard, remains.

This

This could not fail of alarming *Penelope*, and raiſing all her curioſity to know it. *Homer* would greatly have offended againſt nature, if he had not deſcrib'd her under an impatience upon the mention of it; her fondneſs is too ſincere to be indifferent upon ſuch a ſuggeſtion, but her anſwer to *Ulyſſes* chiefly demands obſervation.

If heav'n a kind releaſe from ills foreſhows,
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!

This diſcovers a greatneſs of ſpirit worthy of a Queen and Heroine: ſhe is threatned to loſe *Ulyſſes* by a ſecond abſence, ſhe is alarmed with a new train of his ſufferings; but being inform'd that all theſe calamities will end in a proſperous iſſue, that long life and happineſs attend him, ſhe not only takes courage perſonally, but comforts her husband. *Homer* was too good a judge of decency to aſcribe the weakneſs that attends the generality of that ſex to *Penelope*; ſhe has a bravery of ſoul worthy of a Heroine in Epic Poetry. Beſides, this is a further inſtance of *Homer's* judgment: the event of the *Odyſſey* is to ſhew *Ulyſſes* happy; now if the Poet had not fully ſatisfy'd the Reader in this reſpect, he had not reinſtated his Heroe in proſperity, and conſequently had defeated the Moral of the *Odyſſey*, which is to ſhew wiſdom and virtue triumphant, by repreſenting his Heroe after all difficulties ſettled in full tranquillity.

XXIV.

VERSE 317. *-----His fair ſpouſe* Ulyſſes *led*
To the chaſte love-rights of the nuptial bed.]

The Reader may be pleas'd to conſult the Annotations on book XI. *p.* 136. concerning the anſwer of *Ulyſſes* to *Penelope*; it being a repetition from that part of the *Odyſſey*.

Euſtathius informs us, that *Ariſtarchus*, and *Ariſtophanes* the *Grammarian*, thought the verſe quoted at the head of this remark to be the concluſion of the *Odyſſey*, and conſequently they judged the

the remaining part of this book and the whole 24th ſuppoſititious: thoſe who were of a contrary opinion reply'd, that by ending the Poem with that verſe, many incidents of great importance would be rejected; for inſtance, the recapitulation of the whole *Odyſſey*, and eſpecially the diſcovery of *Ulyſſes* to his father *Laertes*, with all the beatiful fictions contain'd in it. They add, that if the little relation that the beginning of that book bears to the ſubject of the Poem be a reaſon for the rejection of it, we muſt for the ſame reaſon abridge the Poem, and reject a multitude of the Fables which are ſcatter'd thro' the whole courſe of it. It may therefore be conjectured that *Ariſtarchus* and *Ariſtophanes* were not of opinion that the Poem ended with this verſe, but only the moſt neceſſary and important incidents. *Caſaubon* in a remark upon a paſſage of *Strabo*, favours the opinion of *Ariſtarchus*, for he there ſpeaks of the laſt book as if he ſuſpected it to be ſpurious; and *Rapin* joyns in the ſame judgment. *Homer* is to be defended in another manner, than by ſuch arguments as are brought in anſwer to *Ariſtarchus*. The ſame objection has been made againſt the two laſt books of the *Iliad*, as againſt theſe of the *Odyſſey*; the former ought to have ended with the deciſive action in the death of *Hector*, and the latter with the diſcovery of *Ulyſſes* to *Penelope*, when his happineſs ſeems to be eſtabliſh'd. But there is no weight in theſe objections. There is a difference between the *unravelling* of the action, and the full *accompliſhment* of it; the Action is unravell'd by the death of the Suitors; but there are conſequences ariſing from their deaths that hinder the accompliſhment of the action; namely, the danger of the reſentments of their friends, who riſe in arms to revenge their ſlaughter; and till their inſurrection is pacify'd, *Ulyſſes* cannot be ſaid to be in a ſtate of ſecurity. The ſubject of the *Iliad* is the Anger of *Achilles*; that of the *Odyſſey*, the Re-eſtabliſhment of *Ulyſſes* in his dominions; now the anger of *Achilles* ends not with the death of *Hector*, nor is *Ulyſſes* fully re-eſtabliſhed by the death of the Suitors; he has another obſtacle to overcome, and till the commotions of the *Ithacans* are appeas'd, the deſign of the Poem is not executed, which is to ſhew *Ulyſſes* in peaceful poſſeſſion of his

his Palace and Authority. We see in this very book, that *Ulysses* is forc'd to fly from his own Palace; can he then be said to be re-establish'd in tranquillity? this very action demonstrates, that what follows is part of the subject of the Poem, and such a part, as if it had not been related, would have given us room to have imagin'd that *Homer* had never finish'd it, or that the conclusion of it had been lost. The beginning of the Action is his sailing from *Troy* toward his country; the middle contains all the calamities he sustains in his return, the disorders of his family before and after it; and the end of the Action is his re-establishment in the peaceful possession of his kingdoms, when he is acknowledg'd by his wife, father, family, and subjects: now this is not compleated till the very end of the last book, and consequently that book is not spurious, but essential. The Poet had ended very injudiciously, if he had stopp'd before; for the Reader would have remain'd unsatisfy'd in two necessary points, *viz.* how he was made known to *Laertes*, and what vengeance the chief families of the nation endeavour'd to take against the destroyers of their sons; but this storm being once blown over, and all his subjects who had taken arms being either vanquish'd or appeas'd, the Action is compleated in all its parts, and consummates the *Odyssey*.

XXV.

VERSE 324. *A mournful story of domestic woes.*] It is with great judgment that the Poet passes thus briefly over the story of *Penelope*; he makes her impatience to hear the history of *Ulysses* the pretended occasion of her conciseness; the true reason is, he is unwilling to tire his Reader by repeating what he already knows: It is likewise remarkable, that *Ulysses* does not begin his own adventures by a detail of his sufferings during the war of *Troy*; for this would have been foreign to the design of the *Odyssey*; but with his sailing from *Troy* to the *Cicons*, and enters directly into the subject of it. He likewise concludes an Epitome of the whole

Odyssey

Odyſſey in the compaſs of one and thirty lines; and purpoſely contracts it, becauſe we are already acquainted with the whole relation.

Lycophron has given us a ſummary of the wandrings of *Ulyſſes*; which if any one is deſirous to compare with this of *Homer*, he will ſee the difference between a clear, and an obſcure Writer. *Tibullus* in his *Panegyric* on *Meſſala* has been more ſucceſsful than *Lycophron*, he follows the order of *Homer*, and treads directly in his footſteps.

Nam Ciconumque manus adverſis repulit armis,
Non valuit Lotos captos avertere curſus;
Ceſſit & Ætnæe Neptunius incola rupis,
Victa Maronæo fœdatus lumina Baccho.
Vexit & Æolios placidum per Nerea ventos;
Incultos adiit Læſtrygonas, &c.

Dacier is of opinion, that this recapitulation in *Homer* has a very good effect. I will tranſlate her obſervation. We learn from it, that the ſubject of the *Odyſſey* is not alone the return of *Ulyſſes* to his country, and his re-eſtabliſhment in it; but that it comprehends all his wandrings and all his voyages; all that he ſaw, or ſuffer'd in his return to it; in a word, all that he underwent after he ſet ſail from the ſhores of *Troy*: Another advantage we reap from it is, that we ſee the order and train of the adventures of his Heroe, as they really happen'd, naturally and hiſtorically: for in his relation of them in his Poem, he uſes an artificial order; that is, he begins at the latter end, and finds an opportunity to inſert all that precedes the opening of his Poem by way of narration to the *Phæacians*: Here he ſets every event in its natural order, ſo that with a glance of the eye we may diſtinguiſh what gives continuity to the action, and what is comprehended in it. By this method we are able to ſeparate the time of the duration of the Poem, from the time of the duration of the Action; for in reality the Poem begins many years before the return of *Ulyſſes*; but *Homer* begins his action but thirty five days be-

fore he lands in his own country. In the courſe therefore of the *Odyſſey*, *Homer* gave us the artificial, here the natural order; which is an eaſe and aſſiſtance to the memory of the Reader.

XXVI.

VERSE 355. ----- *How his companions ſlay*
The oxen ſacred to the God of day.]

The ſtory of theſe oxen is fully related, *lib.* 12. I refer to the Annotations. The crime of the companions of *Ulyſſes* was ſacrilege, they having deſtroy'd the herds ſacred to a God. Theſe herds were ſaid to be immortal: I have there given the reaſon of it, but too conciſely, and will therefore add a ſupplement from the *Polyhymnia* of *Herodotus*; I ought to have mention'd, that the body of ſoldiers call'd Immortal, was a ſelect number of men in the army of *Xerxes*: ſo nam'd, becauſe upon the death of any one of their number, whether by war or ſickneſs, another was immediately ſubſtituted into his room, ſo that they never amounted to more or leſs than ten thouſand. If we apply this piece of Hiſtory to the herds of *Apollo*, it excellently explains *Homer*'s Poetry: they are call'd Immortal, becauſe upon the death of any one of the whole herd, another was brought into its place; they are ſaid neither to increaſe nor decay, becauſe they were always of a fix'd number, and continually ſupply'd upon any vacancy.

The Reader will be appriz'd of the heinouſneſs of the crime in killing theſe oxen, from an obſervation of *Bochart*, *p.* 314. The *Phœnicians* and *Ægyptians* ſo ſuperſtitiouſly abſtain'd from the fleſh of the ox, that, as *Porphyry* affirms, they would ſooner feed upon human fleſh than that of ſuch beaſts. *Ælian* tells us, that it was death amongſt the *Phrygians* to kill a labouring ox; and *Varro*, *Ruſt. lib.* 2. *cap.* 5. thus writes; *ab hoc antiqui manus ita abſtineri voluerunt, ut capite ſanxerint, ſi quis occidiſſet.* Thus alſo *Columella*, in *præfat. lib.* 7. *Cujus tanta fuit apud antiquos veneratio, ut tam Capitale eſſet bovem necâſſe, quam civem.*

I have been the more full upon this head, to ſhew that *Homer*'s fiction is built upon a foundation of truth, and that he writes according to the religion of the Ancients: *Rapin* is very ſevere upon him for aſcribing the death of the companions of *Ulyſſes*, to the violation of theſe herds of *Apollo*. "The reaſon "(ſays he) why they are deſtroy'd is very ridiculous, becauſe, "*lib.* 1.

------ they dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the God of day.

"This is certainly a far-fetch'd deſtruction: The Heroe, or the "Poet was willing to be freed from them." But from this obſervation, they will be found to be guilty of ſacrilege, and a violation of what was regarded by the world with the utmoſt veneration; and conſequently the crime is adæquate to the puniſhment. Beſides, *Horace Epiſt.* 6. *lib.* 1. gives ſentence againſt theſe companions of *Ulyſſes*.

----- Cærite cerâ
Digni, remigium vitioſum Ithacenſis Ulyſſei;
Cui potior patriâ fuit interdicta voluptas.

XXVII.

VERSE 361. *Where the gay blooming Nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay.*] This is a circumſtance (obſerves Madam *Dacier*) that *Ulyſſes* ought by no means to forget; for it gives him an opportunity to pay an high compliment to his wife, by letting her know he preferr'd her perſon to that of *Calypſo* a Goddeſs: this is the reaſon why he enlarges upon it in five verſes; whereas he concludes moſt of the other adventures in little more than one. But (adds that Lady) we may eaſily believe that he was ſilent about the nature of his converſation with that Nymph; and indeed it would have leſſen'd the compliment, and perhaps his welcome home, if he had not been able to keep a ſecret; he is very cautious in

this reſpect; he enlarges upon the fondneſs of *Calypſo* for his perſon, but ſuppreſſes, for a very obvious reaſon, the kind returns he made for her civilities.

XXVIII.

VERSE 398. ----Pallas *ſhrouds*
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.]

Ulyſſes, to avoid obſervation, leaves the City at the point of day, before the darkneſs was quite diſpell'd; this is the ſuggeſtion of his own wiſdom, which is figur'd by *Minerva.*

This book ends in the morning of the forty firſt day. There are but few verſes in the tranſlation, more than in *Homer*: I ſpeak it not as if this were a beauty, it may as well be a fault; our Heroic verſe conſiſts but of ten ſyllables, the *Greek* oftentimes of ſeventeen, as in this verſe,

Αὐτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδής.

We therefore write with the diſadvantage of ſeven ſyllables, which makes it generally impoſſible to comprehend the ſenſe of one line in *Homer* within the compaſs of one line in a tranſlation, with any tolerable beauty; but in ſome parts, where the ſubject ſeem'd to hang heavy, this has been attempted; with what ſucceſs, muſt be left to the Reader.

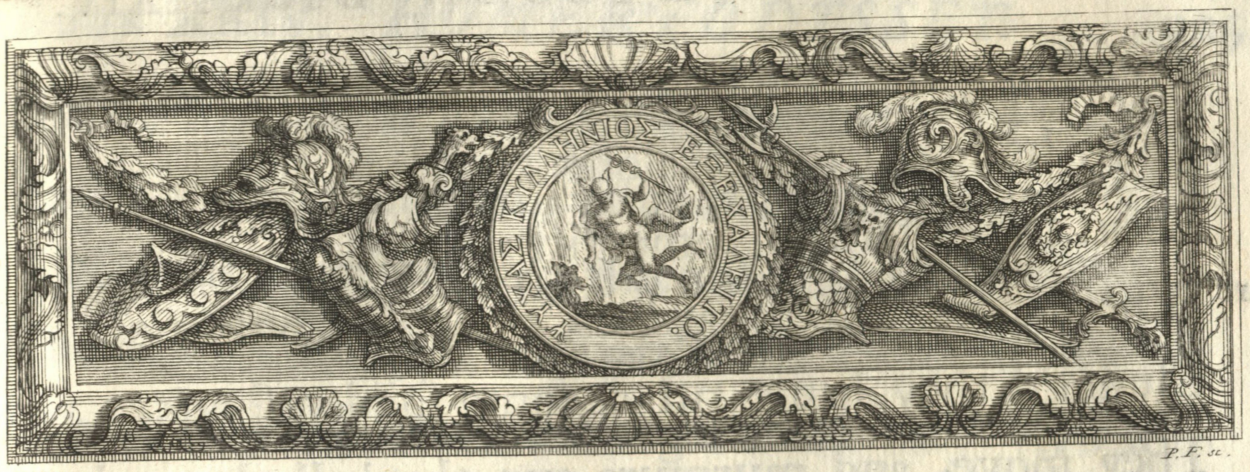
THE

THE TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

The ſouls of the Suitors are conducted by Mercury *to the infernal ſhades.* Ulyſſes *in the country goes to the retirement of his father* Laertes; *he finds him buſyed in his garden all alone: The manner of his diſcovery to him is beautifully deſcribed. They return together to his lodge, and the King is acknowledg'd by* Dolius *and the ſervants. The* Ithacenſians, *led by* Eupithes *the father of* Antinous, *riſe againſt* Ulyſſes, *who gives them battle, in which* Eupithes *is killed by* Laertes: *And the Goddeſs* Pallas *makes a laſting peace between* Ulyſſes *and his ſubjects, which concludes the* Odyſſey.

THE



W. K. jnv. P. F. sc.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

CYLLENIUS now to *Pluto*'s dreary reign
Conveys the dead, a lamentable train!
The golden wand, that cauſes ſleep to fly,
Or in ſoft ſlumber ſeals the wakeful eye,
That drives the ghoſts to realms of night or day,
Points out the long, uncomfortable way.

Trembling

Trembling the Spectres glide, and plaintive vent
Thin, hollow ſcreams, along the deep deſcent.
As in the cavern of ſome rifted den,
Where flock nocturnal bats, and birds obſcene;
Cluſter'd they hang, till at ſome ſudden ſhock,
They move, and murmurs run thro' all the rock:
So cow'ring fled the ſable heaps of ghoſts,
And ſuch a ſcream fill'd all the diſmal coaſts.
And now they reach'd the *Earth's* remoteſt ends,
And now the gates where ev'ning *Sol* deſcends,
And *Leucas'* rock, and *Ocean's* utmoſt ſtreams,
And now pervade the dusky land of *Dreams*,
And reſt at laſt, where ſouls unbodied dwell
In ever-flowing meads of *Aſphodel.*
The empty *Forms* of men inhabit there,
Impaſſive ſemblance, Images of air!
Nought elſe are all that ſhin'd on earth before;
Ajax, and great *Achilles*, are no more!
Yet ſtill a maſter ghoſt, the reſt he aw'd,
The reſt ador'd him, tow'ring as he trod;

Still

Still at his ſide is *Neſtor*'s ſon ſurvey'd,
And lov'd *Patroclus* ſtill attends his ſhade.
New as they were to that infernal ſhore,
The Suitors ſtopp'd, and gaz'd the Heroe o'er.
When, moving ſlow, the regal form they view'd
Of great *Atrides*: Him in pomp purſu'd
And ſolemn ſadneſs thro' the gloom of hell,
The train of thoſe who by *Ægyſthus* fell.
O mighty chief! (*Pelides* thus began)
Honour'd by *Jove* above the lot of man!
King of a hundred Kings! to whom reſign'd
The ſtrongeſt, braveſt, greateſt of mankind.
Com'ſt thou the firſt, to view this dreary ſtate?
And was the nobleſt the firſt mark of fate?
Condemn'd to pay the great arrear ſo ſoon,
The lot, which all lament, and none can ſhun!
Oh! better hadſt thou ſunk in *Trojan* ground,
With all thy full-blown honours cover'd round!
Then grateful *Greece* with ſtreaming eyes might raiſe
Hiſtoric marbles to record thy praiſe:

Thy praiſe eternal on the faithful ſtone
Had with tranſmiſſive glories grac'd thy ſon.
But heavier fates were deſtin'd to attend:
What man is happy, till he knows his end?
O ſon of *Peleus!* greater than mankind!
(Thus *Agamemnon*'s kingly ſhade rejoin'd)
Thrice happy thou! to preſs the martial plain
Midſt heaps of heroes in thy quarrel ſlain:
In clouds of ſmoke, rais'd by the noble fray,
Great, and terrific ev'n in death you lay,
And deluges of blood flow'd round you ev'ry way.
Nor ceas'd the ſtrife, 'till *Jove* himſelf oppos'd,
And all in tempeſts the dire evening clos'd.
Then to the fleet we bore thy honour'd load,
And decent on the fun'ral bed beſtow'd.
Then unguents ſweet and tepid ſtreams we ſhed;
Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and o'er the dead
Each clipt the curling honours of his head.
Struck at the news, thy azure mother came;
The ſea-green ſiſters waited on the dame.

A voice of loud lament thro' all the main
Was heard, and terror ſeiz'd the *Grecian* train:
Back to their ſhips the frighted hoſt had fled;
But *Neſtor* ſpoke, they liſten'd, and obey'd.
(From old experience *Neſtor*'s counſel ſprings,
And long viciſſitudes of human things)
" Forbear your flight: Fair *Thetis* from the main
" To mourn *Achilles* leads her azure train.
Around thee ſtand the daughters of the deep,
Roab thee in heav'nly veſts, and round thee weep.
Round thee, the *Muſes*, with alternate ſtrain,
In ever-conſecrating verſe, complain.
Each warlike *Greek* the moving muſic hears,
And iron-hearted Heroes melt in tears.
'Till ſev'nteen nights and ſev'nteen days return'd,
All that was mortal or immortal mourn'd.
To flames we gave thee, the ſucceeding day,
And fatted ſheep and ſable oxen ſlay;
With oils and honey blaze th'augmented fires,
And like a God adorn'd, thy earthly part expires.

Unnumber'd warriors round the burning pyle
Urge the fleet courſer's or the racer's toil;
Thick clouds of duſt o'er all the circle riſe,
And the mixt clamour thunders in the skies.
Soon as abſorpt in all-embracing flame
Sunk what was mortal of thy mighty name,
We then collect thy ſnowy bones, and place
With wines and unguents in a golden vaſe.
(The vaſe to *Thetis Bacchus* gave of old,
And *Vulcan*'s art enrich'd the ſculptur'd gold)
There we thy relicks, great *Achilles!* blend
With dear *Patroclus*, the departed friend:
In the ſame urn a ſep'rate ſpace contains
Thy next-belov'd, *Antilochus*' remains.
Now all the ſons of warlike *Greece* ſurround
Thy deſtin'd tomb, and caſt a mighty mound:
High on the ſhore the growing hill we raiſe,
That wide th' extended *Helleſpont* ſurveys;
Where all, from age to age who paſs the coaſt,
May point *Achilles*' tomb, and hail the mighty ghoſt.

Thetis

Thetis herſelf to all our peers proclaims
Heroic prizes and exequial games;
The Gods aſſented; and around thee lay
Rich ſpoils and gifts that blaz'd againſt the day.
Oft have I ſeen with ſolemn fun'ral games
Heroes and Kings committed to the flames;
But ſtrength of youth, or valour of the brave
With nobler conteſt ne'er renown'd a grave.
Such were the games by azure *Thetis* given,
And ſuch thy honours, oh belov'd of heaven!
Dear to mankind thy fame ſurvives, nor fades
Its bloom eternal in the *Stygian* ſhades.
But what to me avail my honours gone,
Succeſsful toils, and battles bravely won?
Doom'd by ſtern *Jove*, at home to end my life,
By curſt *Ægyſthus*, and a faithleſs wife!

Thus they; while *Hermes* o'er the dreary plain
Led the ſad numbers by *Ulyſſes* ſlain.
On each majeſtic form they caſt a view,
And tim'rous paſs'd, and awfully withdrew.

But *Agamemnon*, thro' the gloomy ſhade,
His ancient hoſt *Amphimedon* ſurvey'd;
Son of *Melanthus!* (he began) Oh ſay!
What cauſe compell'd ſo many, and ſo gay,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
Say, could one city yield a troop ſo fair?
Were all the partners of one native air?
Or did the rage of ſtormy *Neptune* ſweep
Your lives at once, and whelm beneath the deep?
Did nightly thieves, or Pyrates cruel bands,
Drench with your blood your pillag'd country's ſands?
Or well-defending ſome beleaguer'd wall,
Say, for the publick did ye greatly fall?
Inform thy gueſt; for ſuch I was of yore
When our triumphant navies touch'd your ſhore;
Forc'd a long month the wint'ry ſeas to bear,
To move the great *Ulyſſes* to the war.
O King of men! I faithful ſhall relate
(Reply'd *Amphimedon*) our hapleſs fate.
Ulyſſes abſent, our ambitious aim
With rival loves purſu'd his royal Dame;

Her coy reſerve, and prudence mixt with pride,
Our common ſuit nor granted, nor deny'd;
But cloſe with inward hate our deaths deſign'd;
Vers'd in all arts of wily womankind.
Her hand, laborious in deluſion, ſpread
A ſpacious loom, and mix'd the various thread;
Ye Peers (ſhe cry'd) who preſs to gain my heart
Where dead *Ulyſſes* claims no more a part,
Yet a ſhort ſpace, your rival ſuit ſuſpend,
'Till this funereal web my labours end:
Ceaſe, till to good *Laertes* I bequeath
A task of grief, his ornaments of death:
Leſt, when the Fates his royal aſhes claim,
The *Grecian* matrons taint my ſpotleſs fame;
Should he, long honour'd with ſupreme command,
Want the laſt duties of a daughter's hand.
The fiction pleas'd: our gen'rous train complies,
Nor fraud miſtruſts in virtue's fair diſguiſe.
The work ſhe ply'd; but ſtudious of delay,
Each following night revers'd the toils of day.

Unheard,

Unheard, unſeen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid reveal'd th'amazing tale,
And ſhow'd, as unperceiv'd we took our ſtand,
The backward labours of her faithleſs hand.
Forc'd, ſhe compleats it; and before us lay
The mingled web, whoſe gold and ſilver ray
Diſplay'd the radiance of the night and day.
Juſt as ſhe finiſh'd her illuſtrious toil,
Ill fortune led *Ulyſſes* to our iſle.
Far in a lonely nook, beſide the ſea,
At an old ſwineherd's rural lodge he lay.
Thither his ſon from ſandy *Pyle* repairs,
And ſpeedy lands, and ſecretly confers.
They plan our future ruin, and reſort
Confed'rate, to the city and the court.
Firſt came the ſon; the father next ſucceeds,
Clad like a beggar, whom *Eumæus* leads;
Propt on a ſtaff, deform'd with age and care,
And hung with rags, that flutter'd in the air.

Who

Who could *Ulyſſes* in that form behold?
Scorn'd by the young, forgotten by the old,
Ill-us'd by all! to ev'ry wrong reſign'd,
Patient he ſuffer'd with a conſtant mind.
But when, ariſing in his wrath t'obey
The will of *Jove*, he gave the vengeance way;
The ſcatter'd arms that hung around the dome
Careful he treaſur'd in a private room:
Then, to her Suitors bade his Queen propoſe
The Archer's ſtrife; the ſource of future woes,
And Omen of our death! In vain we drew
The twanging ſtring, and try'd the ſtubborn yew:
To none it yields but great *Ulyſſes'* hands;
In vain we threat; *Telemachus* commands:
The Bow he ſnatch'd, and in an inſtant bent;
Thro' ev'ry ring the victor arrow went.
Fierce on the threſhold then in arms he ſtood;
Pour'd forth the darts, that thirſted for our blood,
And frown'd before us, dreadful as a God!

Firſt bleeds *Antinous*: thick the ſhafts reſound;
And heaps on heaps the wretches ſtrow the ground;
This way, and that, we turn, we fly, we fall;
Some God aſſiſted, and unmann'd us all:
Ignoble cries precede the dying groans;
And batter'd brains and blood beſmear the ſtones.
Thus, great *Atrides*! thus *Ulyſſes* drove
The ſhades thou ſeeſt, from yon' fair realms above.
Our mangled bodies now deform'd with gore,
Cold and neglected, ſpread the marble floor.
No friend to bathe our wounds! or tears to ſhed
O'er the pale corſe! the honours of the dead.
Oh bleſt *Ulyſſes* (thus the King expreſt
His ſudden rapture) in thy Conſort bleſt!
Not more thy wiſdom, than her virtue, ſhin'd;
Not more thy patience, than her conſtant mind.
Icarius' daughter, glory of the paſt,
And model to the future age, ſhall laſt:
The Gods, to honour her fair fame, ſhall raiſe
(Their great reward) a Poet in her praiſe.

Not

Not ſuch, oh *Tyndarus!* thy daughter's deed,
By whoſe dire hand her King and husband bled:
Her ſhall the Muſe to infamy prolong,
Example dread! and theme of tragic ſong!
The gen'ral ſex ſhall ſuffer in her ſhame,
And ev'n the beſt that bears a Woman's name.

Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade
Conferr'd the mournful Phantoms of the dead.

While from the town, *Ulyſſes*, and his band,
Paſt to *Laertes'* cultivated land.
The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain,
And labour made the rugged ſoil a plain.
There ſtood his manſion of the rural ſort,
With uſeful buildings round the lowly court:
Where the few ſervants that divide his care,
Took their laborious reſt, and homely fare;
And one *Sicilian* matron, old and ſage,
With conſtant duty tends his drooping age.

Here now arriving, to his ruſtic band
And martial ſon, *Ulyſſes* gave command.

Enter the houſe, and of the briſtly ſwine
Select the largeſt to the pow'rs divine.
Alone, and unattended, let me try
If yet I ſhare the old man's memory?
If thoſe dim eyes can yet *Ulyſſes* know,
(Their light and deareſt object long ago)
Now chang'd with time, with abſence, and with [woe?

Then to his train he gives his ſpear and ſhield;
The houſe they enter, and he ſeeks the field;
Thro' rows of ſhade with various fruitage crown'd,
And labour'd ſcenes of richeſt verdure round.
Nor aged *Dolius*, nor his ſons were there,
Nor ſervants, abſent on another care;
To ſearch the woods for ſets of flowry thorn,
Their orchard-bounds to ſtrengthen and adorn.

But all alone the hoary King he found;
His habit courſe, but warmly wrapt around;
His head, that bow'd with many a penſive care,
Fenc'd with a double cap of goatskin hair:
His buskins old, in former ſervice torn,
But well repair'd; and gloves againſt the thorn.

In this array the kingly Gard'ner ſtood,
And clear'd a Plant, encumber'd with its wood.
Beneath a neighb'ring tree, the Chief divine
Gaz'd o'er his Sire, retracing ev'ry line,
The ruins of himſelf! now worn away
With age, yet ſtill majeſtic in decay!
Sudden his eyes releas'd their wat'ry ſtore;
The much-enduring man could bear no more.
Doubtful he ſtood, if inſtant to embrace
His aged limbs, to kiſs his rev'rend face,
With eager tranſport to diſcloſe the whole,
And pour at once the torrent of his ſoul?
Not ſo: his judgment takes the winding way
Of queſtion diſtant, and of ſoft eſſay,
More gentle methods on weak age employs,
And moves the ſorrows to enhance the joys.
Then to his Sire with beating heart he moves,
And with a tender pleaſantry reproves:
Who digging round the plant ſtill hangs his head,
Nor ought remits the work, while thus he ſaid.

Great

Great is thy skill, oh father! great thy toil,
Thy careful hand is ſtamp'd on all the ſoil,
Thy ſquadron'd vineyards well thy art declare,
The olive green, blue fig, and pendent pear;
And not one empty ſpot eſcapes thy care.
On ev'ry plant and tree thy cares are ſhown,
Nothing neglected, but thy ſelf alone.
Forgive me, father, if this fault I blame;
Age ſo advanc'd may ſome indulgence claim.
Not for thy ſloth, I deem thy Lord unkind;
Nor ſpeaks thy form a mean or ſervile mind:
I read a Monarch in that princely air,
The ſame thy aſpect, if the ſame thy care;
Soft ſleep, fair garments, and the joys of wine,
Theſe are the rights of age, and ſhou'd be thine.
Who then thy maſter, ſay? and whoſe the land
So dreſs'd and manag'd by thy skilful hand?
But chief oh tell me (what I queſtion moſt)
Is this the far-fam'd *Ithacenſian* coaſt?
For ſo reported the firſt man I view'd,
(Some ſurly Iſlander, of manners rude)

Nor farther conference vouchſaf'd to ſtay;
Heedleſs he whiſtled, and purſu'd his way.
But thou! whom years have taught to underſtand,
Humanely hear, and anſwer my demand:
A friend I ſeek, a wiſe one and a brave,
Say, lives he yet, or molders in the grave?
Time was (my fortunes then were at the beſt)
When at my houſe I lodg'd this foreign gueſt;
He ſaid, from *Ithaca*'s fair iſle he came,
And old *Laertes* was his father's name.
To him, whatever to a gueſt is ow'd
I paid, and hoſpitable gifts beſtow'd;
To him ſev'n talents of pure ore I told,
Twelve cloaks, twelve veſts, twelve tunicks ſtiff
A bowl, that rich with poliſh'd ſilver flames,
And, skill'd in female works, four lovely dames.
At this the Father, with a father's fears:
(His venerable eyes bedimm'd with tears)
This is the land; but ah! thy gifts are loſt,
For godleſs men, and rude, poſſeſs the coaſt:

Sunk

Sunk is the glory of this once-fam'd ſhore!
Thy ancient friend, oh ſtranger, is no more!
Full recompence thy bounty elſe had born;
For ev'ry good man yields a juſt return:
So civil rights demand; and who begins
The track of friendſhip, not purſuing, ſins.
But tell me, ſtranger, be the truth confeſt,
What years have circled ſince thou ſaw'ſt that gueſt?
That hapleſs gueſt, alas! for ever gone!
Wretch that he was! and that I am! my ſon!
If ever man to miſery was born,
'Twas his to ſuffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!
Far from his friends, and from his native reign,
He lies a prey to monſters of the main,
Or ſavage beaſts his mangled reliques tear,
Or ſcreaming vulturs ſcatter thro' the air:
Nor could 'his mother fun'ral unguents ſhed,
Nor wail'd his father o'er th' untimely dead,
Nor his ſad conſort, on the mournful bier,
Seal'd his cold eyes, or drop'd a tender tear!

But tell me, who thou art? and what thy race?
Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place?
Or if a merchant in purſuit of gain,
What port receiv'd thy veſſel from the main?
Or com'ſt thou ſingle, or attend thy train?
Then thus the Son. From *Alybas* I came,
My palace there; *Eperitus* my name.
Not vulgar born, from *Aphidas* the King
Of *Polyphemon*'s royal line I ſpring.
Some adverſe *Dæmon* from *Sicania* bore
Our wandring courſe, and drove us on your ſhore:
Far from the town, an unfrequented bay
Reliev'd our weary'd veſſel from the ſea.
Five years have circled ſince theſe eyes purſu'd
Ulyſſes parting thro' the ſable flood;
Proſp'rous he ſail'd, with dexter Auguries,
And all the wing'd good omens of the skies.
Well hop'd we then to meet on this fair ſhore,
Whom heav'n, alas! decreed to meet no more.

Quick thro' the father's heart theſe accents ran;
Grief ſeiz'd at once, and wrapt up all the man;
Deep from his ſoul he ſigh'd, and ſorrowing ſpread
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.
Trembling with agonies of ſtrong delight
Stood the great ſon, heart-wounded with the ſight:
He ran, he ſeiz'd him with a ſtrict embrace,
With *thouſand kiſſes wander'd o'er his face,*
I, I am he; oh father riſe! behold
Thy ſon, with twenty winters now grown old;
Thy ſon, ſo long deſir'd, ſo long detain'd,
Reſtor'd, and breathing in his native land.
Theſe floods of ſorrow, oh my Sire, reſtrain!
The vengeance is compleat; the Suitor-train,
Stretch'd in our palace, by theſe hands lie ſlain.
Amaz'd, *Laertes*. "Give ſome certain ſign,
"(If ſuch thou art) to manifeſt thee mine."
Lo here the wound (he cries) receiv'd of yore,
The ſcar indented by the tuſky boar,

When

When by thy ſelf and by *Anticlia* ſent,
To old *Antolycus*'s realms I went.
Yet by another ſign thy offſpring know;
The ſev'ral trees you gave me long ago,
While, yet a child, theſe fields I lov'd to trace,
And trod thy footſteps with unequal pace:
To ev'ry plant in order as we came,
Well-pleas'd you told its nature, and its name,
Whate'er my childiſh fancy ask'd, beſtow'd;
Twelve pear-trees bowing with their pendent load,
And ten, that red with bluſhing apples glow'd;
Full fifty purple figs; and many a row
Of various vines that then began to blow,
A future vintage! when the *Hours* produce
Their latent buds, and *Sol* exalts the juice.

Smit with the ſigns which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees ſuſtain
Their feeble weight no more; his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd *Ulyſſes* thrown;
He faints, he ſinks, with mighty joys oppreſt:
Ulyſſes claſps him to his eager breaſt.

Soon as returning life regains its ſeat,
And his breath lengthens, and his pulſes beat;
Yes, I believe (he cries) almighty *Jove!*
Heav'n rules us yet, and Gods there are above.
'Tis ſo — the Suitors for their wrongs have paid —
But what ſhall guard us, if the town invade?
If, while the news thro' ev'ry city flies,
All *Ithaca* and *Cephalenia* riſe?
To this *Ulyſſes*. As the Gods ſhall pleaſe
Be all the reſt; and ſet thy ſoul at eaſe.
Haſte to the cottage by this orchard ſide,
And take the banquet which our cares provide:
There wait thy faithful band of rural friends,
And there the young *Telemachus* attends.
Thus having ſaid, they trac'd the garden o'er,
And ſtooping enter'd at the lowly door.
The ſwains and young *Telemachus* they found,
The victim portion'd, and the goblet crown'd.
The hoary King his old *Sicilian* maid
Perfum'd and waſh'd, and gorgeouſly array'd.

Pallas

Pallas attending gives his frame to ſhine
With awful port, and majeſty divine;
His gazing ſon admires the god-like grace,
And air celeſtial dawning o'er his face.
What God, he cry'd, my father's form improves?
How high he treads, and how enlarg'd he moves?
Oh! would to all the deathleſs pow'rs on high,
Pallas, and *Jove*, and him who gilds the sky!
(Reply'd the King elated with his praiſe)
My ſtrength were ſtill, as once in better days;
When the bold *Cephalens* the leaguer form'd,
And proud *Nericus* trembled as I ſtorm'd.
Such were I now, not abſent from your deed
When the laſt ſun beheld the Suitors bleed,
This arm had aided yours; this hand beſtrown
Our floors with death, and puſh'd the ſlaughter on;
Nor had the Sire been ſep'rate from the Son.
They commun'd thus; while homeward bent their [way
The ſwains, fatigu'd with labours of the day;
Dolius the firſt, the venerable man,
And next his ſons, a long-ſucceeding train.

For due refection to the bow'r they came;
Call'd by the careful old *Sicilian* dame,
Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the fire:
They see their Lord, they gaze, and they admire.
On chairs and beds in order seated round,
They share the gladsome board; the roofs resound.
While thus *Ulysses* to his ancient friend:
"Forbear your wonder, and the feast attend;
"The rites have waited long." The chief commands
Their loves in vain; old *Dolius* spreads his hands,
Springs to his master with a warm embrace,
And fastens kisses on his hands and face:
Then thus broke out. Oh long, oh daily mourn'd!
Beyond our hopes, and to our wish, return'd!
Conducted sure by heav'n! for heav'n alone
Could work this wonder: welcome to thy own!
And joys and happiness attend thy throne!
Who knows thy blest, thy wish'd return? oh say,
To the chast Queen shall we the news convey?
Or hears she, and with blessings loads the day?

Dismiss

Diſmiſs that care, for to the royal bride
Already is it known (the King reply'd,
And ſtrait reſum'd his ſeat) while round him bows
Each faithful youth, and breathes out ardent vows:
Then all beneath their father take their place,
Rank'd by their ages, and the banquet grace.
Now flying Fame the ſwift report had ſpread
Thro' all the city, of the Suitors dead.
In throngs they riſe, and to the palace crowd;
Their ſighs were many, and the tumult loud.
Weeping they bear the mangled heaps of ſlain,
Inhume the natives in their native plain,
The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.
Then ſad in council all the Seniors ſate,
Frequent and full, aſſembled to debate.
Amid the circle firſt *Eupithes* roſe,
Big was his eye with tears, his heart with woes:
The bold *Antinous* was his age's pride,
The firſt who by *Ulyſſes'* arrow dy'd.

Down

Down his wan cheek the trickling torrent ran,
As mixing words with ſighs, he thus began. [wrought,
Great deeds, oh friends! this wond'rous man has
And mighty bleſſings to his country brought.
With ſhips he parted and a num'rous train,
Thoſe, and their ſhips he bury'd in the main.
Now he returns, and firſt eſſays his hand
In the beſt blood of all his native land.
Haſte then, and ere to neighb'ring *Pyle* he flies,
Or ſacred *Elis*, to procure ſupplies;
Ariſe (or ye for ever fall) ariſe!
Shame to this age, and all that ſhall ſucceed!
If unreveng'd your ſons and brothers bleed.
Prove that we live, by vengeance on his head,
Or ſink at once forgotten with the dead.
Here ceas'd he, but indignant tears let fall
Spoke when he ceas'd: dumb ſorrow touch'd them all.
When from the Palace to the wond'ring throng
Sage *Medon* came, and *Phemius* came along;

(Reſtleſs

(Reſtleſs and early ſleep's ſoft bands they broke)
And *Medon* firſt th'aſſembled chiefs beſpoke.

Hear me, ye Peers and Elders of the land,
Who deem this act the work of mortal hand:
As o'er the heaps of death *Ulyſſes* ſtrode,
Theſe eyes, theſe eyes beheld a preſent God,
Who now before him, now beſide him ſtood,
Fought as he fought, and mark'd his way with blood:
In vain old *Mentor*'s form the God bely'd,
'Twas heav'n that ſtruck, and heav'n was on his ſide.

A ſudden horror all th'aſſembly ſhook,
When ſlowly-riſing, *Halitherſes* ſpoke:
(Rev'rend and wiſe, whoſe comprehenſive view
At once the preſent and the future knew)
Me too ye fathers hear! from you proceed
The ills ye mourn; your own the guilty deed.
Ye gave your ſons, your lawleſs ſons the rein,
(Oft warn'd by *Mentor* and my ſelf in vain)
An abſent Heroe's bed they ſought to ſoil,
An abſent Heroe's wealth they made their ſpoil:

Immod'rate riot, and intemp'rate luſt!
Th'offence was great, the puniſhment was juſt.
Weigh then my counſels in an equal ſcale,
Nor ruſh to ruin. Juſtice will prevail.
His mod'rate words ſome better minds perſuade:
They part, and join him; but the number ſtay'd.
They ſtorm, they ſhout, with haſty frenzy fir'd,
And ſecond all *Eupithes'* rage inſpir'd.
They caſe their limbs in braſs; to arms they run;
The broad effulgence blazes in the ſun.
Before the city, in an ample plain,
They meet: *Eupithes* heads the frantic train.
Fierce for his ſon, he breathes his threats in air;
Fate hears them not, and *Death* attends him there.
This paſt on earth, while in the realms above
Minerva thus to cloud-compelling *Jove*.
May I preſume to ſearch thy ſecret ſoul?
Oh Pow'r ſupreme, oh ruler of the whole!
Say, haſt thou doom'd to this divided ſtate
Or peaceful amity, or ſtern debate?
Declare thy purpoſe; for thy will is Fate.

Is not thy thought my own? (the God replies
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies)
Had not long ſince thy knowing ſoul decreed,
The Chief's return ſhould make the guilty bleed?
'Tis done, and at thy will the Fates ſucceed.
Yet hear the iſſue: Since *Ulyſſes'* hand
Has ſlain the Suitors, heav'n ſhall bleſs the land.
None now the kindred of th' unjuſt ſhall own;
Forgot the ſlaughter'd brother, and the ſon:
Each future day increaſe of wealth ſhall bring,
And o'er the paſt, *Oblivion* ſtretch her wing.
Long ſhall *Ulyſſes* in his empire reſt,
His people bleſſing, by his people bleſt.
Let all be peace.—He ſaid, and gave the nod
That binds the Fates; the ſanction of the God:
And prompt to execute th' eternal will,
Deſcended *Pallas* from th' *Olympian* hill.
Now ſate *Ulyſſes* at the rural feaſt,
The rage of hunger and of thirſt repreſt:

To watch the foe a truſty ſpy he ſent:
A ſon of *Dolius* on the meſſage went,
Stood in the way, and at a glance beheld
The foe approach'd, embattel'd on the field.
With backward ſtep he haſtens to the bow'r,
And tells the news. They arm with all their pow'r.
Four friends alone *Ulyſſes'* cauſe embrace,
And ſix were all the ſons of *Dolius'* race:
Old *Dolius* too his ruſted arms put on;
And, ſtill more old, in arms *Laertes* ſhone.
Trembling with warmth, the hoary heroes ſtand,
And brazen Panoply inveſts the band.
The opening gates at once their war diſplay:
Fierce they ruſh forth: *Ulyſſes* leads the way.
That moment joins them with celeſtial aid,
In *Mentor*'s form, the *Jove*-deſcended maid:
The ſuff'ring Heroe felt his patient breaſt
Swell with new joy, and thus his ſon addreſt.
Behold, *Telemachus*! (nor fear the ſight)
The brave embattel'd; the grim front of fight!

The

The valiant with the valiant muſt contend:
Shame not the line whence glorious you deſcend,
Wide o'er the world their martial fame was ſpread;
Regard thy ſelf, the living, and the dead.
Thy eyes, great father! on this battle caſt,
Shall learn from me *Penelope* was chaſt.
So ſpoke *Telemachus:* the gallant boy
Good old *Laertes* heard with panting joy;
And, Bleſt! thrice bleſt this happy day! he cries,
The day that ſhows me, ere I cloſe my eyes,
A ſon and grandſon of th' *Arceſian* name
Strive for fair Virtue, and conteſt for Fame!
Then thus *Minerva* in *Laertes'* ear:
Son of *Arceſius*, rev'rend warrior, hear!
Jove and *Jove*'s daughter firſt implore in pray'r,
Then whirling high, diſcharge thy lance in air.
She ſaid, infuſing courage with the word.
Jove and *Jove*'s daughter then the Chief implor'd,
And whirling high, diſmiſt the lance in air.
Full at *Eupithes* drove the deathful ſpear:

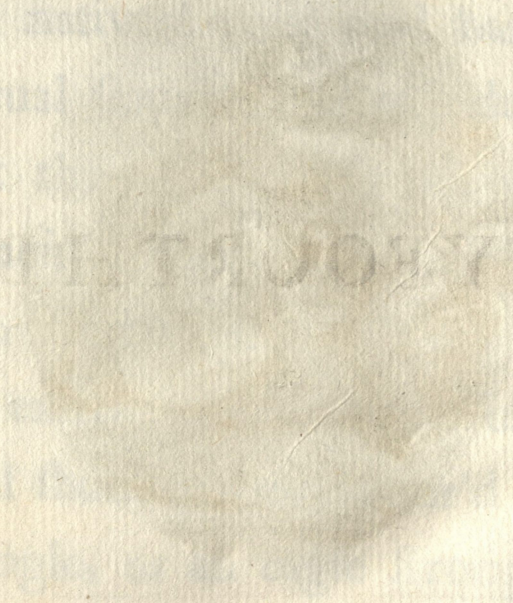
The

The braſs-cheek'd helmet opens to the wound;
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms reſound.
Before the father and the conqu'ring ſon
Heaps ruſh on heaps; they fight, they drop, they run.
Now by the ſword and now the jav'lin fall
The rebel race, and death had ſwallow'd all;
But from on high the blue-ey'd Virgin cry'd;
Her awful voice detain'd the headlong tyde.
"Forbear ye natives! your mad hands forbear
"From mutual ſlaughter: *Peace* deſcends to ſpare.
Fear ſhook the nations. At the voice divine
They drop their jav'lins, and their rage reſign,
All ſcatter'd round their glitt'ring weapons lie;
Some fall to earth, and ſome confus'dly fly.
With dreadful ſhouts *Ulyſſes* pour'd along,
Swift as an eagle, as an eagle ſtrong.
But *Jove*'s red arm the burning thunder aims;
Before *Minerva* ſhot the livid flames;
Blazing they fell, and at her feet expir'd:
Then ſtopt the Goddeſs, trembled, and retir'd.

Deſcended from the Gods! *Ulyſſes*, ceaſe;
Offend not *Jove:* Obey, and give the peace.
So *Pallas* ſpoke: The mandate from above
The King obey'd. The Virgin-ſeed of *Jove*
In *Mentor*'s form, confirm'd the full accord,
" And willing nations knew their lawful Lord.



OBSER-



OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK.

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I.



IT has been already prov'd, that this book is the genuine work of *Homer*; but perhaps the Reader may not be diſpleas'd to ſee the reaſons why it was rejected by ſo great a Critic as *Ariſtarchus*: I ſhall therefore lay them before him from *Didymus* and *Spondanus*.

Ariſtarchus affirms, that this is the only place in *Homer*, where *Mercury* performs the office of conducting the ſouls of the dead; and that there is no proof he was known ſo early by the title of ψυχοπομπὸς; that this is the only paſſage where he is call'd *Cyllenius*; that the ceremony of his guiding the ſouls is contrary to other deſcriptions of *Homer*, where they all deſcend without a guide into the manſions of the dead, even before the funeral rites. That it is abſurd to imagine a *white rock* in theſe kingdoms of darkneſs, *&c.* To theſe *Didymus* thus replies. If a ſingle mention of any incident in *Homer* were a reaſon for its rejection, abundance of paſſages muſt

be rejected. He thinks it a ſufficient argument, that *Mercury* was call'd ψυχοπομπὸς, and *Cyllenius* in the days of *Homer*, that he is here mention'd under theſe titles; but this is begging the queſtion. He adds, that altho' the ſouls of the dead deſcend without a guide in other places, this hinders not but they may deſcend with one; for they are in other places only ſaid in general to deſcend, whereas here the manner of their deſcent is particularized. Neither is it any objection againſt this book, to ſay that it is contrary to the manner of *Homer* to deſcribe the ſhades of the dead receiv'd immediately into the ſtate of *Achilles*, *Agamemnon*, &c. before the performance of their funeral ceremonies; this (ſays he) is a favour granted by *Mercury* to *Ulyſſes*, who was deſcended from that Deity, he being the father of *Arciſius* and conſequently great grandfather to *Ulyſſes*. It was the opinion of the Ancients, that the ſhades of the deceas'd could viſit the earth before the obſequies were finiſh'd, but not afterwards; this is evident from the words of *Patroclus*, *Iliad* 23.

——To the further ſhore,
When once we paſs, the ſoul returns no more.

It is therefore out of favour to *Ulyſſes*, that *Mercury* introduces theſe ſhades into the region where *Agamemnon* reſided, before the funeral ceremonies, that they might not return to earth and diſquiet *Ulyſſes*. But there may be a ſtronger objection made againſt the former part of this book; namely, that this is an Epiſode which has no relation to the principal ſubject, and that we may retrench it without deſtroying any part of the Action eſſential to the *Odyſſey*: But it may be anſwer'd, that tho' it makes no part of the principal Action, yet it has a ſufficient connection with it: it is the ſequel of the death of the Suitors, and conſequently the principal Action is the cauſe of it; it is drawn and deduc'd from it, and *Homer* makes a very happy uſe of it to adorn and diverſify his Poem, with the Hiſtory of what happen'd before *Troy*, after the concluſion of the *Iliad*;

Iliad; and in particular, with the death of *Achilles*, and a deſcription of his funeral ceremonies. *Didymus*, *Dacier*.

Plato in the beginning of his third Dialogue, *de Repub.* brings an heavy charge againſt *Homer*, for the diſadvantageous character he gives of a future ſtate. He quotes the ſimilitude of the Bats, and affirms that the dreadful deſcription of the condition of the dead, muſt deter mankind from hazarding their lives, even in the cauſe of their country. "Let us then (ſays that Author) with "the permiſſion of *Homer* and other Poets, reject ſuch relati-"ons, not becauſe they are unpoetical, not becauſe they are "unpleaſant to read, but becauſe by how much they are "more pleaſant and poetical, by ſo much they are more dange-"rous, and to be kept from our youth, and men, who are born "to aſſert their liberty with the hazard of their lives, and prefer "death to ſlavery." It muſt be allow'd that this is ſtrong reaſoning, and it is not eaſy to guard the doctrine of *Homer* from ſuch unhappy conſequences; for why ſhould men chuſe to die, rather than be ſlaves, when by death they fall into a worſe condition? It will not be an anſwer to ſay that *Homer* aſſerts a threefold ſtate in futurity; *viz.* of the ſoul, the εἴδωλον, or *vehicle*, and the body: and that while the *vehicle* is in this condition of horrors, the ſoul may be happy; for ſtill the ſtate of the dead is repreſented as a ſtate of horror, and man is in part (namely, in his εἴδωλον) miſerable after death: Nay ſo miſerable, that even *Hercules*, who was a God and receiv'd amongſt the Deities, is yet tormented in Hell; *lib.* XI.

Here hov'ring ghoſts, like fowl, his ſhade ſurround,
And clang their pinions with terrific ſound,
Gloomy as night he ſtands, in act to throw
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.

It will indeed be a vindication of *Homer* as a Poet, to ſay, that he wrote according to the opinion of his age; and that ſuch as was the notion of the Ancients of a future ſtate, ſuch is his deſcription of

of it. I will only add, that we may collect from *Plato*, that he judg'd this book genuine, for he quotes this passage as *Homer's*.

II.

VERSE 17. *And* Leucas' *rock*----] This description of the descent into hell is more particular than that in the XIth *Odyssey*; and each particular is well suited to the subject; the descent is fabled to be by the Ocean, because the Sun seems to descend thro' it into Night or the region of darkness, in the western parts of Heaven. *Milton* fables the Sun to rise thro' the gates of light, after the manner of the Ancients.

——'Till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light-----

The circumstance likewise of going thro' the region of *dreams* is well chosen; Dreams are the attendants of sleep, the brother of death; they come by night, and are therefore well imagin'd to have relation to the kingdom of death, and to be introductory to it; *Virgil* in the descent of *Æneas* into hell, has borrow'd this image,

----- *Quam sedem somnia vulgo*
Vana tenere ferunt-----

The God of sleep there hides his heavy head,
And empty dreams on every leaf are spread.

The only circumstance liable to objection is, the *Leucadian*, or *white* rock, which *Aristarchus* thought improperly placed in the road to the realms of darkness; but (replies *Eustathius*) this is only meant of

of a rock ſtanding on the extremities of the earth, or a rock on which the laſt rays of the Sun fall. *Dacier* imagines, that there is a further meaning in the expreſſion: "There is an Iſland "over-againſt *Acarnania*, on the weſt of *Ithaca*, call'd *Leucas*, "from a white rock ſtanding in it; this rock was famous in "antiquity, becauſe lovers in deſpair threw themſelves from the "top of it into the ocean; it was call'd *the Lover's leap*, and "being thus remarkable for the deaths of numbers of people, "*Homer* places it here." This is no ill explication; for a rock may well be feign'd to ſtand at the entrance of the region of death, by which ſo many perſons had enter'd into it.

Ovid in his *Epiſtles* mentions this *Leucadian* rock.

------O you that love in vain,
Fly hence, and ſeek the far Leucadian *main:*
There ſtands a rock from whoſe impending ſteep,
Apollo's *fane ſurveys the rolling deep;*
There injur'd lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguiſh, and forget to love.

III.

VERSE 35. *O mighty chief!* (Pelides *thus began*) &c.] This appears to be introduc'd ſomewhat unnaturally: *Achilles* had now been dead about ten years, and *Agamemnon* almoſt as long; it can therefore ſcarce be reconcil'd to probability, to imagine that they ſhould not have met before this time, and mutually have ſatisfy'd their curioſities, by relating their ſeveral ſtories at ſome former interview: *Dacier* indeed remarks, that we are not to imagine this conference was held at the time when the Suitors deſcended, but upon ſome preceding occaſion, immediately after the death of *Agamemnon*. If this be allow'd, yet the objection remains, that the introduction is forc'd and unnatural, for then the deſcent of *Mercury* and the ſhades of the Suitors will be no reaſon why this conference ſhould be here repeated; for ſo, neither *Mercury* nor the Suitors hear it. But

Dacier is undoubtedly in an error; for εὖρον in the original is the third perſon plural, and abſolutely refers to *Mercury* and the ſhades of the Suitors; and therefore it follows that this conference happen'd at the time of their entrance.

The ſhades of the Suitors (obſerves *Dacier*) when they are ſummon'd by *Mercury* out of the Palace of *Ulyſſes*, emit a feeble plaintive, inarticulate ſound, τρίζεσι *ſtrident*: Whereas *Agamemnon* and the ſhades that have long been in the ſtate of the dead ſpeak articulately. I doubt not but *Homer* intended to ſhew by the former deſcription, that when the ſoul is ſeparated from the organs of the body, it ceaſes to act after the ſame manner, as while it was joyn'd to it; but how the dead recover their voices afterwards is not ſo eaſy to underſtand. In other reſpects *Virgil* paints after *Homer*.

——pars tollere vocem
Exiguam: inceptus clamor fruſtratur hiantes.

They rais'd a feeble cry, with trembling notes,
But the weak voice deceiv'd their gaſping throats. Dryden.

But why ſhould we ſuppoſe with *Dacier*, that theſe ſhades of the Suitors have loſt the faculty of ſpeaking? I rather imagine, that the ſounds they utter'd were ſigns of complaint and diſcontent, and proceeded not from an inability to ſpeak: After *Patroclus* was ſlain, he appears to *Achilles*, and ſpeaks very articulately to him; yet to expreſs his ſorrow at his departure he acts like theſe Suitors: for *Achilles*

Like a thin ſmoke beholds the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.

Dacier conjectures, that the power of ſpeech ceaſes in the dead, till they are admitted into a ſtate of reſt; but *Patroclus* is an inſtance to the contrary in the *Iliad*, and *Elpenor* in the *Odyſſey*, for

for they both ſpeak before their funeral rites are perform'd, and conſequently before they enter into a ſtate of repoſe amongſt the ſhades of the happy.

IV.

VERSE 56. *Great, and terrific ev'n in death*------] There is a very peculiar beauty in the verſification of *Homer* in this place:

------σὺ δὲ ϛεροφάλιϛγι κονίης
Κεῖσο μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ.

The words μέγας μεγαλωϛὶ ſet the largeneſs of the body of *Achilles* ſtretch'd out upon the ground full before our eyes; we ſee him in the deſcription; the repetition forces it upon our obſervation, ſo that the mind has time to dwell upon it, and admire the extent of the limbs of that Heroe.

V.

VERSE 68. ------*Terror ſeiz'd the* Grecian *train.*] This deſcription furniſh'd *Ariſtarchus* with another objection to this book: He thought it improbable that the appearance of *Thetis* and her Sea-nymphs ſhould terrify the whole *Grecian* army: they ſay in anſwer, that all the ocean was in a great commotion as *Thetis* aſcended, or as *Homer* expreſſes it,

------βοὴ δ' ἐπὶ πόντον ὀρώρει
Θεσπεσίη.------

This uproar occaſion'd their fear; the *Greeks* were ignorant of the cauſe of it, and conſequently apprehended ſome dreadful event; this is evident, for *Neſtor* appeaſes their conſternation by unfolding the reaſon of the tumult, and ſhewing them that it was occaſion'd by the aſcent of *Thetis.*

The Reader has undoubtedly obſerv'd how excellently *Homer* ſuſtains his characters; *Neſtor* is the wiſeſt man, both in the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*: he has the experience of a very great age, and may therefore be ſuppos'd to be acquainted with all the moſt uncommon appearances in nature: The Poet accordingly deſcribes him as the only perſon not afraid in the *Grecian* army: there were others undoubtedly as brave as *Neſtor*, but no one ſo wiſe; his intrepidity is therefore to be imputed to his wiſdom, not bravery, and this furniſhes us with an excellent moral; That ignorance is uſually the ſource of fear.

The character of *Achilles* is no leſs happily ſupported; the ſame love of glory is viſible in all he ſpeaks, that diſtinguiſh'd his character thro' the *Iliad*: he ſtill prefers a ſhort life with fame, before old age without it.

Ὡς ὄφελες τιμῆς ἀπονήμενος ἧς περ ἄναστες,
Δήμῳ ἐνὶ Τρώων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν.

The ſentiment is truly heroic; diſhonour is worſe than death, the happineſs or miſery of which is not to be meaſured by time, but glory; long life is but lengthen'd mortality, and they who live the longeſt have but the ſmall privilege of creeping more leiſurely than others to their graves.

VI.

VERSE 77. *Round thee, the* Muſes------] It is impoſſible (obſerves *Dacier*) not to be ſtruck with the noble fictions of *Homer* in honour of *Achilles*; every circumſtance is great. A whole army is in tears; the *Muſes* celebrate his glory; a Goddeſs and her Nymphs ennoble it with their preſence and lamentations. At the funerals of other Heroes, women and captives are the mourners; here the *Muſes* perſonally appear. Heaven and Earth, Men and Gods intereſt themſelves in the obſequies of ſo great an

Heroe! Yet from this place *Ariſtarchus* draws an argument for rejecting this book: *Homer* (ſays he) no where elſe gives the number of the nine *Muſes*, inſinuating that their number was not fix'd in his age; but *Homer* frequently invokes the *Muſes*, why then ſhould he be ignorant of the number? and if not ignorant of it, why might he not mention it? *Ariſtarchus* further adds, that it is abſurd to imagine the body of *Achilles* could be preſerv'd ſeventeen days without burial; but this may be aſcrib'd to the power of *Thetis*, who may eaſily be ſuppos'd to preſerve it. Beſides, why might not the body be embalm'd? and then there will be no occaſion for a miracle, and the interpoſition of a Goddeſs: We muſt remember what ſhe did to the body of *Patroclus* in the *Iliad*.

VII.

VERSE 97. *There we thy relicks, great* Achilles! *blend*
With dear Patroclus, *the departed friend.*]

This is agreeable to the requeſt made to *Achilles* by the ghoſt of *Patroclus*, in the *Iliad*.

Hear then! and as in fate and love we joyn,
Ah ſuffer that my bones may reſt with thine!
That golden Urn thy Goddeſs mother gave,
May mix our aſhes in one common grave!

It is likewiſe aſſerted by *Homer*, that the bones of *Antilochus* were repoſited in the ſame urn with thoſe of *Patroclus* and *Achilles*; where then is the peculiar honour paid to *Patroclus*, if *Antilochus* was partaker of it? The difference is, the bones of *Achilles* and *Patroclus* were mix'd in the urn, thoſe of *Antilochus* lay ſeparately.

Homer adds, that the whole army rais'd a monument to *Achilles*; this is done according to his own injunctions in the *Iliad*, for ſpeaking of the tomb of *Patroclus*, he thus proceeds;

Mean-time erect the tomb with pious hands,
A common ſtructure on the humble ſands;
Hereafter, Greece *ſome nobler work may raiſe,*
And late poſterity record our praiſe.

Achilles means, that when he is dead the *Greeks* ſhould raiſe one common monument to himſelf and *Patroclus*, which we ſee here effected.

VIII.

VERSE 127. *But* Agamemnon, *thro' the gloomy ſhade,*
His ancient hoſt Amphimedon *ſurvey'd.*]

An objection has been rais'd againſt this paſſage, and it has been thought an abſurdity that *Agamemnon* ſhould be the gueſt of *Amphimedon*, and not of *Ulyſſes*, when he came to make an addreſs to him, and was within his territories. *Didymus* anſwers, that this conduct in *Agamemnon* was occaſion'd by the refuſal of *Ulyſſes* to aſſiſt in the war of *Troy*: *Agamemnon* reſented his denyal, and went to the houſe of *Amphimedon*.

IX.

VERSE 142. *Forc'd a long month* -----
To move the great Ulyſſes *to the war.*]

It is not obvious why *Ulyſſes*, who was a perſon of the greateſt bravery, ſhould be unwilling to engage in ſuch an action of glory, as the war of *Troy*: Was it becauſe he foreſaw that it would be a work of danger, (as *Euſtathius* imagines) or was he diſſatisfy'd in the ground of it, which was only to revenge the rape of *Helen*, and nothing but a private injury? the former is a reaſon unworthy of his heroic character, the latter is no more than a conjecture. It may poſſibly be a truer reaſon that he was unwilling to forſake his wife, of whom he was very fond,

and

and whom he had newly marry'd; but then it muſt be allow'd, that he prefers his love to his glory. *Euſtathius* recites the manner how he was drawn to engage in the war of *Troy*: *Ulyſſes* to deliver himſelf from the importunities of his friends to aſſiſt *Agamemnon*, pretended madneſs, and yok'd two animals of a different kind to a plough, and began to work with them; *Palamedes* who ſuſpected the impoſture, took his ſon *Telemachus*, an infant, and laid him in the furrow before the plough; *Ulyſſes* turn'd aſide not to hurt his child, and this diſcover'd the impoſition. *Ariſtotle* takes notice of the great judgment of *Homer* in ſuppreſſing this incident concerning *Ulyſſes*, it being unworthy of the bravery of an Heroe: He is proving, *Chap.* 8. of his Poetics, that all the actions of an Heroe's life are not to be inſerted in an Epic Poem, for the actions of the ſame man are ſo many and different, that we can never reduce them to unity: For this reaſon *Homer* mentions not all the adventures of *Ulyſſes*, but only ſuch as have relation to the ſubject of the *Odyſſey*; he knew that this counterfeit madneſs had no connexion either in truth or probability with the ſubject of his Poem, and therefore he forbears the mention of it. The Reader will underſtand the meaning of *Ariſtotle*, if he conſiders that the ſubject of the *Odyſſey* is the ſtory of a perſon who ſuffers great calamities in the return to his country, before he eſtabliſhes himſelf in his dominions: Now the counterfeited madneſs of *Ulyſſes* has no connection with theſe ſufferings, and conſequently is judiciouſly omitted by *Homer* as foreign to the deſign of the Poem, and contrary to the unity of the action. A detail of all the adventures of an Heroe's life is the province of Hiſtory; the relation of one ſingle, great, and ſurprizing action is the ſubject of Epic Poetry.

X.

VERSE 125. *Then, to the Suitors bade his Queen propoſe, &c.*] We have already ſeen, that it was the contrivance of *Penelope* to propoſe the Bow, to gain time to defer the marriage hour; how then comes *Amphimedon* to aſcribe it to the art of *Ulyſſes*? *Euſtathius* anſwers

anſwers that *Amphimedon* is in an error, and that tho' the contrivance was from *Penelope*, yet *Amphimedon* could not come to the knowledge of it; and ſuch ſtratagems being agreeable to the character of *Ulyſſes*, he imputes this action to him rather than *Penelope*.

It is impoſſible not to take notice that *Homer* makes repetition after repetition: *Agamemnon* ſpeaks the ſame words as in the eleventh *Odyſſey*; *Amphimedon* the ſame as in the ſecond; and the whole account of the Suitors' deſtruction is no more than a recital of what the Reader already knows. Was *Homer* tir'd at the end of his work, and would not give himſelf the labour of invention? I confeſs we may loſe our appetite to ſee the ſame entertainment thus continually ſerv'd up in the very ſame manner, without ſo much as a new garniſhment. I fear the words of *Ulyſſes* may ſometimes be applicable to *Homer*.

And what ſo tedious as a twice-told tale?

Beſides, this whole infernal interview is merely ornamental, which the Poet was at liberty to inſert or omit according to his judgment, without breaking the thread of the principal action; it might therefore be wiſh'd that he had ſubſtituted ſome other incident in the room of it, and given a greater diverſity to the ſtory: If by laying the ſcene in Hell, he deſign'd to raiſe the wonder and curioſity of the Reader, (who cannot fail of having his attention waken'd to ſee a proſpect open'd beyond the bounds of nature, and to look into the ſtate of departed Heroes) yet it muſt be confeſs'd that this deſign has already been fully executed in the eleventh of the *Odyſſey*. But the Poet ſeems to introduce the deſcent for the information of the dead rather than the living; *Agamemnon* is told how the Suitors were deſtroyed by *Ulyſſes*; and *Achilles* how nobly the *Greeks* perform'd his funeral obſequies; incidents that very little contribute to the ſtory of the *Odyſſey*. In ſhort, the main action ſtands ſtill during this whole *Epiſode*, which takes up almoſt half the book, and the latter

ter part of the *Epiſode* preſents no new object to amuſe and entertain us. But,

----- Cynthius aurem
Vellit -----

I betray my own want of judgment, rather than diſcover *Homer's* errors. I will only add, that the Reader will be fully convinc'd that this whole *Epiſode* may be omitted, by obſerving how well the ſtory will be carried on with a regular connection by beginning the book with theſe words,

Ὣς δ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ πόλιος καλέσαν, τάχα δ' ἄγχου ἵκοντο, &c.

So that if I could in any part ſubſcribe to the opinion of *Ariſtarchus* for the rejection of this book, it ſhould be only for the former part of it, but I am perſuaded from the nobleneſs of the verſes, that the whole is genuine.

XI.

VERSE 232. *Thus in the regions of eternal ſhade.*] I think it will not be improper here to particularize from whence Antiquity rais'd the fictions concerning Hell, and the nature of it, as we have it in *Diodorus Siculus*.

Pluto (obſerves that Author) was the firſt that introduc'd the rites of ſepulture, and other ceremonies beſtow'd on the dead: This is the reaſon why the Ancients imagin'd him to be the King of the dead.

Rhadamanthus is ſaid to have been the moſt juſt man in the world, he ſeverely puniſh'd robbers and other notorious offenders, and from his ſingular reputation for integrity was feign'd to be the judge of the good and bad after death; and for the ſame reaſon *Minos* was joyn'd with him in the ſame dignity.

Homer

Homer borrow'd his fictions from *Orpheus*, *Orpheus* from the *Ægyptians*: it was *Orpheus* who introduced the opinion of the pains of the damn'd, and of the *Elysian* fields, and taught that the souls of the dead were conducted by *Mercury* into the infernal mansions: (a proof that he was call'd ψυχοπομπὸς before the days of *Homer*) *Diodorus* proceeds and mentions the beginning of this book, how *Homer* feigns that *Mercury* leads the shades of the dead by the Ocean, the *Leucadian* rock, and the gates of the sun: A plain instance that he look'd upon this book as the genuine work of *Homer*. All these fables (continues *Diodorus*) are of *Ægyptian* extract; by the Ocean, *Homer* means *Nilus*; by the gates of the sun, he means *Heliopolis*, a city sacred to the Sun; the meadow into which the shades are conducted, denotes the pleasant meadows full of canes adjoyning to *Memphis*; and the dead are feigned to reside there, because it was the general burial place amongst the *Ægyptians*. Concerning *Cocytus*, *Acheron*, &c. the Reader may consult the first Note upon the eleventh *Odyssey*.

Plutarch in his treatise of *Isis* and *Osyris* agrees with *Diodorus* concerning the extraction of these fables from *Ægypt*, and mentions at *Memphis* the gates of lamentation and oblivion; that is, of *Lethe*, and *Cocytus*; which being open'd at the burial of the dead, give a doleful and groaning sound. From hence they are thus describ'd by *Homer* in the tenth *Odyssey*.

> *And where slow rolling from the* Stygian *bed*
> Cocytus' *lamentable waters spread,*
> *Where the dark rock o'erhangs th'infernal lake,*
> *And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.*

These observations give light to most of *Homer*'s fictions concerning hell, and shew that his Poetry is built upon the customs of Antiquity.

Macrobius explains all these particulars after a different manner: This solution supposes a state of pre existence of the soul: If (says that Author) "To die, be the same as to go to the infernal regions; "to enjoy the supernal, is then to live; and therefore before Philo-

"sophy

" ſophy prevail'd, the body it ſelf was ſuppos'd to be the infernal re-
" ceptacle of the Soul, into which ſhe deſcended as into a priſon,
" from above; this was thought the ſepulchre of the ſoul, and
" the cave of *Pluto*. The river of Oblivion denotes the error
" of the ſoul, which forgets the Majeſty of the former ſtate ſhe
" enjoy'd before ſhe enter'd the body: *Phlegethon*, the ardor of
" our deſires, and flames of anger: *Acheron* all our words and
" actions that bring us into ſorrows; ſo likewiſe, *Styx* implies
" our hatred, *Cocytus* our grief and lamentation. Thus alſo the
" puniſhments in hell are verify'd upon earth: the Vultur which
" preys upon the liver of *Tityus*, is the ſting of a guilty conſci-
" ence; the ambitious man is the *Siſyphus*, who is eternally aſ-
" piring, and yet always diſappointed; the avaritious man is the
" *Tantalus* who ſtarves amidſt his plenty, *&c.*

By joyning theſe two interpretations together, we have at once the double pleaſure of a beautiful fable and inſtructive moral; from the whole we may collect, that altho' the ancients were ignorant of the true nature of a future ſtate, yet that they believ'd it, and expected there would be puniſhments and rewards in it. This note is of uſe to explain ſeveral paſſages in the eleventh *Odyſſey*.

XII.

VERSE 236. *The ground himſelf had purchas'd with his pain.*] *Euſtathius* very well explains theſe words, in which the *Greek* may be conſtrued to ſignify that *Laertes* had purchas'd this place of his retirement by his labour and induſtry: But probably *Homer* intends to expreſs an allotment or portion of ground which was aſſign'd *Laertes* by the public, as a reward for his heroic labours in war, and bravery in conquering his enemies, like that mention'd in the *Iliad*.

The Lycians *grant a choſen ſpace of ground,*
With woods, with vineyards, and with harveſts crown'd.

It may either be ſo, or *Homer* intending ſolely to paint the laborious life of *Laertes*, added this circumſtance of his encreaſing his rural cell by his induſtry, as an inſtance of it; tho' the latter is more ſuitable to the character of a King.

XIII.

VERSE 266. ----- *Gloves againſt the thorn.*] *Caſaubon* in his Remarks upon *Athenæus*, *lib.* 12. *cap.* 2. affirms, that anciently neither the *Greeks* nor the *Romans* ever wore any covering on their hands, which are now uſed ſo univerſally, that they are worn by the meaneſt people; but this place is an inſtance of *Caſaubon*'s miſtake: 'Tis true, *Xenophon* gives this practice as an argument of the luxury and delicacy of the *Perſians*, who ſuffer'd no part of the body to be expos'd to the air, but wore ἢ περὶ ἄρκαις ταῖς χερσὶ χειρίδας, ἢ δακτυλήθρας ἔχουσι, "gloves upon "their hands, and coverings on their very fingers." *Pliny* the Younger mentions the ſame cuſtom amongſt the *Romans*, *Manus Hieme manicis muniebantur! ut ne cœli quidem aſperitas ullum ſtudiis tempus eriperet.* This then is the difference; the *Perſians* wore theſe hand-coverings out of effeminacy and delicacy; whereas in *Greece* they were uſed only out of neceſſity, as a defence in rural labour, as appears from *Laertes*, they being never mention'd upon any other occaſion, either in the *Iliad* or *Odyſſey*.

Dacier.

XIV.

VERSE 267. *In this array the kingly Gard'ner ſtood,*
And clear'd a Plant, encumber'd with its wood.]

This is the firſt appearance of *Laertes*, he is the very picture of melancholy, his dreſs, his employ, and ſolitary life all diſcover a fix'd ſorrow and contempt of the world. It has been a diſpute whether we are to aſcribe this retreat of *Laertes* to a meaneſs of ſpirit, who forſakes his ſtation, and is unequal to adverſity; or to wiſdom, and a noble neglect of the pomp and ſplendor of the world,

world, by which he prefers a little rural retreat to all the magnificence of a Palace, and a ſmall garden to all the dominions of a King. *Plutarch* ſeverely cenſures his conduct: " A perſon " (obſerves that writer) who waſtes his age in his bed, or in tri- " vial affairs, makes himſelf an object of contempt, as *Homer* " teaches by the examples of *Neſtor* and *Laertes*: *Neſtor*, by en- " gaging in the war of *Troy*, obtain'd the utmoſt veneration; " while *Laertes*, who abandon'd himſelf to ſolitude, was deſpis'd " univerſally." I am unwilling to ſubſcribe to this obſervation, being of opinion that the ſilent virtues of a good man in ſolitude are more amiable than all the noiſy honours of active life. The picture of *Laertes* is undoubtedly drawn very naturally; a tender father is afflicted for the loſs of a brave and beloved ſon, this bitter ingredient gives a diſreliſh to all the vanities of life; he is depriv'd of an object that he valu'd above the world, he therefore neglects it, as having nothing worthy of his cares, and abandons it for privacy and tranquillity. *Menedemus* in *Terence* is the very copy of *Laertes* in *Homer*; an inſtance that he thought *Homer*'s an exact repreſentation of human nature: and the applauſe with which that Comedy was receiv'd, ſhews that all *Rome* was of the ſame judgment. Sorrow loves to be alone, it rather ſeeks for amuſements than buſineſs and glory; and it may perhaps be true, that it ſhews more greatneſs of ſoul to reſign a kingdom than to conquer it. Pride, ambition, and guilty paſſions have rais'd many to the top of human glory; but it evidences that a perſon is not influenced by vicious ſentiments, who knows how to moderate his deſires, and is able to retire from the ſplendor of a Crown into obſcurity. *Tully* mentions the manner of life in *Laertes*, without condemnation; the place is to be found in his *Cato Major*, where he ſpeaks of the innocent amuſements of old age, and illuſtrates his aſſertions by the example of *Laertes*. *Homerus Laertem lenientem deſiderium, quod capiebat e filio, colentem agrum & ſtercorantem facit.* But *Tully* miſtakes *Homer*, for *Laertes* is not found dunging his ground.

Perhaps inſtead of λιγεδόυπα, he read κοπεήσουπα, as it is uſed in the ſeventeenth *Odyſſey*.

----- Ὀδυσῆϊ τέμενος μέγα κοπρήσονλες.

Or perhaps he quoted by memory. I will only add, that *Tully* in his retirement at *Tusculum*, used to write to his friends, that he there led the life of *Laertes:* and *Tully* was too sensible of his own worth, to speak any thing to the disparagement of it.

XV.

VERSE 279. *Not so: his judgment takes the winding way.*] It has been objected, that *Ulysses* here acts contrary to filial piety, and permits a tender father to continue in his sorrows, when it was in his power immediately to make him happy, by a discovery of his person; they likewise condemn the κερτόμεα ἔπεα, which *Homer* puts into the mouth of *Ulysses*. It must be allow'd, that those words are frequently us'd by the Poet in a bad sense, and signify *heart-wounding*, or *reproachful words*; but here they are not so to be understood; they only imply, *that* Ulysses *blam'd* Laertes *out of tenderness for taking no more care of his person*; this is not a reproach, but the language of fondness and affection: or perhaps the Poet meant to express that this enquiry rais'd images of sorrow in the soul of *Laertes*, and *wounded his heart* by naming the lost *Ulysses*. *Eustathius* solves the former objection by saying that *Ulysses* delay'd the discovery, lest the suddenness of joy should prove fatal to *Laertes*. But *Homer* undoubtedly paints according to nature; *Ulysses* bursts into tears at the sight of his father, yet restrains them, and tries if after twenty years absence he was known by him; this delay raises the Reader's curiosity, makes him, as it were, present at the interview, and impatient to hear the manner of the discovery: Besides, this procedure excellently agrees with the general character of *Ulysses*, who is upon all emergencies master of his passions, and remarkable for disguise and an artful dissimulation; this disguise has a very happy effect in this place, it holds us in a pleasing suspence, and makes us wait with attention to see the issue of the interview.

XVI.

VERSE 298. *I read a Monarch in that princely air.*] The words in the *Greek* are not without obſcurity, and *Euſtathius* explains them two ways; they may either ſignify, that *Laertes* appears to be a perſon of ſuch diſtinction that he ought to live with more delicacy and dignity; *viz. to bath, and after a due repaſt to ſleep in ſtate*; or they imply, that *Laertes* ſhews the dignity of a King in his perſon, who comes from the bath, and dines in ſtate. *Ulyſſes* cannot compare *Laertes* to a King who is freſh from the bath, and dreſt royally, for he tells us, he is cover'd with ſweat and duſt; he therefore means that his perſonage is noble, and like a King, that therefore he ought to live like a King, with reſpect to his food and his bath, and to indulge his age by allowing it eaſe and refreſhment.

XVII.

VERSE 353. ------ *From* Alybas *I came.*] *Ulyſſes* is inexhauſtible in his fictions; he here accommodates the names of perſons and places to his fortunes: *Alybas* is ſuppos'd to be a city of *Italy*, afterwards called *Metapontium*. It is placed by others in *Thrace*. It is here introduced to denote, the wandrings of *Ulyſſes* by the ſea, or ἅλη: the word *Aphidas* denotes his generoſity, which *ſpares nothing* towards his friends. He feigns himſelf to be the grandſon of Πολυπήμων, to repreſent the multitude of his ſufferings; his name is *Eperitus*, from ἐπήϊος, the ſame with περιμάχητος from ἐρίζω, to ſhew the ſtruggle that he has met with in all his adventures, as well as the toils in the war of *Troy*, and againſt other enemies. *Euſtathius*.

XVIII.

VERSE 369. ------ *and ſorrowing ſpread*
A cloud of aſhes on his hoary head.]

This was a common practice amongſt the ancient orientals, in token of the extremity of ſorrow; it was uſed amongſt the *He-*

brews.

brews as well as *Greeks*; thus Ezek. xxvii. 30. *They ſhall caſt duſt upon their heads.* Job ii. 12. *They rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads.* Thus alſo *Achilles* in the eighteenth of the *Iliad*;

His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Thoſe he deforms in duſt, and theſe he tears.

Homer calls it κόνιν αἰθαλόεσσαν, which does not mean that *Laertes* threw glowing embers on his head, for he was in his garden, where ſuch aſhes were not to be found, but he means ξήρην, or *dry duſt*, ſuch as ariſes from ſubſtances conſum'd by fire, or reſembling aſhes. *Euſtathius.*

XIX.

VERSE 371 *Trembling with agonies,* &c.] The *Greek* expreſſion is remarkable,

------ἀνὰ ῥῖνας δὲ οἱ ἤδη
Δειμὺ μένος πεύτυψε------

A ſharp ſenſation ſtruck his noſtrils. Euſtathius judges, that the meaning is, that *Ulyſſes* perceived himſelf ready to burſt into tears; a kind of a pricking ſharp ſenſation being felt in the noſtrils before the eruption of tears. *Caſaubon* more fully explains it; he obſerves that all violent paſſions cauſe a ſenſation in the noſtrils, ariſing from the ebullition of the ſpirits, which mount toward the brain, and endeavouring to free themſelves from reſtraint find a vent by the noſtril, and crouding thro' it, dilate it in their paſſage; this is evident from animals, and the nobler kinds of them, as the bull, the horſe, the lion, whoſe noſtrils always dilate when mov'd to anger. A ſimilar expreſſion is found in the firſt *Idyllium* of *Theocritus.*

Καὶ οἱ ἀεὶ δειμεῖα χολὰ ποτὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται.

He

He ſpeaks of the anger of the God *Pan*, but it is applicable to all violence of paſſion. *Ariſtotle* (obſerves *Dacier*) quotes this verſe as apply'd by *Homer* to expreſs anger, *Cap.* 8. of his Morals to *Nicomachus*, but he is evidently in an error; for there is here no mention of anger: he undoubtedly truſted to his memory, it being ſorrow ariſing from filial tenderneſs which moves *Ulyſſes*.

Dacier.

XX.

VERSE 389. *The ſev'ral trees you gave me long ago,*
While yet a child -----]

The word in the original is παιδνὸς, which ſignifies *a very young boy*: *Homer* uſes it to expreſs the age, when out of a childiſh ſimplicity *Ulyſſes* ask'd his father to grant him ſuch and ſuch trees. Such requeſts are very natural in children, and we ſee (ſays *Dacier*) the ſame practis'd every day; Parents out of fondneſs indulge the requeſts of their children in ſuch little particularities, and a bird, an horſe, *&c.* continues the child's favourite for many years. It muſt be allow'd, that no Poet ever follow'd nature ſo faithfully as *Homer*. *Virgil* perhaps has reach'd his nobleſt elevations and ſublimities, but there is a greater variety of natural incidents, more exact pictures of human life in *Homer* than in all other Poets. Some Painters excel in the boldneſs of their figures, and know how to draw a Heroe or a God, but are leſs happy in lower ſubjects; but *Homer* draws univerſally, and is excellent upon all occaſions; he paints the largeſt figures or the leaſt sketches equally natural, and with equal beauty.

XXI.

VERSE 438. *And proud* Nericus *trembled as I ſtorm'd.*] I doubt not but the Reader has obſerv'd, that *Laertes* uſes the very turn of language and manner of ſelf-commendation ſo remarkable in almoſt all the ſpeeches of *Neſtor*: this is to be aſcrib'd to the nature of old age in general, which loves a little to boaſt, and relates the exploits of youth with the utmoſt ſatisfaction; or as *Horace* deſcribes it, ----*Lau-*

------ Laudator temporis acti
Se puero ------

I will only add, that the reaſon why *Homer* deſcribes *Laertes* enlarg'd with ſtrength and majeſty by *Minerva* is to reconcile the future ſtory to probability; *Laertes* acts the Heroe, engages at the head of his friends, and kills the leader of his enemies; this might appear to be an exploit too great for a weak old man waſted away with ſorrows: the Poet therefore knowing that he had loſt his natural vigour thro' age, ſupplies the defect with preternatural ſtrength, and by this method renders him equal to his future actions.

XXII.

VERSE 451. *Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the ſire.*] We are not to imagine that this *Sicilian* was the wife of *Dolius*; *Homer* gives her the title of mother to his children, becauſe ſhe had the care of their education; for he adds, ἢ σφέας τρέφε, ſhe was their nurſe, not their mother. *Dacier.*

XXIII.

VERSE 481. *The reſt in ſhips are wafted o'er the main.*] To underſtand this we muſt remember, that many of the Suitors came from the neighbouring Iſlands, *Samos*, *Zacynthus*, *&c.* and therefore they are ſaid to be tranſported by ſea, to be buried in their native countries: this cuſtom prevailed over all the oriental world: But there may be a particular reaſon why this is done by the *Ithacans*; they might intend to raiſe thoſe ſeveral Iſlands to engage againſt *Ulyſſes*, and draw them to arms by ſuch moving ſpectacles. *Dacier.*

VERSE

XXIV.

VERSE 509. *Hear me, ye Peers and Elders of the land.*] There is great art in the ſpeeches of *Medon* and *Eupithes*: *Eupithes* ſaid that *Ulyſſes* had ſlain the braveſt of the *Greeks*; *Medon* allows it, but adds, that it was done by the will of the Gods: the conſequence therefore is, that to fight againſt *Ulyſſes* upon this account, is to fight againſt the Gods. *Eupithes* applies to their revenge, *Medon* to their fears; *Eupithes* ſheds tears to move their compaſſion, *Medon* intimidates them by averring that the aſſiſtance of the Gods was viſible on the ſide of *Ulyſſes*. The perſons likewiſe whom *Homer* employs to plead againſt *Eupithes* are well choſen; *Halitherſes* is a Prophet, *Medon* an Herald, and both perſons eſteem'd ſacred by their offices; this is the reaſon why the *Greeks* are ſaid to be ſtruck with awe at their appearance.

Dacier, &c.

XXV.

VERSE 518. ----- Halitherſes *ſpoke.*] The ſpeech of *Medon* had a good effect upon the audience; for *Homer* adds, that the whole aſſembly grew afraid; *Halitherſes* perceiv'd it, and ſeconds it. He inſiſts upon a new head of perſuaſion, and ſets forth the juſtice of the late action of *Ulyſſes*: the Suitors were ſlain (ſays he) for their crimes, and you are guilty for not reſtraining their outrages; and then to deter them from their preſent deſigns, he repreſents their danger in engaging againſt their King. From theſe ſpeeches (obſerves *Euſtathius*) *Homer* draws the probability of the future part of the ſtory; he divides the enemy, and wins over almoſt half of their numbers; whereas, had they proceeded unanimouſly, *Ulyſſes* muſt neceſſarily have periſh'd by their power.

It is obſervable, that tho' *Phemius* accompanies *Medon*, yet he is ſilent; the reaſon is, he as it were ſpeaks by the mouth of *Medon*, he was witneſs to the aſſiſtance of heav'n on the part of *Ulyſſes*, and approves and confirms by his preſence the truth of his teſtimony. It is thus on the ſtage where the whole Chorus was anciently ſuppos'd to ſpeak by the mouth of their Prolocutor. *Dacier*, &c.

XXVI.

VERSE 542. Minerva *thus to cloud-compelling* Jove.] *Homer*, to give importance to the concluſive action of his Poem, introduces *Jupiter* and *Minerva* in debate about the event of it. At the beginning of the *Odyſſey* he deſcribes the Gods in conſultation for the re-eſtabliſhment of *Ulyſſes*: In the concluſion of it, we ſee *Jupiter* himſelf rewarding the virtue and bravery of *Ulyſſes*, and decreeing him to reign in peace and tranquillity. This is carry'd on with great judgment: we are fully ſatisfy'd that the action of the *Odyſſey* is compleated in the happineſs of the Heroe, when we hear *Jupiter* giving his ſanction to it. Beſides, it leaves a noble image of the greatneſs of *Ulyſſes*, and of the whole ſtory of the *Odyſſey*, upon the Reader's mind, when we ſee it is of ſuch weight as to engage *Jupiter* in its favour. Thus in imitation of *Homer*, toward the concluſion of the *Æneid*, *Virgil* deſcribes *Jupiter* and *Juno* in debate concerning the deciſive action between *Turnus* and *Æneas*.

XXVII.

VERSE 553. ——*Since* Ulyſſes' *hand*
Has ſlain the Suitors, heav'n ſhall bleſs the land.]
The deſign of the *Odyſſey* is to ſhew virtue rewarded, and vice puniſh'd; here, to introduce this act of juſtice with the greater ſolemnity, *Jupiter* is repreſented giving his aſſent to it: "Let "there be peace (ſays that Deity) but let juſtice be done, and the "guilty

" guilty puniſh'd;" the Reader muſt neceſſarily be ſatisfy'd with the equity of the cauſe of *Ulyſſes*, when he hears *Jupiter* himſelf directing in it. Beſides, this conduct of *Homer* preſents us with an excellent moral; it ſhews us that the Deity is the governour of human affairs, and arbiter of peace and war; as he directs, the ſcenes of blood are open'd or clos'd, and the words of *Homer*, διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλὴ, may be apply'd to the *Odyſſey* as well as the *Iliad*.

XXVIII.

VERSE 573. *Four friends alone* Ulyſſes' *cauſe embrace.*] The Poet tells us the exact number of the party of *Ulyſſes*, which conſiſted of ten perſons under the direction of *Dolius*, *Laertes*, and *Ulyſſes*: How many were under *Eupithes* is uncertain, we therefore are at liberty to ſuppoſe them more or leſs ſuperior in number; *Medon* and *Halitherſes* had withdrawn almoſt half of his aſſiſtants, and by that method reduc'd the enemy to a greater equality: it is probable that they had no very extraordinary inequality, for the onſet is ſo ſudden, that the friends of the dead Suitors could not have time to embody; beſides, it appears from the ſixteenth *Odyſſey*, that of the whole band of Suitors, twelve only were *Ithacans*, the reſt came from the adjacent Iſlands, and therefore none of their friends could as yet be arriv'd to aſſiſt *Eupithes*, and conſequently this party conſiſted ſolely of *Ithacans*, and were not perhaps greatly ſuperior to *Ulyſſes*. This obſervation likewiſe furniſhes us with a reaſon why the enemy was ſo eaſily defeated, by ſo ſmall a body of men as engaged for *Ulyſſes*.

XXIX.

VERSE 606. *Full at* Eupithes *drove the deathful ſpear.*] *Euſtathius* calls this an admirable incident, or change of fortune in favour of *Ulyſſes*. The ſon of *Antinous* is ſlain by the ſon of

Laertes, and the father of *Antinous* by the father of *Ulyſſes*. We now ſee *Ulyſſes* happy in his wife, his ſon, and his father; victorious over his enemies, and his ſubjects ſubmitting to his authority; and therefore the action is now compleat, and terminates with the *Odyſſey*.

XXX.

VERSE 630. ----*The Virgin-ſeed of* Jove
In Mentor*'s form, confirm'd the full accord.*]

The meaning of the paſſage is no more than this, when ſtript of its poetical ornaments: *Mentor*, a perſon of great wiſdom, acts as a mediator between the King and his ſubjects, he regulates the conditions of peace, and ratifies it with ſacrifices to the Gods; this being an act of wiſdom, Poetry aſcribes it to *Minerva*.

I muſt obſerve with what dignity *Homer* concludes the *Odyſſey*: To honour his Heroe, he introduces two Deities, *Jupiter* and *Pallas*, who intereſt themſelves in his cauſe: He then paints *Ulyſſes* in the boldeſt colours, as he ruſhes upon the enemy with the utmoſt intrepidity, and his courage is ſo ungovernable, that *Jupiter* is forc'd to reſtrain it with his thunder. It is uſual for Orators to reſerve the ſtrongeſt arguments for the concluſion, that they may leave them freſh upon the Reader's memory; *Homer* uſes the ſame conduct, he repreſents his Heroe in all his terror, he ſhews him to be irreſiſtible, and by this method leaves us fully poſſeſt with a noble idea of his magnanimity.

It has been already obſerv'd, that the End of the action of the *Odyſſey* is the re-eſtabliſhment of *Ulyſſes* in full peace and tranquillity, this is not effected, till the defeat of the Suitors' friends: and therefore if the Poet had concluded before this event, the *Odyſſey* had been imperfect. It was neceſſary that the Reader ſhould not only be inform'd of the return of *Ulyſſes* to his country, and the puniſhment of the Suitors, but

of

of his re-eſtabliſhment by a peaceful poſſeſſion of his regal authority; which is not executed, till theſe laſt diſorders rais'd by *Eupithes* are ſettled by the victory of *Ulyſſes*, and therefore this is the natural concluſion of the action.

This book opens with the morning, and ends before night, ſo that the whole ſtory of the *Odyſſey* is comprehended in the compaſs of one and forty days. Monſieur *Dacier* upon *Ariſtotle* remarks, that an Epic Poem ought not to be too long: we ſhould be able to retain all the ſeveral parts of it at once in our memory: If we loſe the idea of the beginning when we come to the concluſion, it is an argument that it is of too large an extent, and its Length deſtroys its Beauty. What ſeems to favour this deciſion is, that the *Æneid*, *Iliad*, and *Odyſſey* are conformable to this rule of *Ariſtotle*, and every one of thoſe Poems may be read in the compaſs of a ſingle day.

I have now gone through the Collections upon the *Odyſſey*, and laid together what occurred moſt remarkable in this excellent Poem. I am not ſo vain as to think theſe Remarks free from faults, nor ſo diſingenuous as not to confeſs them: All Writers have occaſion for indulgence, and thoſe moſt who leaſt acknowledge it. I have ſometimes uſed Madam *Dacier* as ſhe has done others, in tranſcribing ſome of her Remarks without particularizing them; but indeed it was through inadvertency only that her name is ſometimes omitted at the bottom of the note. If my performance has merit, either in theſe, or in my part of the tranſlation (namely in the ſixth, eleventh, and eighteenth books) it is but juſt to attribute it to the judgment and care of Mr. *Pope*, by whoſe hand every ſheet was corrected. His other, and much more able aſſiſtant, was Mr. *Fenton*, in the fourth and the twentieth books. It was our particular requeſt, that our ſeveral parts might not be made known to the world till the end of the work; and if they have had the good fortune not to be diſtinguiſhed from His, we ought to be the leſs vain of it, ſince the

the reſemblance proceeds much leſs from our diligence and ſtudy to copy his manner, than from his own daily reviſal and correction. The moſt experienced Painters will not wonder at this, who very well know, that no Critic can pronounce even of the pieces of *Raphael* or *Titian*, which have, or which have not, been worked upon by thoſe of their ſchool? when the ſame Maſter's hand has directed the execution of the whole, reduced it to one character and colouring, gone over the ſeveral parts, and given to each their finiſhing.

I muſt not conclude without declaring our mutual ſatisfaction in Mr. *Pope*'s acceptance of our beſt endeavours, which have contributed at leaſt to his more ſpeedy execution of this great undertaking. If ever My name be numbred with the learned, I muſt aſcribe it to his friendſhip, in tranſmitting it to poſterity by a participation in his labours. *May the ſenſe I have of this*, and other inſtances of that friendſhip, be known as long as His name will cauſe mine to laſt: And may I to this end be permitted, at the concluſion of a work which is a kind of monument of his partiality to me, to place the following lines, as an Inſcription memorial of it.

LET vulgar ſouls triumphal arches raiſe,
Or ſpeaking marbles to record their praiſe;
And picture (to the voice of Fame unknown)
The mimic feature on the breathing ſtone;
Mere mortals! ſubject to death's total ſway,
Reptiles of earth, and beings of a day!
'Tis thine, on ev'ry heart *to grave thy praiſe,*
A monument which Worth alone can raiſe;
Sure to ſurvive, when time ſhall whelm in duſt
The arch, the marble, and the mimic buſt:
Nor 'till the volumes of th' expanded ſky
Blaze in one flame, ſhalt thou and Homer *dye:*
Then ſink together, in the world's laſt fires,
What heav'n created, and what heav'n inſpires.

If ought on earth, when once this breath is fled,
With human tranſport touch the mighty dead:
Shakeſpear, *rejoice! his hand thy page refines;*
Now ev'ry ſcene with native brightneſs ſhines;
Juſt to thy fame, he gives thy genuine thought;
So Tully *publiſh'd what* Lucretius *wrote;*
Prun'd by his care, thy lawrels loftier grow,
And bloom afreſh on thy immortal brow.
Thus when thy draughts, O Raphael! *time invades,*
And the bold figure from the canvaſs fades,
A rival hand recalls from every part
Some latent grace, and equals art with art;
Tranſported we ſurvey the dubious ſtrife,
While each fair image ſtarts again to life.
How long, untun'd, had Homer's *ſacred lyre*
Jarr'd grating diſcord, all extinct his fire?
This you beheld; and taught by heav'n to ſing,
Call'd the loud muſic from the ſounding ſtring;
Now wak'd from ſlumbers of three thouſand years,
Once more Achilles *in dread pomp appears,*
Tow'rs o'er the field of death; as fierce he turns,
Keen flaſh his arms, and all the Heroe burns;
With martial ſtalk, and more than mortal might,
He ſtrides along, and meets the Gods in fight:
Then the pale Titans, *chain'd on burning floors,*
Start at the din that rends th' infernal ſhores;
Tremble the tow'rs of heav'n, Earth rocks her coaſts,
And gloomy Pluto *ſhakes with all his ghoſts.*
To ev'ry theme reſponds thy various lay;
Here rowls a torrent, there Mæanders play;
Sonorous as the ſtorm thy numbers riſe,
Toſs the wild waves, and thunder in the skies;
Or ſofter than a yielding virgin's ſigh,
The gentle breezes breathe away and dye.
Thus, like the radiant God who ſheds the day,
You paint the vale, or gild the azure way;

And

And while with ev'ry theme the verse complies,
Sink without groveling, without rashness rise.
Proceed, great Bard! awake th' harmonious string,
Be ours all Homer! *still* Ulysses *sing.*
How long * *that Heroe, by unskilful hands,*
Stript of his robes, a Beggar trod our lands?
Such as he wander'd o'er his native coast,
Shrunk by the wand, and all the warrior lost:
O'er his smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread;
Old age disgrac'd the honours of his head;
Nor longer in his heavy eye-ball shin'd
The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.
But you like Pallas, *ev'ry limb infold*
With royal robes, and bid him shine in gold;
Touch'd by your hand, his manly frame improves
With grace divine, and like a God he moves.
Ev'n I, the meanest of the Muses train,
Inflam'd by thee, attempt a nobler strain;
Advent'rous waken the Mæonian *lyre,*
Tun'd by your hand, and sing as you inspire:
So arm'd by great Achilles *for the fight,*
Patroclus *conquer'd in* Achilles' *right:*
Like theirs, our Friendship! and I boast my name
*To thine united------*For thy FRIENDSHIP'S FAME.
This labour past, of heavenly subjects sing,
While hov'ring angels listen on the wing,
To hear from earth such heart-felt raptures rise,
As, when they sing, suspended hold the skies:
Or nobly rising in fair Virtue's cause,
From thy own Life transcribe th' unerring laws:
Teach a bad world beneath her sway to bend;
To verse like thine fierce savages attend,
And men more fierce: When Orpheus *tunes the lay,*
Ev'n fiends relenting hear their rage away.

* Odyssey, lib. 16.

W. BROOME.

POSTSCRIPT.

By Mr. *POPE.*

I Cannot diſmiſs this work without a few obſervations on the true Character and Style of it. Whoever reads the Odyſſey with an eye to the Iliad, expecting to find it of the ſame character, or of the ſame ſort of ſpirit, will be grievouſly deceived, and err againſt the firſt principle of Criticiſm, which is to conſider the nature of the piece, and the intent of its author. The Odyſſey is a moral and political work, inſtructive to all degrees of men, and filled with images examples and precepts, of civil and domeſtic life. *Homer* is here a perſon

Qui didicit patriæ *quid debeat, & quid* amicis,
Quo ſit amore parens, *quo* frater *amandus*, & hoſpes:
Qui quid ſit pulcrum, *quid* turpe, *quid* utile, *quid* non,
Plenius & melius Chryſippo & Crantore dicit.

The Odyſſey is the reverſe of the Iliad, in *Moral*, *Subject*, *Manner* and *Style*; to which it has no ſort

of relation, but as the ſtory happens to follow in order of time, and as ſome of the ſame perſons are actors in it. Yet from this incidental connexion many have been miſ-led to regard it as a continuation or ſecond part, and thence to expect a parity of character inconſiſtent with its nature.

It is no wonder that the common Reader ſhould fall into this miſtake, when ſo great a Critic as *Longinus* ſeems not wholly free from it. Although what he has ſaid has been generally underſtood to import a ſeverer cenſure of the Odyſſey than it really does, if we conſider the occaſion on which it is introduced, and the circumſtances to which it is confined.

" The Odyſſey (ſays he) is an inſtance, how na-
" tural it is to a great Genius, when it begins
" to grow old and decline, to delight it ſelf in
" *Narrations* and *Fables*. For, that *Homer*
" compoſed the Odyſſey after the Iliad, many
" proofs may be given, *&c.* From hence in my
" judgment it proceeds, that as the Iliad was writ-
" ten while his *Spirit* was in its greateſt vigor, the
" whole ſtructure of that work is Dramatick and full
" of action; whereas the greater part of the O-
" dyſſey is employ'd in Narration, which is the taſte
" of *Old Age*: So that in this latter piece we may
" compare him to the ſetting Sun, which has *ſtill*

" the

" the ſame greatneſs but not the ſame ardor, or
" force. He ſpeaks not in the ſame ſtrain; we
" ſee no more that *Sublime* of the Iliad which
" marches on with a conſtant pace, without ever
" being ſtopp'd, or retarded: there appears no
" more that hurry and that ſtrong tyde of mo-
" tions and paſſions, pouring one after another:
" there is no more the ſame fury, or the ſame
" volubility of diction, ſo ſuitable to action, and
" all along drawing in ſuch innumerable images of
" nature. But *Homer*, like the Ocean, is always
" great, even when he ebbs and retires; even when
" he is loweſt and loſes himſelf moſt in Narra-
" tions and incredible Fictions: As inſtances of this,
" we cannot forget the deſcriptions of tempeſts,
" the adventures of *Ulyſſes* with the *Cyclops*, and
" many others. But tho' all this be *Age*, it is
" the *Age* of *Homer* ------ And it may be ſaid
" for the credit of theſe fictions, that they are
" *beautiful Dreams*, or if you will, the *Dreams*
" *of* Jupiter *himſelf*. I ſpoke of the Odyſſey on-
" ly to ſhow, that the greateſt Poets when
" their genius wants ſtrength and warmth for the
" *Pathetic*, for the moſt part employ themſelves
" in painting the *Manners*. This *Homer* has done,
" in characterizing the Suitors, and deſcribing their
" way of life; which is properly a branch of Co-

" medy, whoſe peculiar buſineſs it is to repreſent " the manners of men."

We muſt firſt obſerve, it is the *Sublime* of which *Longinus* is writing: That, and not the nature of *Homer*'s Poem, is his ſubject. After having highly extoll'd the ſublimity and fire of the Iliad, he juſtly obſerves the Odyſſey to have leſs of thoſe qualities, and to turn more on the ſide of moral, and reflections on human life. Nor is it his buſineſs here to determine, whether the *elevated ſpirit* of the one, or the *juſt moral* of the other, be the greater excellence in it ſelf.

Secondly, that fire and fury of which he is ſpeaking, can not well be meant of the general Spirit and Inſpiration which is to run through a whole Epic Poem, but of that particular warmth and impetuoſity neceſſary in ſome parts, to image or repreſent actions or paſſions, of haſte, tumult, and violence. It is on occaſion of citing ſome ſuch particular paſſages in *Homer*, that *Longinus* breaks into this reflection; which ſeems to determine his meaning chiefly to that ſenſe.

Upon the whole, he affirms the Odyſſey to have leſs ſublimity and fire than the Iliad, but he does not ſay it wants the ſublime or wants fire. He affirms it to be narrative, but not that the narration is defective. He affirms it to abound *in*

fictions,

ſictions, not that thoſe fictions are ill invented, or ill executed. He affirms it to be nice and particular in painting the manners, but not that thoſe manners are ill painted. If *Homer* has fully in theſe points accompliſh'd his own deſign, and done all that the nature of his Poem demanded or allowed, it ſtill remains perfect in its kind, and as much a maſter-piece as the Iliad.

The Amount of the paſſage is this; that in his own particular taſte, and with reſpect to the *Sublime*, *Longinus* preferr'd the Iliad: And becauſe the Odyſſey was leſs active and lofty, he judged it the work of the old age of *Homer*.

If this opinion be true, it will only prove, that *Homer*'s Age might determine him in the choice of his ſubject, but not that it affected him in the execution of it: And that which would be a very wrong inſtance to prove the decay of his Imagination, is a very good one to evince the ſtrength of his Judgment. For had he (as Madam *Dacier* obſerves) compos'd the Odyſſey in his youth, and the Iliad in his age, both muſt in reaſon have been exactly the ſame as they now ſtand. To blame *Homer* for his choice of ſuch a ſubject, as did not admit the ſame incidents and the ſame pomp of ſtyle as his former; is to take offence at too much variety, and to imagine, that when a man has written one

good

good thing, he must ever after only copy himself.

The *Battle of* Constantine, and the *School of* Athens, are both pieces of *Raphael*: Shall we censure the School of *Athens* as faulty, because it has not the fury and fire of the other? or shall we say, that *Raphael* was grown grave and old, because he chose to represent the manners of old men and Philosophers? There is all the silence, tranquillity and composure in the one, and all the warmth, hurry and tumult in the other, which the subject of either required: both of them had been imperfect, if they had not been as they are. And let the Painter or Poet be young or old, who designs and performs in this manner, it proves him to have made the piece at a time of life when he was master not only of his art, but of his discretion.

Aristotle makes no such distinction between the two Poems: He constantly cites them with equal praise, and draws the rules and examples of Epic writing equally from both. But it is rather to the Odyssey that *Horace* gives the preference, in the Epistle to *Lollius*, and in the Art of Poetry. It is remarkable how opposite his opinion is to that of *Longinus*; and that the particulars he chuses to extoll, are those very *fictions* and *pictures of the manners* which the other seems least to approve. Those

fables

fables and manners are of the very eſſence of the work: But even without that regard, the fables themſelves have both more invention and more inſtruction, and the manners more moral and example, than thoſe of the Iliad.

In ſome points (and thoſe the moſt eſſential to the Epic Poem) the Odyſſey is confeſſed to excel the Iliad; and principally in the great end of it, the *Moral*. The conduct, turn, and diſpoſition of the *Fable* is alſo what the Criticks allow to be the better model for Epic writers to follow: Accordingly we find much more of the Caſt of this Poem than of the other in the *Æneid*, and (what next to that is perhaps the greateſt example) in the *Telemachus*. In the *Manners*, it is no way inferior: *Longinus* is ſo far from finding any defect in theſe, that he rather taxes *Homer* with painting them too minutely. As to the *Narrations*, although they are more numerous as the occaſions are more frequent, yet they carry no more the marks of old age, and are neither more prolix nor more circumſtantial, than the converſations and dialogues of the Iliad. Not to mention the length of thoſe of *Phœnix* in the ninth book, and of *Neſtor* in the eleventh (which may be thought in compliance to their characters) thoſe of *Glaucus* in the ſixth, of *Æneas* in the twentieth, and ſome others, muſt be allow'd to exceed any in the whole

Odyſſey.

Odyſſey. And that the propriety of ſtyle, and the numbers, in the Narrations of each are equal, will appear to any who compare them.

To form a right judgment, whether the Genius of *Homer* had ſuffer'd any decay; we muſt conſider, in both his poems, ſuch parts as are of a ſimilar nature, and will bear compariſon. And it is certain we ſhall find in each, the ſame vivacity and fecundity of invention, the ſame life and ſtrength of imaging and colouring, the particular deſcriptions as highly painted, the figures as bold, the metaphors as animated, and the numbers as harmonious and as various.

The Odyſſey is a perpetual ſource of Poetry: The ſtream is not the leſs full, for being gentle; tho' it is true (when we ſpeak only with regard to the *Sublime*) that a river, foaming and thund'ring in cataracts from rocks and precipices, is what more ſtrikes, amazes and fills the mind, than the ſame body of water, flowing afterwards thro' peaceful vales and agreeable ſcenes of paſturage.

The Odyſſey (as I have before ſaid) ought to be conſider'd according to its own nature and deſign, not with an eye to the Iliad. To cenſure *Homer* becauſe it is unlike what it was never meant to reſemble, is, as if a Gardiner who had purpoſely cultivated two beautiful trees of contrary natures, as a

ſpecimen

ſpecimen of his skill in the ſeveral kinds, ſhould be blamed for not bringing them into *pairs*; when in root, ſtem, leaf, and flower, each was ſo entirely different, that one muſt have been ſpoil'd in the endeavour to match the other.

Longinus, who ſaw this Poem was "*partly of the* "*nature of Comedy*," ought not for that very reaſon to have conſider'd it with a view to the Iliad. How little any ſuch reſemblance was the intention of *Homer*, may appear from hence, that although the character of *Ulyſſes* there was already drawn, yet here he purpoſely turns to another ſide of it, and ſhows him not in that full light of glory but in the ſhade of common life, with a mixture of ſuch qualities as are requiſite to all the loweſt accidents of it, ſtrugling with misfortunes, and on a level with the meaneſt of mankind. As for the other perſons, none of them are above what we call the higher Comedy: *Calypſo*, tho' a Goddeſs, is a character of intrigue; the *Suitors* are yet more approaching to it; the *Phæacians* are of the ſame caſt; the *Cyclops*, *Melanthius*, and *Irus*, deſcend even to droll characters: and the ſcenes that appear throughout, are generally of the comic kind; banquets, revels, ſports, loves, and the purſuit of a woman.

From the Nature of the Poem, we ſhall form an Idea of the *Style*. The diction is to follow the images, and to take its colour from the complexion of the thoughts. Accordingly the Odyſſey is not always cloath'd in the majeſty of verſe proper to Tragedy, but ſometimes deſcends into the plainer Narrative, and ſometimes even to that familiar dialogue eſſential to Comedy. However, where it cannot ſupport a ſublimity, it always preſerves a dignity, or at leaſt a propriety.

There is a real beauty in an eaſy, pure, perſpicuous deſcription even of a low action. There are numerous inſtances of this both in *Homer* and *Virgil*; and perhaps thoſe natural paſſages are not the leaſt pleaſing of their works. It is often the ſame in Hiſtory, where the repreſentations of common, or even domeſtic things, in clear, plain, and natural words, are frequently found to make the livelieſt impreſſion on the reader.

The queſtion is, how far a Poet, in purſuing the deſcription or image of an action, can attach himſelf to *little circumſtances*, without vulgarity or trifling? what particulars are proper, and enliven the image; or what are impertinent, and clog it? In this matter Painting is to be conſulted, and the whole regard had to thoſe circumſtances which contribute to form a full, and yet not a confuſed, idea of the thing.

Epithets

Epithets are of vaſt ſervice to this effect, and the right uſe of theſe is often the only expedient to render the narration poetical.

The great point of judgment is to diſtinguiſh when to ſpeak ſimply, and when figuratively: But whenever the Poet is oblig'd by the nature of his ſubject to deſcend to the lower manner of writing, an elevated ſtyle would be affected, and therefore ridiculous; and the more he was forc'd upon figures and metaphors to avoid that lowneſs, the more the image would be broken, and conſequenly obſcure.

One may add, that the uſe of the grand ſtyle on little ſubjects, is not only ludicrous, but a ſort of tranſgreſſion againſt the rules of proportion and mechanicks: 'Tis uſing a vaſt force to lift a *feather*.

I believe, now I am upon this head, it will be found a juſt obſervation, that the *low actions of life* cannot be put into a figurative ſtyle without being ridiculous, but *things natural* can. Metaphors raiſe the latter into Dignity, as we ſee in the *Georgicks*; but throw the former into Ridicule, as in the *Lutrin*. I think this may very well be accounted for: Laughter implies cenſure; inanimate and irrational beings are not objects of cenſure; therefore theſe may be elevated as much as you pleaſe, and no ridicule follows: but when rational beings are repreſented above

their real character, it becomes ridiculous in Art, becauſe it is vicious in Morality. The *Bees* in *Virgil*, were they rational beings, would be ridiculous by having their actions and manners repreſented on a level with creatures ſo ſuperior as men; ſince it would imply folly or pride, which are the proper objects of Ridicule.

The uſe of pompous expreſſion for low actions or thoughts is the *true Sublime* of *Don Quixote*. How far unfit it is for Epic Poetry, appears in its being the perfection of the Mock-Epick. *It is ſo far* from being the Sublime of *Tragedy*, that it is the cauſe of all *Bombaſte*; when Poets inſtead of being (as they imagine) conſtantly lofty, only preſerve throughout a painful equality of fuſtian: That continu'd ſwell of language (which runs indiſcriminately even thro' their loweſt characters, and rattles like ſome mightineſs of meaning in the moſt indifferent ſubjects) is of a piece with that perpetual elevation of tone which the Players have learned from it; and which is not *ſpeaking*, but *vociferating*.

There is ſtill more reaſon for a variation of ſtyle in *Epic* Poetry than in *Tragic*, to diſtinguiſh between that *Language of the Gods* proper to the *Muſe* who ſings, and is inſpir'd; and that of *Men* who are introduced ſpeaking only according to nature. Farther,

ther, there ought to be a difference of ſtyle obſerv'd in the ſpeeches of human perſons, and thoſe of Deities; and again, in thoſe which may be called ſet harangues or orations, and thoſe which are only converſation or dialogue. *Homer* has more of the latter than any other Poet: what *Virgil* does by two or three words of narration, *Homer* ſtill performs by ſpeeches: Not only replies, but even rejoynders are frequent in him, a practice almoſt unknown to *Virgil*. This renders his Poems more animated, but leſs grave and majeſtic; and conſequently neceſſitates the frequent uſe of a lower ſtyle. The writers of Tragedy lye under the ſame neceſſity, if they would copy nature; whereas that painted and poetical diction which they perpetually uſe, would be improper even in Orations deſign'd to move with all the arts of Rhetorick: This is plain from the practice of *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*; and *Virgil* in thoſe of *Drances* and *Turnus* gives an eminent example, how far remov'd the ſtyle of them ought to be from ſuch an exceſs of figures and ornaments: which indeed fits only that *Language of the Gods* we have been ſpeaking of, or that of a *Muſe* under inſpiration.

To read thro' a whole work in this ſtrain, is like travelling all along on the ridge of a hill; which is not half ſo agreeable as ſometimes gradually to riſe, and ſometimes gently to deſcend, as the way leads, and as the end of the journey directs. In-

Indeed the true reaſon that ſo few Poets have imitated *Homer* in theſe lower parts, has been the extreme difficulty of preſerving that mixture of Eaſe and Dignity eſſential to them. For it is as hard for an Epic Poem to ſtoop to the Narrative with ſucceſs, as for a Prince to deſcend to be familiar, without diminution to his greatneſs.

The *ſublime* ſtyle is more eaſily counterfeited than the *natural*; ſomething that paſſes for it, or ſounds like it, is common in all falſe writers: But nature, purity, perſpicuity, and ſimplicity, never walk in the clouds; they are obvious to all capacities; and where they are not evident, they do not exiſt.

The moſt plain Narration not only admits of theſe, and of harmony (which are all the qualities of ſtyle) but it requires every one of them to render it pleaſing. On the contrary, whatever pretends to a ſhare of the Sublime, may paſs notwithſtanding any defects in the reſt, nay ſometimes without any of them, and gain the admiration of all ordinary readers.

Homer in his loweſt narrations or ſpeeches is ever eaſy, flowing, copious, clear, and harmonious. He ſhows not leſs *invention*, in aſſembling the humbler, than the greater, thoughts and images; nor leſs *judgment*, in proportioning the ſtyle and the verſification to theſe, than to the other. Let it be remember'd, that the ſame Genius that ſoar'd the higheſt,

and

and from whom the greateſt models of the *Sublime* are derived, was alſo he who ſtoop'd the loweſt, and gave to the ſimple *Narrative* its utmoſt perfection. Which of theſe was the harder task to *Homer* himſelf, I cannot pretend to determine; but to his Tranſlator I can affirm (however unequal all his imitations muſt be) that of the latter has been much the more difficult.

Whoever expects here the ſame pomp of verſe, and the ſame ornaments of diction, as in the Iliad; he will, and he ought to be diſappointed. Were the original otherwiſe, it had been an offence againſt nature; and were the tranſlation ſo, it were an offence againſt *Homer*, which is the ſame thing.

It muſt be allow'd that there is a majeſty and harmony in the *Greek* language which greatly contribute to elevate and ſupport the narration. But I muſt alſo obſerve that this is an advantage grown upon the language ſince *Homer*'s time; for things are remov'd from vulgarity by being out of uſe: And if the words we could find in any preſent language were equally ſonorous or muſical in themſelves, they would ſtill appear leſs poetical and uncommon than thoſe of a dead one from this only circumſtance, of being in every man's mouth. I may add to this another diſadvantage to a Tranſlator, from a different cauſe: *Homer* ſeems to have taken upon him

him the character of an Hiſtorian, Antiquary, Divine, and Profeſſor of Arts and Sciences; as well as a Poet. In one or other of theſe characters he deſcends into many particularities, which as a Poet only perhaps he would have avoided. All theſe ought to be preſerv'd by a faithful Tranſlator, who in ſome meaſure takes the place of *Homer*; and all that can be expected from him is to make them as poetical as the ſubject will bear. Many arts therefore are requiſite to ſupply theſe diſadvantages, in order to dignify and ſolemnize *theſe plainer parts*, which hardly admit of any poetical ornaments.

Some uſe has been made to this end, of the ſtyle of *Milton*. A juſt and moderate mixture of old words may have an effect like the working old Abbey ſtones into a building, which I have ſometimes ſeen to give a kind of venerable air, and yet not deſtroy the neatneſs, elegance, and equality *requiſite* to a new work; I mean without rendring it too unfamiliar, or remote from the preſent purity of writing, or from that eaſe and ſmoothneſs which ought always to accompany Narration or Dialogue. In reading a ſtyle judiciouſly antiquated, one finds a pleaſure not unlike that of travelling on an old *Roman* way: but then the road muſt be as *good*, as the way is *ancient*; the ſtyle muſt be ſuch in which we may evenly proceed, without being put to ſhort ſtops by

ſudden

ſudden abruptneſſes, or puzled by frequent turnings and tranſpoſitions: No man delights in furrows and ſtumbling-blocks: And let our love to Antiquity be ever ſo great, a fine ruin is one thing, and a heap of rubbiſh another. The imitators of *Milton*, like moſt other imitators, are not *Copies* but *Caricatura's* of their original; they are a hundred times more obſolete and cramp than he, and equally ſo in all places: Whereas it ſhould have been obſerved of *Milton*, that he is not laviſh of his exotick words and phraſes every where alike, but employs them much more where the ſubject is marvellous vaſt and ſtrange, as in the ſcenes of Heaven, Hell, Chaos, *&c.* than where it is turn'd to the natural and agreeable, as in the pictures of Paradiſe, the loves of our firſt parents, the entertainments of Angels, and the like. In general, this unuſual ſtyle better ſerves to awaken our ideas in the deſcriptions and in the imaging and pictureſque parts, than it agrees with the lower ſort of narrations, the character of which is ſimplicity and purity. *Milton* has ſeveral of the latter, where we find not an antiquated affected or uncouth word, for ſome hundred lines together; as in his fifth book, the latter part of the eighth, the former of the tenth and eleventh books, and in the narration of *Michael* in the twelfth. I wonder indeed that he, who ventur'd (contrary

to the practice of all other Epic Poets) to imitate *Homer*'s Lowneſſes in the *Narrative*, ſhould not alſo have copied his plainneſs and perſpicuity in the *Dramatic* parts: Since in his ſpeeches (where clearneſs above all is neceſſary) there is frequently ſuch tranſpoſition and forced conſtruction, that the very ſenſe is not to be diſcover'd without a ſecond or third reading: And in this certainly he ought to be no example.

To preſerve the true character of *Homer*'s ſtyle in the preſent tranſlation, great pains has been taken to be eaſy and natural. The chief merit I can pretend to, is, not to have been carried into a more plauſible and figurative manner of writing, which would better have pleaſed all readers, but the judicious ones. My errors had been fewer, had each of thoſe Gentlemen who join'd with me ſhown as much of the ſeverity of a friend to me, as I did to them, in a ſtrict animadverſion and correction. What aſſiſtance I receiv'd from them, was made known in general to the publick in the original Propoſals for this work, and the particulars are ſpecify'd at the concluſion of it; to which I muſt add (to be punctually juſt) ſome part of the tenth and fifteenth books. The Reader will now be too good a judge, how much the greater part of it, and conſequently of its faults, *is*

chargeable

chargeable upon me alone. But this I can with integrity affirm, that I have beſtowed as much time and pains upon the whole, as were conſiſtent with the indiſpenſable duties and cares of life, and with that wretched ſtate of health which God has been pleaſed to make my portion. At the leaſt, it is a pleaſure to me to reflect, that I have introduced into our language this other work of the greateſt and moſt ancient of Poets, with ſome dignity; and I hope, with as little diſadvantage as the Iliad. And if, after the unmerited ſucceſs of that tranſlation, any one will wonder why I would enterprize the Odyſſey? I think it a ſufficient anſwer to ſay, that *Homer* himſelf did the ſame, or the world would never have ſeen it.

I deſign'd to have ended this Poſtſcript here; but ſince I am now taking my leave of *Homer*, and of all controverſy relating to him, I beg leave to be indulg'd if I make uſe of this laſt opportunity, to ſay a very few words about ſome reflections which the late Madam *Dacier* beſtow'd on the firſt part of my Preface to the Iliad, and which ſhe publiſh'd at the end of her tranſlation of that Poem*.

To write gravely an anſwer to them would be too much for the reflections; and to ſay nothing

* *Seconde Edition, a Paris,* 1719.

concerning them, would be too little for the Author. It is owing to the induſtry of that learned Lady, that our polite neighbours are become acquainted with many of *Homer*'s beauties, which were hidden from them before in *Greek* and in *Euſtathius*. She challenges on this account a particular regard from all the admirers of that great Poet, and I hope that I ſhall be thought, as I mean, to pay ſome part of this debt to her memory in what I am now writing.

Had theſe reflections fallen from the pen of an ordinary Critick, I ſhould not have apprehended their effect, and ſhould therefore have been ſilent concerning them: but ſince they are Madam *Dacier*'s, I imagine that they muſt be of weight; and in a caſe where I think her Reaſoning very bad, I reſpect her Authority.

I have fought under Madam *Dacier's* banner, and have wag'd war in defence of the divine *Homer* againſt all the Hereticks of the age. And yet it is Madam *Dacier* who accuſes me, and who accuſes me of nothing leſs than betraying our common Cauſe. She affirms that the moſt declar'd enemies of this Author have never ſaid any thing againſt him more injurious or more unjuſt than I. What muſt the world think of me, after ſuch a judgment paſs'd by ſo great a Critick? *the*

world,

world, who decides ſo often, and who examines ſo ſeldom; the world, who even in matters of litterature is almoſt always the ſlave of Authority? Who will ſuſpect that ſo much learning ſhould miſtake, that ſo much accuracy ſhould be miſ-led, or that ſo much candour ſhould be byaſs'd?

All this however has happen'd, and Madam *Dacier*'s Criticiſms on my Preface flow from the very ſame error, from which ſo many falſe criticiſms of her countrymen upon *Homer* have flow'd, and which ſhe has ſo juſtly and ſo ſeverely reprov'd; I mean the error of depending on injurious and unskilful *tranſlations*.

An indifferent tranſlation may be of ſome uſe, and a good one will be of a great deal. But I think that no tranſlation ought to be the ground of *Criticiſm*, becauſe no man ought to be condemn'd upon another man's explanation of his meaning: Could *Homer* have had the honour of explaining his, before that auguſt Tribunal where Monſieur *de la Motte* preſides, I make no doubt but he had eſcap'd many of thoſe ſevere animadverſions with which ſome *French* Authors have loaded him, and from which even Madam *Dacier*'s tranſlation of the Iliad could not preſerve him.

How unhappy was it for me, that the knowledge of our *Iſland-tongue* was as neceſſary to Madam

Dacier

Dacier in my caſe, as the knowledge of *Greek* was to Monſieur *de la Motte* in that of our great Author; or to any of thoſe whom ſhe ſtyles *blind Cenſurers*, and blames for condemning what they did not underſtand.

I may ſay with modeſty, that ſhe knew leſs of my true ſenſe from that faulty tranſlation of part of my Preface, than thoſe blind cenſurers might have known of *Homer*'s even from the tranſlation of *la Valterie*, which preceded her own.

It pleas'd me however to find, that her objections were not level'd at the general Doctrine, or at any eſſentials of my Preface, but only at a few particular expreſſions. She propos'd little more than (to uſe her own phraſe) to *combate two or three Similes*; and I hope that to combate a Simile is no more than to fight with a ſhadow, ſince a Simile is no better than the ſhadow of an Argument.

She lays much weight where I lay'd but little, and examines with more ſcrupuloſity than I writ, or than perhaps the matter requires.

Theſe unlucky Similes taken by themſelves may perhaps render my meaning equivocal to an ignorant tranſlator; or there may have fallen from my pen ſome expreſſions, which taken by themſelves likewiſe, may to the ſame perſon have the ſame effect. But if the tranſlator had been maſter of our

tongue,

tongue, the general tenor of my argument, that which precedes and that which follows the paſſages objected to, would have ſufficiently determined him as to the preciſe meaning of them: And if Madam *Dacier* had taken up her pen a little more leiſurely, or had employ'd it with more temper, ſhe would not have anſwered Paraphraſes of her own, which even the tranſlation will not juſtify, and which ſay more than once the very contrary to what I have ſaid in the paſſages themſelves.

If any perſon has curioſity enough to read the whole paragraphs in my Preface, on ſome mangled parts of which theſe reflections are made, he will eaſily diſcern that I am as orthodox as Madam *Dacier* her ſelf in thoſe very articles on which ſhe treats me like an Heretick: He will eaſily ſee that all the difference between us conſiſts in this, that I offer *opinions*, and ſhe delivers *doctrines*; that my imagination repreſents *Homer* as the greateſt of human Poets, whereas in hers he was exalted above humanity; infallibility and impeccability were two of his attributes. There was therefore no need of defending *Homer* againſt me, who (if I miſtake not) had carry'd my admiration of him as far as it can be carry'd without giving a *real* occaſion of writing in his defence.

After

better inſtruction. Now tho' I am ſawcy enough to think that one may ſometimes differ from *Ariſtotle* without blundering, and tho' I am ſure one may ſometimes fall into an error by following him ſervilely; yet I own that to quote any Author for what he never ſaid is a blunder; (but by the way, to correct an Author for what he never ſaid, is ſomewhat worſe than a blunder.) My words were theſe. "As "there is a greater variety of Characters in the Iliad "than in any other Poem, ſo there is of Speeches. "Every thing in it has manners, as *Ariſtotle* expreſſes "it; That is, every thing is acted or ſpoken: very "little paſſes in narration." She juſtly ſays that "E-"very thing which is acted or ſpoken, has not neceſſa-"rily manners merely becauſe it is acted or ſpoken." Agreed: But I would ask the queſtion, whether any thing can have manners which is neither acted nor ſpoken? if not, then the whole Iliad being almoſt ſpent in ſpeech and action, almoſt every thing in it has Manners: ſince *Homer* has been prov'd before in a long paragraph of the Preface, to have excell'd in drawing Characters and painting Manners, and indeed his whole Poem is one continued occaſion of ſhewing this bright part of his talent.

To ſpeak fairly, it is impoſſible ſhe could read even the tranſlation, and take my ſenſe ſo wrong as ſhe repreſents it; but I was firſt tranſlated ignorantly,

rantly, and then read partially. My expreſſion indeed was not quite exact; it ſhould have been, "Every thing has manners as *Ariſtotle* calls them." But ſuch a fault methinks might have been ſpared, ſince if one was to look with that diſpoſition ſhe diſcovers towards me, even on her own excellent writings, one might find ſome miſtakes which no context can redreſs; as where ſhe makes *Euſtathius* call *Cratiſthenes* the *Phliaſian*, *Calliſthenes* the *Phyſician* *. What a triumph might ſome ſlips of this ſort have afforded, to *Homer*'s, hers and my enemies, from which ſhe was only ſcreen'd by their happy ignorance? How unlucky had it been, when ſhe inſulted Mr. *de la Motte* for omitting a material paſſage in the † ſpeech of *Helen* to *Hector*, *Il.* 6. if ſome champion for the moderns had by chance underſtood ſo much *Greek*, as to whiſper him, that there was no ſuch paſſage in *Homer?*

Our concern, zeal, and even jealouſy, for our great Author's honour were mutual, our endeavours to advance it were equal, and I have as often trembled for it in her hands, as ſhe could in mine. It was one of the many reaſons I had to wiſh the longer life of this Lady, that I muſt certainly have regain'd her good opinion, in ſpite of all miſ-repreſenting Tranſlators whatever. I could not have expected it on any other

* *Dacier Remarques ſur le* 4^me^ *livre de l'Odyſſ.* pag. 467.

† *De la Corruption du Gout.*

terms than being approved as great, if not as passionate, an admirer of *Homer* as her self. For that was the first condition of her favour and friendship; otherwise not one's Taste alone, but one's Morality had been corrupted, nor would any man's Religion have been unsuspected, who did not implicitly believe in an Author whose doctrine is so conformable to holy Scripture. However, as different people have different ways of expressing their Belief, some purely by public and general acts of worship, others by a reverend sort of reasoning and enquiry about the grounds of it; 'tis the same in Admiration, some prove it by exclamations, others by respect. I have observed that the loudest huzza's given to a great man in a triumph, proceed not from his friends, but the rabble; and as I have fancy'd it the same with the rabble of Criticks, a desire to be distinguish'd from them has turn'd me to the more moderate, and I hope, more rational method. Tho' I am a Poet, I would not be an Enthusiast; and tho' I am an Englishman, I would not be furiously of a Party. I am far from thinking my self that Genius, upon whom at the end of these remarks Madam *Dacier* congratulates my country: One capable of "correct-"ing *Homer*, and consequently of reforming man-"kind, and amending this Constitution." It was not to *Great Britain* this ought to have been ap-

ply'd,

ply'd, ſince our nation has one happineſs for which ſhe might have preferr'd it to her own, that as much as we abound in other miſerable miſguided Sects, we have at leaſt none of the blaſphemers of *Homer*. We ſtedfaſtly and unanimouſly believe, both his Poem, and our Conſtitution, to be the beſt that ever human wit invented: That the one is not more incapable of amendment than the other; and (old as they both are) we deſpiſe any *French* or *Engliſh* man whatever, who ſhall preſume to retrench, to innovate, or to make the leaſt alteration in either. Far therefore from the Genius for which Madam *Dacier* miſtook me, my whole deſire is but to preſerve the humble character of a faithful Tranſlator, and a quiet Subject.

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