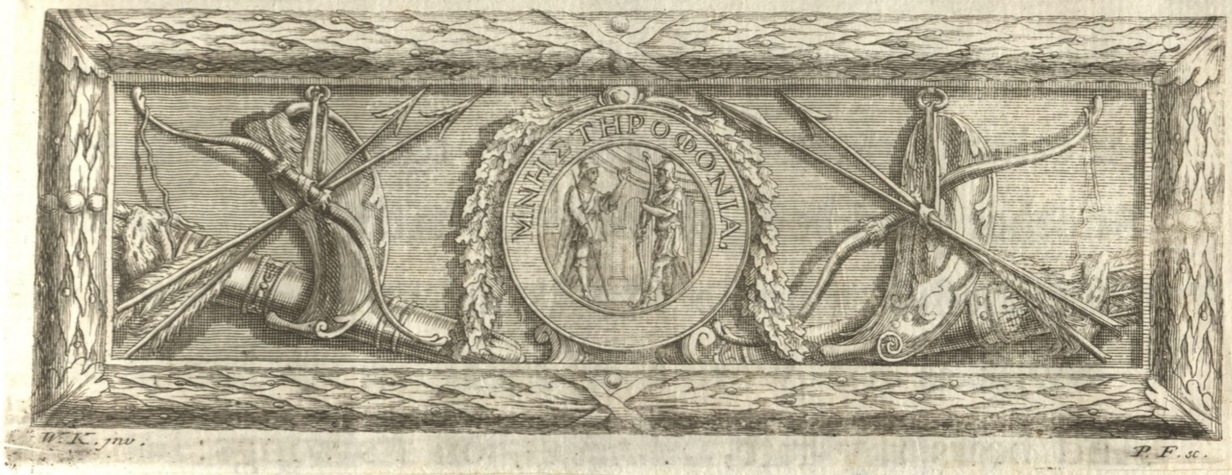
THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

The Death of the Suitors.

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



THE

TWENTY-SECOND BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THEN fierce the Heroe o'er the threſhold ſtrode;
Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a God.
Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable ſtore;
Before his feet the ratling ſhow'r he threw,
And thus terrific, to the Suitor crew.

One

One vent'rous game this hand has won to-day,
Another, Princes! yet remains to play;
Another mark our arrow muſt attain.
Phœbus aſſiſt! nor be the labour vain.
Swift as the word the parting arrow ſings,
And bears thy fate, *Antinous*, on its wings:
Wretch that he was, of unprophetic ſoul!
High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl;
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;
Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:
For Fate who fear'd amidſt a feaſtful band?
And Fate to numbers by a *ſingle hand.*
Full thro' his throat *Ulyſſes'* weapon paſt,
And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his laſt.
The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,
A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting from his noſe;
Grim in convulſive agonies he ſprawls:
Before him ſpurn'd, the loaded table falls,
And ſpreads the pavement with a mingled flood
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.

Amaz'd, confounded, as they ſaw him fall,
Uproſe the throngs tumultuous round the hall;
O'er all the dome they caſt a haggard eye,
Each look'd for arms in vain; no arms were nigh:
Aim'ſt thou at Princes? (all amaz'd they ſaid)
Thy laſt of games unhappy haſt thou play'd;
Thy erring ſhaft has made our braveſt bleed,
And death, unlucky gueſt, attends thy deed.
Vulturs ſhall tear thee — Thus incens'd they ſpoke,
While each to Chance aſcrib'd the wond'rous ſtroke,
Blind as they were; for death ev'n now invades
His deſtin'd prey, and wraps them all in ſhades.
Then grimly frowning with a dreadful look,
That wither'd all their hearts, *Ulyſſes* ſpoke.

Dogs, ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more
Ulyſſes vengeful from the *Trojan* ſhore;
While to your luſt and ſpoil a guardleſs prey,
Our houſe, our wealth, our helpleſs handmaids lay:
Not ſo content, with bolder frenzy fir'd,
Ev'n to our bed preſumptuous you aſpir'd:

Laws

Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,
Or ſhame of men, or dread of Gods above;
Heedleſs alike of infamy or praiſe,
Or Fame's eternal voice in future days:
The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,
Impending Fate is yours, and inſtant doom.
Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the Suitors ſtood,
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood;
Trembling they ſought their guilty heads to hide,
Alone the bold *Eurymachus* reply'd.
If, as thy words import, (he thus began)
Ulyſſes lives, and thou the mighty man,
Great are thy wrongs, and much haſt thou ſuſtain'd
In thy ſpoil'd Palace, and exhauſted land;
The cauſe and author of thoſe guilty deeds,
Lo! at thy feet unjuſt *Antinous* bleeds.
Not love, but wild ambition was his guide,
To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide,
Theſe were his aims, but juſter *Jove* deny'd.

Since

Since cold in death th' offender lies; oh ſpare
Thy ſuppliant people, and receive their pray'r!
Braſs, gold, and treaſures ſhall the ſpoil defray,
Two hundred oxen ev'ry Prince ſhall pay:
The waſte of years refunded in a day.
'Till then thy wrath is juſt—*Ulyſſes* burn'd
With high diſdain, and ſternly thus return'd.

All, all the treaſures that enrich'd our throne
Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,
If offer'd, vainly ſhould for mercy call;
'Tis you that offer, and I ſcorn them all:
Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,
'Till pale as yonder wretch each Suitor lies.
Hence with thoſe coward terms; Or fight or fly,
This choice is left ye, to reſiſt or die;
And die I truſt ye ſhall — He ſternly ſpoke:
With guilty fears the pale aſſembly ſhook.
Alone *Eurymachus* exhorts the train:
Yon Archer, comrades, will not ſhoot in vain;
But from the threſhold ſhall his darts be ſped,
(Who-e'er he be) 'till ev'ry Prince lie dead.

Be mindful of your ſelves, draw forth your ſwords,
And to his ſhafts obtend theſe ample boards,
(So need compells.) Then all united ſtrive
The bold invader from his poſt to drive;
The City rouz'd ſhall to our reſcue haſte,
And this mad Archer ſoon have ſhot his laſt.
Swift as he ſpoke, he drew his traytor ſword,
And like a lion ruſh'd againſt his Lord:
The wary Chief the ruſhing foe repreſt,
Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breaſt:
His failing hand deſerts the lifted ſword,
And prone he falls extended o'er the board:
Before him wide, in mixt effuſion roll
Th' untaſted viands, and the jovial bowl.
Full thro' his liver paſt the mortal wound,
With dying rage his forehead beats the ground,
He ſpurn'd the ſeat with fury as he fell,
And the fierce ſoul to darkneſs div'd, and hell.
Next bold *Amphinomus* his arm extends
To force the paſs: the god-like man defends.

Thy

Thy ſpear, *Telemachus!* prevents th'attack,
The brazen weapon driving thro' his back,
Thence thro' his breaſt its bloody paſſage tore;
Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor,
And his cruſh'd forehead marks the ſtone with gore.
He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear
The long incumbrance of the weighty ſpear
To the fierce foe advantage might afford,
To ruſh between, and uſe the ſhorten'd ſword.
With ſpeedy ardour to his Sire he flies,
And, Arm great father! arm (in haſte he cries)
Lo hence I run for other arms to wield,
For miſſile jav'lins, and for helm and ſhield;
Faſt by our ſide let either faithful ſwain
In arms attend us, and their part ſuſtain.
Haſte and return (*Ulyſſes* made reply)
While yet th'auxiliar ſhafts this hand ſupply;
Leſt thus alone, encountred by an hoſt,
Driv'n from the gate, th'important paſs be loſt.

With ſpeed *Telemachus* obeys, and flies
Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;
Four brazen helmets, eight refulgent ſpears,
And four broad bucklers, to his Sire he bears:
At once in brazen Panoply they ſhone,
At once each ſervant brac'd his armour on;
Around their King a faithful guard they ſtand,
While yet each ſhaft flew deathful from his hand
Chief after Chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,
And ſwell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground
Soon as his ſtore of flying fates was ſpent,
Againſt the wall he ſet the bow unbent:
And now his ſhoulders bear the maſſy ſhield,
And now his hands two beamy jav'lins wield;
He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd
O'er the high creſt, and caſt a dreadful ſhade.
There ſtood a window near, whence looking down
From o'er the porch, appear'd the ſubject town.
A double ſtrength of valves ſecur'd the place,
A high and narrow, but the only paſs:

The

The cautious King, with all-preventing care,
To guard that outlet, plac'd *Eumæus* there:
When *Agelaus* thus: Has none the ſenſe
To mount yon window, and alarm from thence
The neighbour town? the town ſhall force the door,
And this bold Archer ſoon ſhall ſhoot no more.
Melanthius then: That outlet to the gate
So near adjoins, that one may guard the ſtrait.
But other methods of defence remain,
My ſelf with arms can furniſh all the train;
Stores from the royal magazine I bring,
And their own darts ſhall pierce the Prince and King.
He ſaid; and mounting up the lofty ſtairs,
Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears:
All arm, and ſudden round the hall appears
A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of ſpears.
The Heroe ſtands oppreſt with mighty woe,
On ev'ry ſide he ſees the labour grow:
Oh curſt event! and oh unlook'd-for aid!
Melanthius or the women have betray'd——

Oh

Oh my dear ſon!— The father with a ſigh:
Then ceas'd; the filial virtue made reply.
Falſhood is folly, and 'tis juſt to own
The fault committed; this was mine alone;
My haſte neglected yonder door to bar,
And hence the villain has ſupply'd their war.
Run good *Eumæus* then, and (what before
I thoughtleſs err'd in) well ſecure that door:
Learn if by female fraud this deed were done,
Or (as my thought miſgives) by *Dolius'* ſon.
While yet they ſpoke, in queſt of arms again
To the high chamber ſtole the faithleſs ſwain,
Not unobſerv'd. *Eumæus* watchful ey'd,
And thus addreſs'd *Ulyſſes* near his ſide.
The miſcreant we ſuſpected takes that way;
Him, if this arm be pow'rful, ſhall I ſlay?
Or drive him hither, to receive the meed
From thy own hand, of this deteſted deed?
Not ſo (reply'd *Ulyſſes*) leave him there,
For us ſufficient is another care:

Within

Within the ſtricture of this palace wall
To keep inclos'd his maſters till they fall.
Go you, and ſeize the felon; backward bind
His arms and legs, and fix a plank behind;
On this, his body by ſtrong cords extend,
And on a column near the roof ſuſpend;
So ſtudy'd tortures his vile days ſhall end.
The ready ſwains obey'd with joyful haſte,
Behind the felon unperceiv'd they paſt,
As round the room in queſt of arms he goes:
(The half-ſhut door conceal'd his lurking foes)
One hand ſuſtain'd a helm, and one the ſhield
Which old *Laertes* wont in youth to wield,
Cover'd with duſt, with dryneſs chapt and worn,
The braſs corroded, and the leather torn:
Thus laden, o'er the threſhold as he ſtept,
Fierce on the villain from each ſide they leapt,
Back by the hair the trembling daſtard drew,
And down reluctant on the pavement threw.

Active

Active and pleas'd, the zealous ſwains fulfil
At ev'ry point their maſter's rigid will:
Firſt, faſt behind, his hands and feet they bound,
Then ſtreighten'd cords involv'd his body round;
So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,
The howling felon ſwung from ſide to ſide.
Eumæus ſcoffing, then with keen diſdain.
There paſs thy pleaſing night, oh gentle ſwain!
On that ſoft pillow, from that envy'd height
Firſt may'ſt thou ſee the ſpringing dawn of light;
So timely riſe, when morning ſtreaks the eaſt,
To drive thy victims to the *Suitors* feaſt.
This ſaid, they left him, tortur'd as he lay,
Secur'd the door, and haſty ſtrode away:
Each, breathing death, reſum'd his dang'rous poſt
Near great *Ulyſſes*; Four againſt an hoſt.
When lo! deſcending to her Heroe's aid
Jove's daughter *Pallas*, War's triumphant maid:
In *Mentor*'s friendly form ſhe join'd his ſide;
Ulyſſes ſaw, and thus with tranſport cry'd.

Come,

Come, ever welcome, and thy ſuccour lend;
Oh ev'ry ſacred name in one! my friend!
Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown:
What-e'er thro' life's whole ſeries I have done
Or good, or grateful, now to mind recall,
And aiding this one hour, repay it all.
Thus he; but pleaſing hopes his boſom warm
Of *Pallas* latent in the friendly form.
The adverſe hoſt the phantom warrior ey'd,
And firſt loud-threatning, *Agelaüs* cry'd.
Mentor beware, nor let that tongue perſwade
Thy frantic arm to lend *Ulyſſes* aid;
Our force ſucceſsful ſhall our threat make good,
And with the ſire's and ſon's commix thy blood.
What hop'ſt thou here? Thee firſt the ſword ſhall ſlay,
Then lop thy whole poſterity away;
Far hence thy baniſh'd conſort ſhall we ſend;
With his, thy forfeit lands and treaſures blend;
Thus, and thus only, ſhalt thou join thy friend.
His barb'rous inſult ev'n the Goddeſs fires,
Who thus the warrior to revenge inſpires.

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

With

With theſe, *Piſander* great *Polyctor*'s ſon,
Sage *Polybus*, and ſtern *Amphimedon*,
With *Demoptolemus*: Theſe ſix ſurvive,
The beſt of all the ſhafts had left alive.
Amidſt the carnage deſp'rate as they ſtand,
Thus *Agelaus* rowz'd the lagging band.
The hour is come, when yon' fierce man no more
With bleeding Princes ſhall beſtrow the floor:
Lo! *Mentor* leaves him with an empty boaſt;
The four remain, but four againſt an hoſt.
Let each at once diſcharge the deadly dart,
One ſure of ſix ſhall reach *Ulyſſes*' heart:
Thus ſhall one ſtroke the glory loſt regain:
The reſt muſt periſh, their great leader ſlain.
Then all at once their mingled lances threw,
And thirſty all of one man's blood they flew;
In vain! *Minerva* turn'd them with her breath,
And ſcatter'd ſhort, or wide, the points of death;
With deaden'd ſound, one on the threſhold falls,
One ſtrikes the gate, one rings againſt the walls;

The ſtorm paſt innocent. The god-like man
Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began.
'Tis now (brave friends) our turn, at once to throw
(So ſpeed 'em heav'n) our jav'lins at the foe.
That impious race to all their paſt miſ-deeds
Would add our blood. Injuſtice ſtill proceeds.
He ſpoke: at once their fiery lances flew:
Great *Demoptolemus*, *Ulyſſes* ſlew;
Euryades receiv'd the Prince's dart;
The Goatherd's quiver'd in *Piſander*'s heart;
Fierce *Elatus* by thine, *Eumæus*, falls;
Their fall in thunder ecchoes round the walls.
The reſt retreat: the victors now advance,
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.
Again the foe diſcharge the ſteely ſhow'r;
Again made fruſtrate by the virgin pow'r.
Some, turn'd by *Pallas*, on the threſhold fall,
Some wound the gate, ſome ring againſt the wall;
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,
Drop harmleſs, on the pavement ſounding dead.

Then

Then bold *Amphimedon* his jav'lin caſt;
Thy hand, *Telemachus*, it lightly raz'd;
And from *Cteſippus'* arm the ſpear elanc'd
On good *Eumæus'* ſhield and ſhoulder glanc'd;
Not leſſen'd of their force (ſo ſlight the wound)
Each ſung along, and drop'd upon the ground.
Fate doom'd thee next, *Eurydamas*, to bear
Thy death, ennobled by *Ulyſſes'* ſpear.
By the bold ſon *Amphimedon* was ſlain:
And *Polybus* renown'd the faithful ſwain.
Pierc'd thro' the breaſt the rude *Cteſippus* bled,
And thus Philætius gloried o'er the dead.

There end thy pompous vaunts, and high diſdain;
Oh ſharp in ſcandal, voluble and vain!
How weak is mortal pride! To heav'n alone
Th'event of actions and our fates are known:
Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear:
The victim's heel is anſwer'd with this ſpear.

Ulyſſes brandiſh'd high his vengeful ſteel,
And *Damaſtorides* that inſtant fell;

Faſt

Faſt by, *Leocritus* expiring lay,
The Prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way
Thro' all his bowels: down he tumbles prone,
His batter'd front and brains beſmear the ſtone.
Now *Pallas* ſhines confeſs'd; aloft ſhe ſpreads
The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads;
The dreadful *Ægis* blazes in their eye;
Amaz'd they ſee, they tremble, and they fly:
Confus'd, diſtracted, thro' the rooms they fling,
Like oxen madden'd by the breeze's ſting,
When ſultry days, and long, ſucceed the gentle [ſpring.
Not half ſo keen, fierce vulturs of the chace
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race,
When the wide field extended ſnares beſet,
With conſcious dread they ſhun the quiv'ring net:
No help, no flight; but wounded ev'ry way,
Headlong they drop: the fowlers ſeize the prey.
On all ſides thus they double wound on wound,
In proſtrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,
Unmanly ſhreiks precede each dying groan,
And a red deluge floats the reeking ſtone.

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

Phemius alone the hand of vengeance ſpar'd,
Phemius the ſweet, the heav'n-inſtructed bard.
Beſide the gate the rev'rend minſtrel ſtands;
The lyre, now ſilent, trembling in his hands;
Dubious to ſupplicate the chief, or fly
To *Jove*'s inviolable altar nigh,
Where oft *Laertes* holy vows had paid,
And oft *Ulyſſes* ſmoking victims laid.
His honour'd harp with care he firſt ſet down,
Between the laver and the ſilver throne;
Then proſtrate ſtretch'd before the dreadful man,
Perſuaſive, thus, with accent ſoft began.

O King! to mercy be thy ſoul inclin'd,
And ſpare the Poet's ever-gentle kind.
A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,
For dear to Gods and Men is ſacred ſong.
Self-taught I ſing; by heav'n, and heav'n alone
The genuine ſeeds of Poeſy are ſown;
And (what the Gods beſtow) the lofty lay,
To Gods alone, and god-like worth, we pay.

Save

Save then the Poet, and thy ſelf reward;
'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record.
That here I ſung, was force and not deſire;
This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
And let thy ſon atteſt, nor ſordid pay
Nor ſervile flatt'ry ſtain'd the moral lay.
The moving words *Telemachus* attends,
His ſire approaches, and the bard defends.
Oh mix not, Father, with thoſe impious dead
The man divine; forbear that ſacred head;
Medon the herald too our arms may ſpare,
Medon, who made my infancy his care;
If yet he breathes, permit thy ſon to give
Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live.
Beneath a table, trembling with diſmay,
Couch'd cloſe to earth, unhappy *Medon* lay,
Wrapt in a new-ſlain Oxe's ample hide:
Swift at the word he caſt his skreen aſide,
Sprung to the Prince, embrac'd his knee with tears,
And thus with grateful voice addreſs'd his ears:

O Prince! O Friend! lo here thy *Medon* ſtands;
Ah ſtop the Heroe's unreſiſted hands,
Incens'd too juſtly by that impious brood,
Whoſe guilty glories now are ſet in blood.
To whom *Ulyſſes* with a pleaſing eye:
Be bold, on friendſhip and my ſon rely;
Live, an example for the world to read,
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed:
Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace reſort
From blood and carnage to yon open court:
Me other work requires — With tim'rous awe
From the dire ſcene th' exempted two withdraw,
Scarce ſure of life, look round, and trembling move
To the bright altars of Protector *Jove*.
Mean-while *Ulyſſes* ſearch'd the dome, to find
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.
Not one! compleat the bloody tale he found,
All ſteep'd in blood, all gaſping on the ground.
So, when by hollow ſhores the fiſher train
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main,
And ſcarce the meſhy toils the copious draught con-
[tain,

All naked of their element, and bare,
The fiſhes pant, and gaſp in thinner air;
Wide o'er the ſands are ſpread the ſtiff'ning prey,
'Till the warm ſun exhales their ſoul away.
And now the King commands his ſon to call
Old *Euryclea*, to the death-ful hall:
The ſon obſervant not a moment ſtays;
The aged Governeſs with ſpeed obeys:
The ſounding portals inſtant they diſplay;
The matron moves, the Prince directs the way.
On heaps of death the ſtern *Ulyſſes* ſtood,
All black with duſt and cover'd thick with blood.
So the grim Lion from the ſlaughter comes,
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,
His breaſt with marks of carnage painted o'er,
His jaws all dropping with the bull's black gore.
Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,
The guilty fall'n, the mighty deed compleat;
A ſcream of joy her feeble voice eſſay'd:
The Heroe check'd her, and compos'dly ſaid.

Woman, experienc'd as thou art, controul
Indecent joy, and feaſt thy ſecret ſoul.
T'inſult the dead is cruel and unjuſt;
Fate, and their crime, have ſunk them to the duſt
Nor heeded theſe the cenſure of mankind,
The good and bad were equal in their mind.
Juſtly the price of worthleſsneſs they pay'd,
And each now wails an unlamented ſhade.
But thou ſincere! Oh *Euryclea*, ſay,
What maids diſhonour us, and what obey?
Then ſhe. In theſe thy kingly walls remain
(My ſon) full fifty of the handmaid train,
Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave,
And ſervitude with pleaſing tasks deceive;
Of theſe, twice ſix purſue their wicked way,
Nor me nor chaſt *Penelope* obey;
Nor fits it that *Telemachus* command
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.
Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,
Where ſlumbers ſoft now cloſe the royal eye;

There

There wake her with the news—The matron cry'd;
Not ſo (*Ulyſſes* more ſedate reply'd)
Bring firſt the crew who wrought theſe guilty deeds.
In haſte the matron parts: The King proceeds.
Now to diſpoſe the dead, the care remains
To you my ſon, and you, my faithful ſwains;
Th' offending females to that task we doom,
To waſh, to ſcent, and purify the room.
Theſe (ev'ry table cleans'd, and ev'ry throne,
And all the melancholy labour done)
Drive to yon' court, without the Palace wall,
There the revenging ſword ſhall ſmite them all;
So with the Suitors let 'em mix in duſt,
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their luſt.
He ſaid: The lamentable train appear,
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;
Each heav'd her mournful burthen, and beneath
The porch, depos'd the ghaſtly heaps of death.
The Chief ſevere, compelling each to move,
Urg'd the dire task imperious from above.

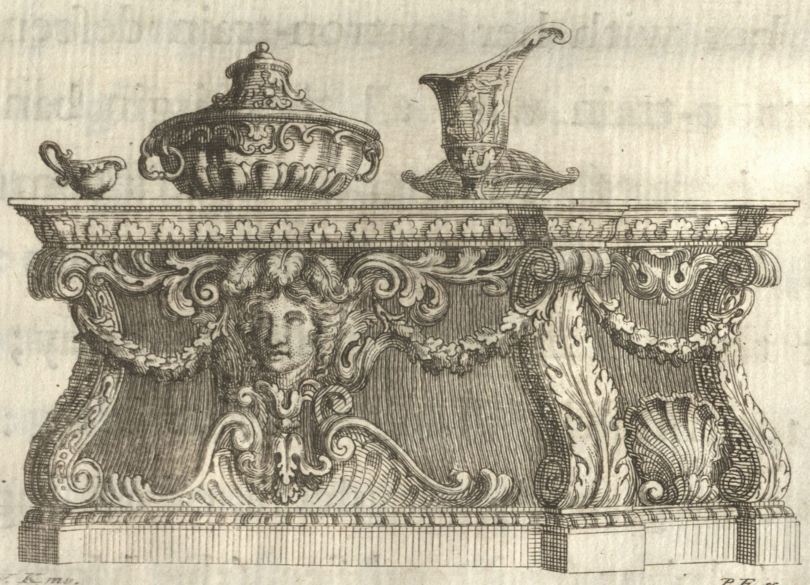
With

With thirſty ſponge they rub the tables o'er,
(The ſwains unite their toil) the walls, the floor
Waſh'd with th' effuſive wave, are purg'd of gore.
Once more the palace ſet in fair array,
To the baſe court the females take their way;
There compaſs'd cloſe between the dome and wall,
(Their life's laſt ſcene) they trembling wait their fall.
Then thus the Prince. To theſe ſhall we afford
A fate ſo pure, as by the martial ſword?
To theſe, the nightly proſtitutes to ſhame,
And baſe revilers of our houſe and name?
Thus ſpeaking, on *the circling wall he ſtrung*
A ſhip's tough cable, from a column hung;
Near the high top he ſtrain'd it ſtrongly round,
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.
Their heads above, connected in a row,
They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below:
Thus on ſome tree hung ſtruggling in the ſnare,
The doves or thruſhes flap their wings in air.
Soon fled the ſoul impure, and left behind
The empty corſe to waver with the wind.

Then forth they led *Melanthius*, and began
Their bloody work: They lopp'd away the man,
Morſel for dogs! then trimm'd with brazen ſheers
The wretch, and ſhorten'd of his noſe and ears;
His hands and feet laſt felt the cruel ſteel:
He roar'd, and torments gave his ſoul to hell—
They waſh, and to *Ulyſſes* take their way,
So ends the bloody buſineſs of the day.
To *Euryclea* then addreſt the King:
Bring hither fire, and hither ſulphur bring,
To purge the palace: then the Queen attend,
And let her with her matron-train deſcend;
The matron-train with all the virgin band
Aſſemble here, to learn their Lord's command.
Then *Euryclea*; Joyful I obey,
But caſt thoſe mean diſhoneſt rags away;
Permit me firſt thy royal robes to bring:
Ill ſuits this garb the ſhoulders of a King.
" Bring ſulphur ſtrait and fire (the Monarch cries)
She hears, and at the word obedient flies.

With

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



OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.

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I.

E are now come to the great event or Cataſtrophe of the *Odyſſey*, which is the Deſtruction of the Suitors. The manner by which the Poet conducts it, has been prais'd and cenſur'd, by ſome as noble and heroic, by others as romantic and incredible: It is therefore highly neceſſary to vindicate *Homer* in the chief action of the whole Poem, that he may not be found culpable, in the place where he ought to be the moſt exact and draw his Heroe to the beſt advantage. The Objection made againſt this deciſive action is, that the Poet makes *Ulyſſes* perform impoſſibilities; no one perſon, with ſuch ſmall aſſiſtance, being able to deſtroy above an hundred Enemies. It is no anſwer to ſay that *Pallas* deſcends to aid *Ulyſſes*, for it has been already proved, that all incidents which require a divine probability, ſhould be ſo diſengag'd from the action, that they may be ſubſtracted from it without deſtroying it; whereas this action is eſſential to it. No leſs a Critic than *Longinus*, Chap. 7.

condemns *Homer*; for enumerating the faults of the *Odyssey*, he thus proceeds: "To these may be added the absurdities he commits, in the account of the destruction of *Penelope*'s Suitors." And *Scaliger*, Lib. 5. of his *Poetics* is of the same opinion: *Ulysses interfecit arcu procos, inter quos & ipsum tantillum esset intervalli: Quare omnes simul in eum impetum non fecerunt?* The strength of this Objection lies in the omission of the Suitors in not rushing at once upon *Ulysses* in an united Body: Now this was impossible, he stood upon the threshold in a narrow pass, and by this advantage he was able to make it good against a great inequality of numbers. It is not difficult to bring instances of a like nature from undoubted history: *Cocles* alone defended the bridge over the *Tyber* against the whole army of *Porsena*, and stood unmoveable till the *Romans* broke it down behind him. And *Leonidas* the *Spartan* General defended the Pass of *Thermopylæ* with a small number, against three millions of *Persians* led by *Xerxes*; and if he had not been betray'd, he would have probably defeated his whole army. In both these instances there was a greater inequality of numbers, than between *Ulysses* and the Suitors. The Reader will be reconcil'd to the probability of these relations, if he considers that the whole business of war was anciently decided by mere strength of body: Fire-arms now set all men upon a nearer Level; but in these early ages, the strongest person was the greatest Heroe; a man of superior and uncommon strength drove his enemies before him like an army of boys, and with as much facility. From this observation it is evident that *Homer* scarce transgresses the bounds of historic truth, when he describes *Achilles* chasing whole squadrons of *Trojans*: He wrote according to the manners of his times, and drew after the life, tho' sometimes he improv'd a feature to give grace to the picture of his Heroe: Thus in the Scripture, from the mere advantage of strength, we see a single *Goliah* defy the whole armies of *Israel*.

Rapin commends the conduct of *Homer* in bringing about the destruction of the Suitors. The unravelling the whole *Odyssey* (says that Author) by their Deaths, is very great, and very becoming

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

II.

VERSE 1. *Then fierce the Heroe o'er the threſhold ſtrode*, &c.] *Plato* was particularly ſtruck with the beauty of theſe lines: In his Dialogue intitled *Iön*, p. 145. *Socrates* thus ſpeaks: "When "you repeat the verſes of *Homer* emphatically, and raviſh the "whole Audience, whether it be the paſſage where he ſings "how *Ulyſſes* leaps upon the threſhold, diſcovers himſelf to the "Suitors, and pours his arrows before his feet; or where *A-*"*chilles* ruſhes upon *Hector*; or where he paints the Lamen-"tations of *Hecuba*, *Priam*, or *Andromache*; tell me, are you any

"longer

" longer master of your own passions? are you not transported
" and ravish'd with divine fury, think your self present at th
" very actions, either in *Ithaca* or *Troy?*" It must indee be allow'd, that *Homer* here paints to the Life; we see *Ulysses* his motion, his attitude, and the noble fury with which he begin the onset. The Poet interests us in the cause of his Heroe, an we fight on his side against his enemies.

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

Τὶς δ' ἀγεϱιῶτις θέλγει νοὸν
Οὐκ ἐπισαμένη τὰ βεάκεα ἕλκειν
Ἐπὶ τῶν σφυϱῶν; ——

which he thus explains,

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

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

III.

VERSE 10. Phœbus *assist!*] *Ulysses* addresses a pray'r to *Apollo* to give success to his present enterprize; he directs it to him, because he is the God of Archery; and he concludes in four words, in compliance with the exigence of the time, which will not permit him to speak at large. This prayer to *Apollo* confirms my observation, that *Penelope* propos'd the tryal of the

Bow

Bow in honour of that Deity, and we find that it was cuſtomary from a remarkable paſſage in the *Iliad*, Lib. 4.

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

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

IV.

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

V.

VERSE 22. *A ſtream of gore burſt ſpouting* ------] The word in the original is αὐλὸς, which commonly ſignifies a pipe or muſical inſtrument: The Ancients (obſerves *Euſtathius*) uſed it to denote a fountain; here therefore it implies a flux or fountain of blood, κρουνὸς ἐξακόντισμα ἄιματος, the word therefore very happily

pily paints the blood spouting from the Nostrils, as from a fountain; and in this sense, it gives us a full image of the nature of the wound; the blood sprung as from a pipe, thro' the mouth of the wound, or from the veins, thro' the nostrils.

VI.

VERSE 35. ----- *thus incens'd they spoke,*
While each to Chance ascrib'd the wond'rous stroke.]
This passage was look'd upon as spurious by the Ancients; for they thought it impossible that all the Suitors should speak the same sentiment, as by compact, like a *Chorus* in a Tragedy: they appeal'd to the custom of *Homer* himself, who continually wrote

Ὣδέ τις εἴπεσχεν.

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

VII.

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

VIII.

VERSE 64. *To ſlay thy ſon, thy kingdoms to divide.*] This expreſſion is judiciouſly inſerted, and with good reaſon put into the mouth of one of the Suitors, namely *Eurymachus*. The Poet is now puniſhing them for their crimes; it is therefore very neceſſary that the Reader ſhould be ſatisfy'd that they deſerve puniſhment; for if it be not an act of juſtice, it is murder. The Poet therefore brings them all confeſſing themſelves guilty by the mouth of *Eurymachus*; their crime is the intended murder of *Telemachus*, and the uſurpation of the throne of *Ulyſſes*. If this had not been ſet in a clear light, there might have been room for a ſuſpicion that *Ulyſſes* inflicted a puniſhment too great for the guilt of the Suitors. For was it a crime that deſerv'd death, to aim at the marriage of *Penelope*? this is not to be ſuppos'd; for they took her to be a widow, and might therefore without a crime ask her in marriage. Was death due for the waſte and profuſion of the riches of *Ulyſſes*? This might have been redreſs'd, by a full repayment, and a juſt equivalent. *Homer* therefore, to ſhew that there is a cauſe for the ſeverity of the puniſhment, ſets their crimes in open view, which are an intentional murder, and an actual treaſon. The place likewiſe where he inſerts this circumſtance is well choſen, *viz.* in the place where the puniſhment is related; and by this method we acknowledge the equity of it. 'Tis true, *Eurymachus* throws the guilt upon *Antinous* as the chief offender; but all the Suitors have been his aſſociates, and approv'd of all his violent and bloody deſigns thro' the *Odyſſey*, and therefore are juſtly involv'd in the ſame puniſhment; ſo that *Ulyſſes* puniſhes rebellious ſubjects by the authority of a King. *Homer* likewiſe obſerves juſtice in the death of *Antinous*; he is the firſt in guilt, and the firſt that falls by his Heroe's hands.

IX.

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

X.

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

XI.

VERSE 108. *The brazen weapon driving thro' his back.*] *Euſtathius*, and *Spondanus* from him, interpret this paſſage very much to the diſadvantage of the courage of *Telemachus*: They obſerve that he is yet new to the horrors of war, and therefore wanting the heart to meet his enemy in the front, gives him this wound between the ſhoulders: That as ſoon as he has given the blow, out of fear he leaves the ſpear in the wound; an action as diſreputable, as to throw away the ſhield in battle; and laſtly, that it is fear that ſuggeſts to his mind the expedient to fetch the arms, a pretext to be diſtant from danger. But it is not difficult to defend *Telemachus*. *Amphinomus* was aſſaulting *Ulyſſes*, and conſequently his back was turn'd towards *Telemachus*, and this occaſions the wound in that part. This combat is not a combat of honour,

honour, where points of ceremony are obſerv'd; *Telemachus* was therefore at liberty to deſtroy his enemy by any methods, without any imputation of cowardice; eſpecially conſidering the inequality of the parties. Neither is it out of fear that he quits his ſpear; but from a dictate of wiſdom; he is afraid leſt ſome of the Suitors ſhould attack him while he is diſengaging it, and take him at an advantage, while he has no weapon to uſe in his own defence; beſides, he has no farther occaſion for it, he haſtes away to provide other arms; not only for himſelf, but for *Ulyſſes* and his friends; and this is ſo far from being the ſuggeſtion of fear, that it is the reſult of wiſdom.

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

XII.

VERSE 117. ----- *arm (in haſte he cries)*] *Homer* almoſt conſtantly gives the epithet πτερόεντα, to ἔπεα; *winged words*. *Plutarch* in his treatiſe upon Garrulity gives us the meaning of it. A word (ſays that Author) while it remains unſpoken is a ſecret, but being communicated, it changes its name into common rumour; it is then *flown* from us; and this is the reaſon why *Homer* calls words *winged:* He that lets a bird fly from his hand, does not eaſily catch it again; and he that lets a word ſlip from his tongue cannot recall it; it flies abroad, and flutters from place to place every moment. It has indeed in ſome paſſages a ſtill cloſer meaning; when a perſon ſpeaks with precipitation, the epithet expreſſes the ſwiftneſs of the ſpeech, the words are wing'd; It is here apply'd with particular propriety; *Telemachus* asks a queſtion in the compaſs of four lines, and receives an anſwer in two from *Ulyſſes*; the time not allowing any delay.

XIII.

VERSE 137. *Against the wall he set the bow unbent.*] The Poet may be thought too circumstantial in the disposal of the bow; but there is a reason for it; he shews *Ulysses* plac'd it out of the reach of the Suitors, who, if they had seiz'd the bow, might have furnish'd themselves with arrows from the dead bodies of their friends, and employ'd them against *Ulysses*: This caution was therefore necessary. *Eustathius.*

XIV.

VERSE 142. *There stood a window near, whence looking down,*
From o'er the porch, appear'd the subject town.]
The word in the *Greek* is ὀρσοθύρη, *janua superior*, and it is likewise used a little lower. It has given great trouble to the Commentators to explain the situation of these two Passages. *Dacier* imagines that by the former there was a descent into the court-yard, and so to the street; but this cannot be true: For *Agelaüs* exhorting his associates to seize this passage, makes use of the word ἀναβάνω, which signifies to *ascend*, and not to *descend* into the court-yard: Besides, he bids them raise the people by *shouting to them*, which seems to imply, that this place overlook'd the streets, from whence a shout might be heard by the people. Ὀρσοθύρη (observes *Eustathius*) is θύρη εἰς ἣν ὄρνυταί τις θέλων ἰδεῖν ἐκεῖθεν, that is, *a door by which a person ascends to obtain a prospect*: This probably led to the roof of the porch of the palace fronting the street, from whence a person standing in the open air and shouting might raise the City; or as for greater clearness it is here translated a window, which answers all these purposes.

But there is still a difficulty arising from the word λαύειν, which is thus solv'd by *Eustathius*, λαύη ἐστὶν ὁ πρὸς τὴν ὀρσοθύρην ἄγων στενωπὸς, that is, a narrow passage leading to this private window or door, and he afterwards interprets it by στενὴ ὁδός.

From

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

XV.

VERSE 159. *Twelve ſhields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears.*] *Ariſtarchus*, remarks *Euſtathius*, blam'd this deſcription as incredible; for how could one perſon be able to carry ſuch a load of armour at one time? But we are not to make this ſuppoſition; the Poet ſpeaks indefinitely, and leaves us at liberty to conjecture that

that *Melanthius* brought them at ſeveral times; thus a little lower we find him going again for arms to furniſh the reſt of the Suitors.

XVI.

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

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

XVII.

VERSE 187. *To keep inclos'd his maſters* ------] It may be ask'd, when *Eumæus* retires from the guard of the paſſage, what hinders

hinders the Suitors from ſeizing it, and by it giving notice to the city of their danger? What *Ulyſſes* here ſays obviates this objection. He tells *Eumæus*, that he and *Telemachus* will defend it againſt all the efforts of his enemies: By this expreſſion he gives us to underſtand, that *Telemachus* ſhall poſt himſelf in the place of *Eumæus*, and make it good till he has executed juſtice upon *Melanthius*.

XVIII.

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

XIX.

VERSE 246. *Art thou* Ulyſſes, *&c.*] *Pallas* is here an allegorical Deity, and repreſents the courage and wiſdom which was exerted by *Ulyſſes* in the deſtruction of the Suitors: The Poet puts the words into the mouth of a Godddeſs, to give ornament and dignity to his Poetry; but they are only the ſuggeſtions of his own heart, which reproaches him for being ſo ſlow in puniſhing the inſolence of his adverſaries. If we take them in this ſenſe,

sense they will be in the nature of a soliloquy: The Poet indeed was oblig'd to introduce a Deity, to give importance to the decisive action of his whole Poem: Thus *Jupiter* assists *Æneas* in *Virgil*; *Minerva*, *Achilles* in the *Iliad*, and the same Goddess *Ulysses* here in the *Odyssey*. I very well know that all these passages have been blam'd by some Critics, as derogatory to the courage of these Heroes, who cannot conquer their enemies but thro' the assistance of a Deity. The Reader may be pleas'd to look back for a full vindication of *Homer* and *Virgil*, to *Lib.* 3. *Note* 43. of the *Odyssey*.

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

XX.

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

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

This perhaps may be the occasion of all such fictions. The superstition of the heathen world induc'd the Ancients to believe that the appearance of any Bird in a critical hour, was a sign of the presence of a Divinity, and by degrees they began to persuade themselves, that the Gods appear'd to them in the form of those birds. Hence arose all the honours paid to Augurs, and the reliance upon divination drawn from the flight of birds; and almost every Deity had a bird sacred to him. The Eagle to *Jupiter*, the Peacok to *Juno*, &c. *Pallas* here takes the

the form of a ſwallow, becauſe it is a domeſtic Bird, and therefore may be ſaid to appear within the walls of the palace with moſt probability.

XXI.

VERSE 298. ------ *the Victors now advance,*
Each from the dead reſumes his bloody lance.]
The danger beginning to abate by the fall of the chief of the enemy, *Ulyſſes* advances from his ſtand: There was a neceſſity for this conduct: *Ulyſſes* and his three aſſiſtants had kill'd four enemies with their ſpears; and conſequently the Poet was oblig'd to ſupply them with freſh weapons, otherwiſe, if they had diſcharg'd their ſpears once more, they muſt have been left naked and defenceleſs, having only two a-piece brought by *Telemachus*. This obſervation ſhews the exactneſs which *Homer* maintains in his relation.

XXII.

VERSE 323. *The victim's heel is anſwer'd with this ſpear.*] This refers to a paſſage in the latter end of the twentieth Book of the *Odyſſey*, where *Cteſippus* throws the foot of a bullock at *Ulyſſes*. *Philætius* here gives him a mortal wound with his ſpear, and tells him it is a return for the foot of the bullock. *Euſtathius* informs us that this became a Proverb, τοῦτο τὸ ἀντὶ ποδὸς ξεινήϊον, to expreſs a return of evil for evil; the like may be obſerv'd of the death of *Antinous*, who was kill'd as he lifted the bowl to drink.

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κύλικος καὶ χείλεος ἄκρου.

Which is exactly render'd by our Proverb, *Many things happen between the cup and the lip.* Thus likewiſe the kindneſs of *Cyclops*

was uſed proverbially, to denote a ſevere injury diſguiſed under a ſeeming civility; that Monſter having promis'd *Ulyſſes* mercy, but it was only the mercy to devour him laſt. Theſe little inſtances prove the great veneration the Ancients had for *Homer*.

XXIII.

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

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

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

XXIV.

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

About th' Alburnian *groves, with holly green,*
Of winged inſects mighty ſwarms are ſeen:

This

This flying plague, to mark its quality,
Oeſtros *the* Grecians *call,* Aſylus, *we:*
A fierce loud buzzing Breeze: their ſtings draw blood;
And drive the cattle gadding thro' the wood,
Seiz'd with unuſual pains they loudly cry, &c. Dryden.

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

The latter ſimile from the Hawks, affords ſome curioſity in regard to the antient manner of that ſport. It is evident, ſays *Dacier*, that this paſſage is an inſtance, that flying of birds of prey, in the nature of our hawking, was practis'd by the Ancients: The nets, call'd by *Homer* νέφεα, were fix'd in the plain ground; the fowlers with their falcons took their ſtation upon the adjoining eminences; when the birds, driven from this riſing ground, flew to the plain, they met with the nets, and endeavouring to eſcape them, crowded into flocks; Then the Hawk or Vultur was loos'd, and deſcending upon his prey, ſlew them in multitudes; for the birds were incapable of reſiſting, and at the ſame time were afraid of the nets, and therefore could not eſcape: This is the reaſon why the fowlers are ſaid to rejoice at the ſport: A plain indication, that the Poet intended to deſcribe the ſportman's flying his bird at the prey. That the word νέφεα ſignifies *Nets*, is evident from *Ariſtophanes*, μὰ νεφέλας, μὰ δίκτυα, that is, *I ſwear by my nets*: *Heſychius* is of the ſame opinion, νέφεα, ſays that Author, ſignifies the *Clouds*, ἢ λίνα θηρατικὰ, *Hunters Nets*. *Euſtathius* directly affirms, that in his time this ſport was practis'd in many countries; and the place where the nets were fixed was called νεφελοσασία. That Author conſtrues theſe words νέφεα πλώσασαι ἴενται, as if ἐπὶ were to be underſtod, to expreſs the ruſhing of the birds againſt the net; but there is no occaſion for this violence to the text, for by joining νέφεα with πλώσασαι the period will be plain, and ſignify, that thro' fear of the net they fly with violence to avoid it. Monſieur *Dacier* has a pretty obſervation upon this ſport; and ſhews us that the

Ancients were used to take even deer with nets, by flying at them birds of prey, in conformity to this description of *Homer*: This is manifest from a passage in *Arrian, lib. 2. c. 1.* where he speaks of men placing their fears where they have nothing to fear: Λοιπὸν ἡμεῖς τὸ τῶν ἐλάφων πάσχομεν ὅτε φοβεῖνται φεύγεσαι αἱ ἔλαφοι τὰ πτηνὰ, πῦ τρέπονται; ἢ πρὸς τινὰ (τόπον) ἀναχωρεῖσιν ὡς ἀσφαλῆ; πρὸς τὰ δίκτυα, ἢ ὅτως ἀπόλλυνται, ἐναλλάξασαι τὰ φοβερὰ ἢ τὰ θαρραλέα; "For what "remains, we are like deer, for they fearing the birds that are "flown at them, what course do they take? To what place of "refuge do they run to be in security? To the nets, and so pe- "rish, mistaking their danger for their greatest safety." *Minerva* in this similitude is the bird of prey descending from the mountain, for she it is who scatters the Suitors by displaying her *Ægis* from the roof of the palace: This is the opinion of *Eustathius*: But in the winding up of the comparison, *Homer* plainly by the vultur denotes *Ulysses* and his assistants (tho' perhaps not exclusively of the Goddess) for in the application he writes:

Ὣς ἄρα τοὶ μνηστῆρας ἐπεσύμενοι κατὰ δῶμα
Τύπτον.------

XXV.

VERSE 347. Liodes *first before the Victor falls:*
The wretched Augur ------]

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

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

XXVI.

VERSE 372. *Dubious ----- if to fly*
To Jove's *inviolable altar nigh*, &c.]

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

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

Cui nihil Hercæi profuit ara Jovis.

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

Uncover'd but by Heav'n, there ſtood in view
An Altar; near the hearth a lawrel grew,
Dodder'd with age; whoſe boughs encompaſs round
The houſhold Gods, and ſhade the holy ground.

Theſe Altars were places of ſanctuary, and by flying to them the perſon was thought to be under the immediate protection of the Deity, and therefore in ſome caſes inviolable. The ſame practice prevail'd amongſt the *Jews*, for we find frequently in the ſcriptures that it was cuſtomary to fly to the Altar as to a place of refuge, which is evident from the expreſſion of laying hold on the horns of the Altar. This is the reaſon why *Phemius* entertains an intention to fly to the Altar of *Jupiter Hercæus*. *Plutarch* in his treatiſe upon Muſic, informs us, that *Demodocus* was

was reported to have wrote a Poem, entitled, *The deſtruction of* Troy: And *Phemius* another, call'd *The return of the* Grecian *Captains*: But by theſe Poets, *Homer* probably means only himſelf, who was Author of two Poems, the *Iliad*, and the *Odyſſey*. *Homer* (remarks *Euſtathius*) plainly ſhews us the notion he had of the great qualifications that were neceſſary to form a good Poet. He muſt ſing of men and Gods; that is, be thoroughly acquainted with all things, both human and divine; he muſt be αὐτοδίδακτος, or *ſelf-taught*; that is, as we expreſs it, he muſt be a Genius; he muſt have a natural ability, which is indeed to be improv'd, but not capable of being learn'd, by ſtudy: He adds, that beſides this felicity of nature, he muſt have an heavenly inſpiration; this implies that he muſt have a kind of enthuſiaſm, an elevation of ſoul which is not to be obtain'd by labour and induſtry, and conſequently is the gift of heaven: thus *Pindar*,

——σοφὰς ὁ πολ-
λὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ.
Μαθόντες δὲ, λάβροι
Παγγλωσίᾳ, κόρακες ὥς,
Ἀκραντα γαρύετον.

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

This is the *Mens Divinior* of *Horace*: By induſtry men may become great Scholars and Philoſophers; but no man was ever a great Poet, without being in the ſtricteſt ſenſe a great Genius. I will only add, that *Ariſtotle* in his *Rhet.* 1. 7. quotes this Hemiſtic αὐτοδίδακτος, *&c.* as an inſtance that natural are more excellent than acquir'd abilities; he gives the reaſon of it; namely, becauſe they are more uncommon, and not to be obtain'd

tain'd by human induſtry. *Maximus Tyrius* has a criticiſm upon it. How (objects that Author) can it be ſaid that the Poet is ſelf-taught, if the Gods teach him to ſing? The anſwer is eaſy, *Homer* means that he has no human inſtructor, and only oppoſes natural to acquir'd abilities. It is obſervable that *Maximus Tyrius* erroneouſly quotes the verſe. *Diſſert.* 22. for he writes, Θεοὶ δέ μοὶ ὤπασαν ὀμφὴν, inſtead of

------Θεὸς δέ μοὶ ἐν φρεσὶν οἴμας
Παντοίας ἀνέφυσεν ------

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

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

XXVII.

VERSE 413. *Live, an example for the world to read,*
How much more ſafe the good than evil deed.]

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

XXVIII.

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

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

which in the *Greek* is expreſs'd by ἀψῖσι λίνα ἁλόντε πανάγρους, may be apply'd to the taking of beaſts or birds by nets, and conſequently ought not to be appropriated to fiſhing. Thus it is evident that this art was practis'd very anciently amongſt the *Grecians*; it was likewiſe known early to the *Hebrews* and *Ægyptians*. Thus *Iſaiah*, xix. 8. *The fiſhers* (of *Ægypt*) *ſhall mourn, all they that caſt the angle into the brook ſhall lament, and they that ſpread nets upon the waters ſhall languiſh.* And that they fiſh'd the ſeas with nets is evident from *Ezekiel* xxvi. 5. *It ſhall be a place for the ſpreading of nets in the midſt of the ſea.* The compariſon is very juſt; and the laſt line of it gives a peculiar honour and diſtinction to *Ulyſſes*: That Heroe is the Sun who kills the Suitors, in the application of the ſimilitude.

XXIX.

VERSE 440. *So the grim Lion*, &c.] *Euſtathius* agrees with an obſervation which has been made concerning the ſimilitudes of the *Odyſſey*, *lib.* 16. He here remarks that compariſons are as rare in the *Odyſſey* as they are frequent in the *Iliad*; and that the difference ariſes from the difference of the ſubjects: The ſubject of the *Iliad*

is

is great, and therefore properly illuſtrated by noble Images, and a variety of ſublime compariſons: The ſubject of the *Odyſſey* requires to be related in a leſs exalted ſtyle, and with greater ſimplicity. This Book is an undeniable teſtimony of the truth of this obſervation: the ſtory of it approaches nearer to the nature of the *Iliad* than any other book of the *Odyſſey*, and we find it is more adorn'd with compariſons than almoſt all the reſt of the Poem.

XXX.

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

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

XXXI.

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

Οὐ κακὸν ὐδ' ἐσθλὸν.

A reverence is due to a good man, and conſequently it is a crime to deny it; but why ſhould it be objected to the Suitors as a fault that they deſpiſed the bad man, whoſe actions deſerve to be deſpis'd? *Euſtathius* anſwers, κακὸς may ſignify ταπεινὸς, or a perſon of a low condition, the poor man, or the ſtranger; and this juſtifies the aſſertion: But perhaps the Poet uſes it to ſhow that they deſpis'd and outrag'd all men univerſally without diſtinction, whether perſons of probity or diſhoneſty; they conſider'd not the condition of others, but were inſolent to all mankind.

XXXII.

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

XXXIII.

VERSE 464. *Nor fits it that* Telemachus *command*
(Young as he is) his mother's female band.]

This, remarks *Euſtathius*, is an inſtance of the maternal wiſdom of *Penelope*; and at the ſame time a vindication of *Telemachus* for not reſtraining the inſolence and immodeſty of theſe female ſervants; They were out of his juriſdiction, and immediately under the protection of *Penelope*. But is not this removal of the fault from *Telemachus*, an imputation upon the Queen? and if the ſon wanted an excuſe for not puniſhing their crimes, is the mother unblameable, who not only permits the diſorder of their lives, but forbids *Telemachus* to redreſs it? Is it to be ſuppos'd that this chaſte matron was more indulgent to female frailty than *Telemachus*? The true reaſon is, *Telemachus* could not, and *Penelope* durſt not, ſhew a juſt reſentment againſt theſe criminals: they had too great an intereſt in the chief of the Suitors to ſtand in awe of the Queen, or fear her vengeance. This is evident, for *Penelope* herſelf was in a great meaſure in their power, and the ſame authority that ſupported the Suitors in their inſolence againſt the Queen, would ſupport theſe females againſt her revenge for their immodeſty.

XXXIV.

VERSE 469. *Not ſo* (Ulyſſes *more ſedate reply'd.*)] *Ulyſſes* gives this injunction, becauſe he is unwilling to wound the eyes of *Penelope* with a ſpectacle of ſuch horrour as the dead bodies and blood of the Suitors. It was indeed neceſſary to find ſome reaſonable pretext for not introducing the Queen immediately; this might be expected from the fondneſs and affection of an husband towards a beloved wife, and therefore *Ulyſſes* makes even his fondneſs for her a reaſon why he delays his diſcovery, namely, his care not to grieve her with ſuch a terrible ſcene of ſlaughter: Beſides, the death of the female ſervants is to ſucceed, and it

would have been indecent to have made her aſſiſting or preſent at their execution. The Poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct; for by it he introduces the diſcovery to *Penelope*, in a time of leiſure, and finds an opportunity to deſcribe at large that ſurprizing and tender incident.

XXXV.

VERSE 477. ------ *the melancholy labour done)*
Drive to yon' court ------]

It would in theſe ages, obſerves *Dacier*, be thought barbarous in a King to command his ſon to perform an execution of ſo much horrour: but antiently it was thought no diſhonour: Thus in the Scriptures *Gideon* having taken *Zeba* and *Salmana*, two *Midian* Kings, commands his ſon to kill them with the ſword in his preſence: But, continues that author, I wiſh *Homer* had deviated from this cuſtom, that he had given both *Ulyſſes* and *Telemachus* ſentiments of more humanity, and ſpar'd his Reader a deſcription of ſuch a terrible execution. I am not delighted with any thing that has a tendency to Inhumanity more than that Lady; but it may be anſwer'd, that *Homer* was obliged to write according to the cuſtom of the age. *Virgil* has aſcrib'd an act more cruel to the pious *Æneas*, who ſacrifices ſeveral unfortunate young men who were his captives. *Æn.* 11. *v.* 15.

Then, pinion'd with their hands behind, appear
Th' unhappy captives, marching in the rear;
Appointed off'rings in the victor's name,
To ſprinkle with their blood the funeral flame. Dryden.

This act is to be aſcrib'd to the manner of the age, and the cuſtoms of war in the days of *Æneas*, and not to his inhumanity: But here it may ſeem eſſential to the very nature of Epic Poetry to relate this act of juſtice: The moral of it is, to ſee the good rewarded and the wicked puniſhed, in the concluſion of the Fable. Theſe criminals had been as guilty in their ſeveral capacities

as

as the Suitors themſelves; it was therefore neceſſary that their puniſhment ſhould be ſet before the Reader, as well as that of the Suitors.

XXXVI.

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

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

XXXVII.

VERSE 527. *Bring ſulphur ſtrait and fire*-----] The reaſon why *Ulyſſes* orders ſulphur to be brought, is, becauſe every thing was thought to be polluted by a dead body, and he uſes it by way of purification. The ſame opinion prevail'd amongſt the *Hebrews* as well as *Greeks*, as the Scriptures inform us. Thus alſo in *Job* it is ſaid, *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.* xviii. 15. which is thought to allude to this cuſtom. *Livy* mentions this practice amongſt the *Romans*, *lib.* 30. *c.* 15. *Habet & in religionibus locum ad expiandas ſuffitu domos.*

Homer

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

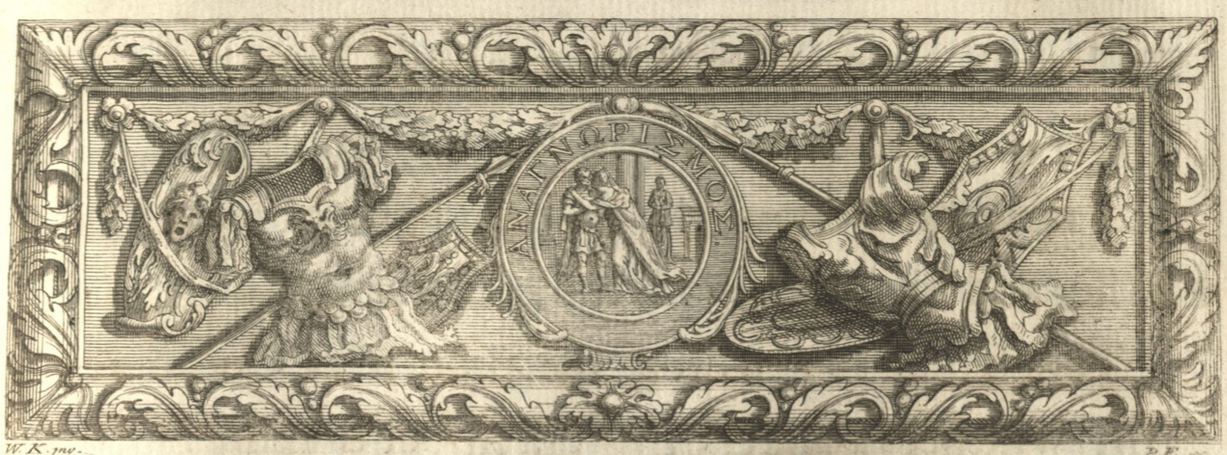
Ulyſſes forbids *Eurcylea* to bring a better Garment: this little particularity is inſerted with judgment; for the diſguiſe of *Ulyſſes* in the garb of a beggar contributes to encreaſe the incredulity of *Penelope*, and conſequently to all thoſe doubts and fears, and that ſtruggle between the love of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

THE

THE TWENTY-THIRD BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

The ARGUMENT.

Euryclea *awakens* Penelope *with the News of* Ulysses's *return, and the death of the Suitors.* Penelope *scarcely credits her, but supposes some God has punish'd them, and descends from her apartment in doubt. At the first interview of* Ulysses *and* Penelope, *she is quite unsatisfy'd.* Minerva *restores him to the beauty of his youth; but the Queen continues incredulous, till by some circumstances she is convinced, and falls into all the transports of passion and tenderness. They recount to each other all that has past during their long separation. The next morning* Ulysses, *arming himself and his friends, goes from the city to visit his Father.*



THE

TWENTY-THIRD BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THEN to the Queen, as in repoſe
ſhe lay,
The Nurſe with eager rapture ſpeeds
her way;
The tranſports of her faithful heart
ſupply
A ſudden youth, and give her wings to fly.
And ſleeps my child? the rev'rend matron cries:
Ulyſſes lives! ariſe, my child, ariſe!

At length appears the long-expected hour!
Ulysses comes! The Suitors are no more!
No more they view the golden light of day;
Ariſe, and bleſs thee with the glad ſurvey!
Touch'd at her words, the mournful Queen rejoyn'd,
Ah! whither wanders thy diſtemper'd mind?
The righteous pow'rs who tread the ſtarry skies,
The weak enlighten and confound the wiſe;
And human thought, with unreſiſted ſway,
Depreſs or raiſe, enlarge or take away:
Truth, by their high decree, thy voice forſakes,
And Folly, with the tongue of Wiſdom ſpeaks.
Unkind, the fond illuſion to impoſe!
Was it to flatter, or deride my woes?
Never did I a ſleep ſo ſweet enjoy,
Since my dear Lord left *Ithaca* for *Troy*:
Why muſt I wake to grieve, and curſe thy ſhore?
O *Troy* — may never tongue pronounce thee more!
Be gone: another might have felt our rage,
But age is ſacred, and we ſpare thy age.

To whom with warmth: My ſoul a lie diſdains;
Ulyſſes lives, thy own *Ulyſſes* reigns:
That ſtranger, patient of the Suitors wrongs,
And the rude licence of ungovern'd tongues,
He, he is thine! thy ſon, his latent gueſt
Long knew, but lock'd the ſecret in his breaſt;
With well-concerted art to end his woes,
And burſt at once in vengeance on the foes.
While yet ſhe ſpoke, the Queen in tranſport ſprung
Swift from the couch, and round the matron hung;
Faſt from her eye deſcends the rolling tear,
Say, once more ſay, is my Ulyſſes here?
How could that numerous and outragious band
By one be ſlain, tho' by an Heroe's hand?
I ſaw it not, ſhe cries, but heard alone,
When death was buſy, a loud dying groan,
The damſel train turn'd pale at every wound,
Immur'd we ſate, and catch'd each paſſing ſound;
When Death had ſeiz'd her prey, thy ſon attends,
And at his nod the damſel train deſcends;

There terrible in arms *Ulyſſes* ſtood,
And the dead Suitors almoſt ſwam in blood;
Thy heart had leap'd the Heroe to ſurvey,
Stern as the ſurly lion o'er his prey,
Glorious in gore! — now with ſulphureous *fires*,
The dome he purges, now the flame aſpires;
Heap'd lie the dead without the Palace walls, —
Haſte, daughter haſte, thy own *Ulyſſes* calls!
Thy every wiſh the bounteous Gods beſtow,
Enjoy the preſent good, and former woe;
Ulyſſes lives his vanquiſh'd foes to ſee;
He lives to thy *Telemachus* and thee!
Ah no! with ſighs *Penelope* rejoyn'd,
Exceſs of joy diſturbs thy wand'ring mind;
How bleſt this happy hour, ſhould he appear,
Dear to us all, to me ſupremely dear!
Ah no! ſome God the Suitors deaths decreed,
Some God deſcends, and by his hand they bleed;
Blind! to contemn the ſtranger's righteous cauſe,
And violate all hoſpitable laws!

The

The good they hated, and the Pow'rs defy'd;
But heav'n is juſt, and by a God they dy'd.
For never muſt *Ulyſſes* view this ſhore;
Never! the lov'd *Ulyſſes* is no more!
What words (the matron cries) have reach'd my ears?
Doubt we his preſence, when he now appears?
Then hear conviction: Ere the fatal day
That forc'd *Ulyſſes* o'er the watry way,
A Boar fierce-ruſhing in the ſylvan war
Plough'd half his thigh; I ſaw, I ſaw the ſcar,
And wild with tranſport had reveal'd the wound;
But ere I ſpoke, he roſe, and check'd the ſound.
Then daughter haſte away! and if a lie
Flow from this tongue, then let thy ſervant die!
To whom with dubious joy the Queen replies;
Wiſe is thy ſoul, but errors ſeize the wiſe;
The works of Gods what mortal can ſurvey,
Who knows their motives, who ſhall trace their way!
But learn we inſtant how the Suitors trod
The paths of death, by Man or by a God.

Thus

Thus ſpeaks the Queen, and no reply attends,
But with alternate joy and fear deſcends;
At ev'ry ſtep debates, her Lord to prove?
Or ruſhing to his arms, confeſs her love?
Then gliding thro' the marble valves in ſtate,
Oppos'd, before the ſhining Fire ſhe ſate.
The Monarch, by a column high enthron'd,
His eye withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;
Curious to hear his Queen the ſilence break:
Amaz'd ſhe ſate, and impotent to ſpeak;
O'er all the man her eyes ſhe rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.
At length *Telemachus* — Oh who can find
O woman like *Penelope* unkind?
Why thus in ſilence? why with winning charms
Thus ſlow, to fly with rapture to his arms?
Stubborn the breaſt that with no tranſport glows,
When twice ten years are paſt of mighty woes:
To ſoftneſs loſt, to ſponſal love unknown,
The Gods have form'd that rigid heart of ſtone!

O

O my *Telemachus!* the Queen rejoin'd,
Diſtracting fears confound my lab'ring mind;
Pow'rleſs to ſpeak, I ſcarce uplift my eyes,
Nor dare to queſtion: doubts on doubts ariſe.
O deign he, if *Ulyſſes*, to remove
Theſe boding thoughts, and what he is, to prove!
Pleas'd with her virtuous fears, the King replies,
Indulge, my ſon, the cautions of the wiſe;
Time ſhall the truth to ſure remembrance bring:
This garb of Poverty belies the King;
No more.—This day our deepeſt care requires,
Cautious to act what thought mature inſpires.
If one man's blood, tho' mean, diſtain our hands,
The homicide retreats to foreign lands;
By us, in heaps th' illuſtrious peerage falls,
Th' important deed our whole attention calls.
Be that thy care, *Telemachus* replies,
The world conſpires to ſpeak *Ulyſſes* wiſe;
For Wiſdom all is thine! lo I obey,
And dauntleſs follow where you lead the way;

Nor

Nor ſhalt thou in the day of danger find
Thy coward ſon degen'rate lag behind.
Then inſtant to the bath, (the Monarch cries)
Bid the gay youth and ſprightly virgins riſe,
Thence all deſcend in pomp and proud array,
And bid the dome reſound the mirthful lay;
While the ſweet Lyriſt airs of rapture ſings,
And forms the dance reſponſive to the ſtrings.
That hence th' eluded paſſengers may ſay,
Lo! the Queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!
The Suitors death unknown, 'till we remove
Far from the court, and act inſpir'd by *Jove*.
Thus ſpoke the King: Th' obſervant train obey
At once they bathe, and dreſs in proud array;
The Lyriſt ſtrikes the ſtring; gay youths advance
And fair-zon'd damſels form the ſprightly dance.
The voice, attun'd to inſtrumental ſounds,
Aſcends the roof; the vaulted roof rebounds;
Not unobſerv'd: the *Greeks* eluded ſay
Lo! the Queen weds! we hear the ſpouſal lay!

Inconſtant! to admit the bridal hour.
Thus they—but nobly chaſte ſhe weds no more.
Mean-while the weary'd King the bath aſcends;
With faithful cares *Eurynomè* attends,
O'er every limb a ſhow'r of fragrance ſheds:
Then dreſt in pomp, magnificent he treads.
The Warrior-Goddeſs gives his frame to ſhine
With majeſty enlarg'd, and grace divine.
Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly
His thick large locks, of *Hyacinthine* dye.
As by ſome artiſt to whom *Vulcan* gives
His heav'nly skill, a breathing image lives;
By *Pallas* taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
And the pale ſilver glows with fuſile gold:
So *Pallas* his heroic form improves
With bloom divine, and like a God he moves;
More high he treads, and iſſuing forth in ſtate,
Radiant before his gazing Conſort ſate.
And oh my Queen! he cries; what pow'r above
Has ſteel'd that heart, averſe to ſpouſal love!

Canſt thou, *Penelope*, when heav'n reſtores
Thy loſt *Ulyſſes* to his native ſhores,
Canſt thou, oh cruel, unconcern'd ſurvey
Thy loſt *Ulyſſes*, on this ſignal day?
Haſte, *Euryclea*, and diſpatchful ſpread
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed:
My weary nature craves the balm of reſt:
But heav'n with Adamant has arm'd her breaſt.
Ah no! ſhe cries, a tender heart I bear,
A foe to pride; no adamant is there;
And now, ev'n now it melts! for ſure I ſee
Once more *Ulyſſes* my belov'd in thee!
Fix'd in my ſoul as when he ſail'd to *Troy*,
His image dwells: then haſte the bed of joy!
Haſte, from the bridal bow'r the bed tranſlate,
Fram'd by his hand, and be it dreſt in ſtate!
Thus ſpeaks the Queen, ſtill dubious, with diſguiſe;
Touch'd at her words, the King with warmth replies,
Alas for this! what mortal ſtrength can move
Th' enormous burthen, who but heav'n above?

It

It mocks the weak attempts of human hands;
But the whole earth muſt move, if heav'n commands.
Then hear ſure evidence, while we diſplay
Words ſeal'd with ſacred truth, and truth obey:
This hand the wonder fram'd; An olive ſpread
Full in the court its ever-verdant head,
Vaſt as ſome mighty column's bulk on high
The *huge trunc roſe, and heav'd into the sky;*
Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r,
And roof'd defenſive of the ſtorm and ſhow'r;
The ſpacious valve, with art inwrought, conjoins;
And the fair dome with poliſh'd marble ſhines.
I lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and ſmooth'd the ſhining grain;
Then poſts, capacious of the frame, I raiſe,
And bore it, regular from ſpace to ſpace:
Athwart the frame, at equal diſtance lye
Thongs of tough hides, that boaſt a purple dye;
Then poliſhing the whole, the finiſh'd mold
With ſilver ſhone, with elephant, and gold.

But if o'erturn'd by rude, ungovern'd hands,
Or ſtill inviolate the olive ſtands,
'Tis thine, oh Queen, to ſay: And now impart,
If fears remain, or doubts diſtract thy heart?
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;
The tears pour'd down amain: And oh, ſhe cries,
Let not againſt thy ſpouſe thine anger riſe!
O vers'd in every turn of human art,
Forgive the weakneſs of a woman's heart!
The righteous pow'rs that mortal lots diſpoſe,
Decree us to ſuſtain a length of woes,
And from the flow'r of life, the bliſs deny
To bloom together, fade away, and dye.
O let me, let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore, thus, thus, to ſpeak my love;
Thus in fond kiſſes, while the tranſport warms,
Pour out my ſoul, and dye within thy arms!

I dreaded fraud! Men, faithleſs men, betray
Our eaſy faith, and make the ſex their prey:
Againſt the fondneſs of my heart I ſtrove,
'Twas caution, oh my Lord! not want of love:
Like me had *Helen* fear'd, with wanton charms,
Ere the fair Miſchief ſet two worlds in arms,
Ere *Greece* roſe dreadful in th'avenging day,
Thus had ſhe fear'd, ſhe had not gone aſtray.
But heav'n, averſe to *Greece*, in wrath decreed
That ſhe ſhould wander, and that *Greece* ſhould bleed:
Blind to the ills that from injuſtice flow,
She colour'd all our wretched lives with woe.
But why theſe ſorrows, when my Lord arrives?
I yield, I yield! my own *Ulyſſes* lives!
The ſecrets of the bridal bed are known
To thee, to me, to *Actoris* alone,
(My father's preſent in the ſpouſal hour,
The ſole attendant on our genial bow'r.)
Since what no eye has ſeen thy tongue reveal'd,
Hard and diſtruſtful as I am, I yield.

Touch'd

Touch'd to the ſoul the King with rapture hear
Hangs round her neck, and ſpeaks his joy in tear
As to the ſhipwreck'd mariner, the ſhores
Delightful riſe, when angry *Neptune* roars,
Then, when the ſurge in thunder mounts the sky
And gulph'd in crouds at once the ſailors dye,
If one more happy, while the tempeſt raves
Out-lives the tumult of conflicting waves,
All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the ſtrand,
And plunging forth with tranſport graſps the land.
The raviſh'd Queen with equal rapture glows,
Claſps her lov'd Lord, and to his boſom grows.
Nor had they ended till the morning ray:
But *Pallas* backward held the riſing day,
The wheels of night retarding, to detain
The gay *Aurora* in the wavy main:
Whoſe flaming ſteeds, emerging thro' the night,
Beam o'er the eaſtern hills with ſtreaming light.
At length *Ulyſſes* with a ſigh replies:
Yet Fate, yet cruel Fate repoſe denies;

A labour long, and hard, remains behind;
By heav'n above, by hell beneath enjoin'd:
For, to *Tireſias* thro' th' eternal gates
Of hell I trod, to learn my future fates.
But end we here — the night demands repoſe,
Be deck'd the couch! and peace a-while, my woes!
To whom the Queen. Thy word we ſhall obey,
And deck the couch; far hence be woes away!
Since the juſt Gods who tread the ſtarry plains
Reſtore thee ſafe, ſince my *Ulyſſes* reigns.
But what thoſe perils heav'n decrees, impart;
Knowledge may grieve, but fear diſtracts the heart.
To this the King. Ah why muſt I diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory of approaching woes?
Why in this hour of tranſport wound thy ears,
When thou muſt learn what I muſt ſpeak with tears?
Heav'n, by the *Theban* ghoſt, thy ſpouſe decrees
Torn from thy arms, to ſail a length of ſeas;
From realm to realm a Nation to explore
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,

Nor ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the ſurgy plain,
A painted wonder, flying on the main.
An Oar my hand muſt bear; a ſhepherd eyes
The unknown inſtrument with ſtrange ſurprize,
And calls a Corn-van: This upon the plain
I fix, and hail the Monarch of the main;
Then bathe his altars with the mingled gore
Of victims vow'd, a ram, a bull, a boar:
Thence ſwift re-ſailing to my native ſhores,
Due victims ſlay to all th'æthereal pow'rs.
Then heav'n decrees in peace to end my days,
And ſteal my ſelf from life by ſlow decays;
Unknown to pain in age reſign my breath,
When late ſtern *Neptune* points the ſhaft of death;
To the dark grave retiring as to reſt;
My people bleſſing, by my people bleſt.
Such future ſcenes th'all-righteous pow'rs diſplay,
By their dread * Seer, and ſuch my future day.
To whom thus firm of ſoul: If ripe for death,
And full of days, thou gently yield thy breath;

* *Tireſias.*

While

While heav'n a kind releaſe from ills foreſhows,
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!
But *Euryclea* with diſpatchful care,
And ſage *Eurynomè*, the couch prepare:
Inſtant they bid the blazing torch diſplay
Around the dome an artificial day;
Then to repoſe her ſteps the Matron bends,
And to the Queen *Eurynomè* deſcends;
A torch ſhe bears to light with guiding fires
The royal pair; ſhe guides them, and retires.
Then inſtant his fair ſpouſe *Ulyſſes* led
To the chaſte love-rites of the nuptial bed.
And now the blooming youths and ſprightly fair
Ceaſe the gay dance, and to their reſt repair;
But in diſcourſe the King and Conſort lay,
While the ſoft hours ſtole unperceiv'd away;
Intent he hears *Penelope* diſcloſe
A mournful ſtory of domeſtic woes,
His ſervants inſults, his invaded bed,
How his whole flocks and herds exhauſted bled,

His generous wines dishonour'd shed in vain,
And the wild riots of the Suitor-train.
The King alternate a dire tale relates,
Of wars, of triumphs, and disastrous fates;
All he unfolds: His list'ning spouse turns pale
With pleasing horror at the dreadful tale,
Sleepless devours each word; and hears, how sla
Cicons on *Cicons* swell th'ensanguin'd plain;
How to the land of *Lote* unblest he sails;
And images the rills, and flowry vales:
How dash'd like dogs, his friends the *Cyclops* tore
(Not unreveng'd) and quaff'd the spouting gor
How, the loud storms in prison bound, he sails
From friendly *Æŏlus* with prosp'rous gales;
Yet Fate withstands! a sudden tempest roars
And whirls him groaning from his native shores
How on the barb'rous *Læstrigonian* coast,
By savage hands his fleet and friends he lost;
How scarce himself surviv'd: He paints the bow'r,
The spells of *Circe*, and her magic pow'r;

His

His dreadful journey to the realms beneath,
To ſeek *Tireſias* in the vales of death;
How in the doleful manſions he ſurvey'd
His royal mother, pale *Anticlea*'s ſhade;
And friends in battle ſlain, heroic ghoſts!
Then how unharm'd he paſt the *Siren*-coaſts,
The juſtling rocks where fierce *Charybdis* raves,
And howling *Scylla* whirls her thund'rous waves,
The cave of death! How his companions ſlay
The oxen ſacred to the God of day,
'Till *Jove* in wrath the ratling Tempeſt guides,
And whelms th' offenders in the roaring tydes:
How ſtruggling thro' the ſurge, he reach'd the ſhores
Of fair *Ogygia*, and *Calypſo*'s bow'rs;
Where the gay blooming Nymph conſtrain'd his ſtay,
With ſweet reluctant amorous delay;
And promis'd, vainly promis'd, to beſtow
Immortal life exempt from age and woe:
How ſav'd from ſtorms *Phæacia*'s coaſt he trod,
By great *Alcinous* honour'd as a God,

Who gave him laſt his country to behold,
With change of rayment, braſs, and heaps of gold.
He ended, ſinking into ſleep, and ſhares
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of all his cares.
Soon as ſoft ſlumber eas'd the toils of day,
Minerva ruſhes thro' th'aereal way,
And bids *Aurora* with her golden wheels
Flame from the Ocean o'er the eaſtern hills:
Uproſe *Ulyſſes* from the genial bed,
And thus with thought mature the Monarch ſaid.
My Queen, my conſort! thro' a length of years,
We drank the cup of ſorrow mix'd with tears,
Thou, for thy Lord; while me th'immortal pow'rs
Detain'd reluctant from my native ſhores.
Now, bleſt again by heav'n, the Queen diſplay,
And rule our Palace with an equal ſway:
Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,
To throng my empty'd folds, with gifts or ſpoils.
But now I haſte to bleſs *Laertes'* eyes
With ſight of his *Ulyſſes* ere he dies;

The

The good old man, to waſting woes a prey,
Weeps a ſad life in ſolitude away.
But hear, tho' wiſe! This morning ſhall unfold
The deathful ſcene, on Heroes, Heroes roll'd;
Thou with thy Maids within the Palace ſtay,
From all the ſcene of tumult far away!

He ſpoke, and ſheath'd in arms, inceſſant flies
To wake his ſon; and bid his friends ariſe.
To arms! aloud he cries: His friends obey,
With glitt'ring arms their manly limbs array,
And paſs the City-gate; *Ulyſſes* leads the way.

Now flames the roſy dawn, but *Pallas* ſhrouds
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.

OBSER-