

## BOOK XIII.

### ARGUMENT.

#### THE FOURTH BATTLE CONTINUED, IN WHICH NEPTUNE ASSISTS THE GREEKS: THE ACTS OF IDOMENEUS.

Neptune, concerned for the loss of the Grecians, upon seeing the fortification forced by Hector, (who had entered the gate near the station of the Ajaces,) assumes the shape of Calchas, and inspires those heroes to oppose him: then, in the form of one of the generals, encourages the other Greeks who had retired to their vessels. The Ajaces form their troops in a close phalanx, and put a stop to Hector and the Trojans. Several deeds of valour are performed; Meriones, losing his spear in the encounter, repairs to seek another at the tent of Idomeneus: this occasions a conversation between those two warriors, who return together to the battle. Idomeneus signalizes his courage above the rest; he kills Othryoneus, Asius, and Alcathous: Deiphobus and Æneas march against him, and at length Idomeneus retires. Menelaus wounds Helenus, and kills Pisander. The Trojans are repulsed on the left wing; Hector still keeps his ground against the Ajaces, till, being galled by the Locrian slingers and archers, Polydamas advises to call a council of war: Hector approves of his advice, but goes first to rally the Trojans; upbraids Paris, rejoins Polydamas, meets Ajax again, and renews the attack.

The eight-and-twentieth day still continues. The scene is between the Grecian wall and the sea-shore.

When now the Thunderer on the sea-beat coast  
Had fix'd great Hector and his conquering host,  
He left them to the fates, in bloody fray  
To toil and struggle through the well-fought day.  
Then turn'd to Thracia from the field of fight  
Those eyes that shed insufferable light,  
To where the Mysians prove their martial force,  
And hardy Thracians tame the savage horse;  
And where the far-famed Hippomolgian strays,  
Renown'd for justice and for length of days;(229)  
Thrice happy race! that, innocent of blood,  
From milk, innoxious, seek their simple food:  
Jove sees delighted; and avoids the scene  
Of guilty Troy, of arms, and dying men:  
No aid, he deems, to either host is given,  
While his high law suspends the powers of Heaven.

Meantime the monarch of the watery main  
Observed the Thunderer, nor observed in vain.  
In Samothracia, on a mountain's brow,  
Whose waving woods o'erhung the deeps below,  
He sat; and round him cast his azure eyes

Where Ida's misty tops confusedly rise;  
Below, fair Ilion's glittering spires were seen;  
The crowded ships and sable seas between.  
There, from the crystal chambers of the main  
Emerged, he sat, and mourn'd his Argives slain.  
At Jove incensed, with grief and fury stung,  
Prone down the rocky steep he rush'd along;  
Fierce as he pass'd, the lofty mountains nod,  
The forest shakes; earth trembled as he trod,  
And felt the footsteps of the immortal god.  
From realm to realm three ample strides he took,  
And, at the fourth, the distant Ægae shook.

Far in the bay his shining palace stands,  
Eternal frame! not raised by mortal hands:  
This having reach'd, his brass-hoof'd steeds he reins,  
Fleet as the winds, and deck'd with golden manes.  
Refulgent arms his mighty limbs infold,  
Immortal arms of adamant and gold.  
He mounts the car, the golden scourge applies,  
He sits superior, and the chariot flies:  
His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep;  
The enormous monsters rolling o'er the deep  
Gambol around him on the watery way,  
And heavy whales in awkward measures play;  
The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,

Exults, and owns the monarch of the main;  
The parting waves before his coursers fly;  
The wondering waters leave his axle dry.

Deep in the liquid regions lies a cave,  
Between where Tenedos the surges lave,  
And rocky Imbrus breaks the rolling wave:  
There the great ruler of the azure round  
Stopp'd his swift chariot, and his steeds unbound,  
Fed with ambrosial herbage from his hand,  
And link'd their fetlocks with a golden band,  
Infrangible, immortal: there they stay:  
The father of the floods pursues his way:  
Where, like a tempest, darkening heaven around,  
Or fiery deluge that devours the ground,  
The impatient Trojans, in a gloomy throng,  
Embattled roll'd, as Hector rush'd along:  
To the loud tumult and the barbarous cry  
The heavens re-echo, and the shores reply:  
They vow destruction to the Grecian name,  
And in their hopes the fleets already flame.

But Neptune, rising from the seas profound,  
The god whose earthquakes rock the solid ground,  
Now wears a mortal form; like Calchas seen,  
Such his loud voice, and such his manly mien;

His shouts incessant every Greek inspire,  
But most the Ajaces, adding fire to fire.

"'Tis yours, O warriors, all our hopes to raise:  
Oh recollect your ancient worth and praise!  
'Tis yours to save us, if you cease to fear;  
Flight, more than shameful, is destructive here.  
On other works though Troy with fury fall,  
And pour her armies o'er our batter'd wall:  
There Greece has strength: but this, this part o'erthrown,  
Her strength were vain; I dread for you alone:  
Here Hector rages like the force of fire,  
Vaunts of his gods, and calls high Jove his sire:  
If yet some heavenly power your breast excite,  
Breathe in your hearts, and string your arms to fight,  
Greece yet may live, her threaten'd fleet maintain:  
And Hector's force, and Jove's own aid, be vain."

Then with his sceptre, that the deep controls,  
He touch'd the chiefs, and steel'd their manly souls:  
Strength, not their own, the touch divine imparts,  
Prompts their light limbs, and swells their daring hearts.  
Then, as a falcon from the rocky height,  
Her quarry seen, impetuous at the sight,  
Forth-springing instant, darts herself from high,  
Shoots on the wing, and skims along the sky:

Such, and so swift, the power of ocean flew;  
The wide horizon shut him from their view.

The inspiring god Oileus' active son  
Perceived the first, and thus to Telamon:

"Some god, my friend, some god in human form  
Favouring descends, and wills to stand the storm.  
Not Calchas this, the venerable seer;  
Short as he turned, I saw the power appear:  
I mark'd his parting, and the steps he trod;  
His own bright evidence reveals a god.  
Even now some energy divine I share,  
And seem to walk on wings, and tread in air!"

"With equal ardour (Telamon returns)  
My soul is kindled, and my bosom burns;  
New rising spirits all my force alarm,  
Lift each impatient limb, and brace my arm.  
This ready arm, unthinking, shakes the dart;  
The blood pours back, and fortifies my heart:  
Singly, methinks, yon towering chief I meet,  
And stretch the dreadful Hector at my feet."

Full of the god that urged their burning breast,  
The heroes thus their mutual warmth express'd.

Neptune meanwhile the routed Greeks inspired;  
Who, breathless, pale, with length of labours tired,  
Pant in the ships; while Troy to conquest calls,  
And swarms victorious o'er their yielding walls:  
Trembling before the impending storm they lie,  
While tears of rage stand burning in their eye.  
Greece sunk they thought, and this their fatal hour;  
But breathe new courage as they feel the power.  
Teucer and Leitus first his words excite;  
Then stern Peneleus rises to the fight;  
Thoas, Deipyrus, in arms renown'd,  
And Merion next, the impulsive fury found;  
Last Nestor's son the same bold ardour takes,  
While thus the god the martial fire awakes:

"Oh lasting infamy, oh dire disgrace  
To chiefs of vigorous youth, and manly race!  
I trusted in the gods, and you, to see  
Brave Greece victorious, and her navy free:  
Ah, no--the glorious combat you disclaim,  
And one black day clouds all her former fame.  
Heavens! what a prodigy these eyes survey,  
Unseen, unthought, till this amazing day!  
Fly we at length from Troy's oft-conquer'd bands?  
And falls our fleet by such inglorious hands?  
A rout undisciplined, a straggling train,

Not born to glories of the dusty plain;  
Like frightened fawns from hill to hill pursued,  
A prey to every savage of the wood:  
Shall these, so late who trembled at your name,  
Invade your camps, involve your ships in flame?  
A change so shameful, say, what cause has wrought?  
The soldiers' baseness, or the general's fault?  
Fools! will ye perish for your leader's vice;  
The purchase infamy, and life the price?  
'Tis not your cause, Achilles' injured fame:  
Another's is the crime, but yours the shame.  
Grant that our chief offend through rage or lust,  
Must you be cowards, if your king's unjust?  
Prevent this evil, and your country save:  
Small thought retrieves the spirits of the brave.  
Think, and subdue! on dastards dead to fame  
I waste no anger, for they feel no shame:  
But you, the pride, the flower of all our host,  
My heart weeps blood to see your glory lost!  
Nor deem this day, this battle, all you lose;  
A day more black, a fate more vile, ensues.  
Let each reflect, who prizes fame or breath,  
On endless infamy, on instant death:  
For, lo! the fated time, the appointed shore:  
Hark! the gates burst, the brazen barriers roar!  
Impetuous Hector thunders at the wall;



The hour, the spot, to conquer, or to fall."

These words the Grecians' fainting hearts inspire,  
And listening armies catch the godlike fire.  
Fix'd at his post was each bold Ajax found,  
With well-ranged squadrons strongly circled round:  
So close their order, so disposed their fight,  
As Pallas' self might view with fix'd delight;  
Or had the god of war inclined his eyes,  
The god of war had own'd a just surprise.  
A chosen phalanx, firm, resolved as fate,  
Descending Hector and his battle wait.  
An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,  
Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields,  
Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,  
Helms stuck to helms, and man drove man along.  
The floating plumes unnumber'd wave above,  
As when an earthquake stirs the nodding grove;  
And levell'd at the skies with pointing rays,  
Their brandish'd lances at each motion blaze.

Thus breathing death, in terrible array,  
The close compacted legions urged their way:  
Fierce they drove on, impatient to destroy;  
Troy charged the first, and Hector first of Troy.  
As from some mountain's craggy forehead torn,

A rock's round fragment flies, with fury borne,  
(Which from the stubborn stone a torrent rends,)  
Precipitate the ponderous mass descends:  
From steep to steep the rolling ruin bounds;  
At every shock the crackling wood resounds;  
Still gathering force, it smokes; and urged amain,  
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to the plain:  
There stops--so Hector. Their whole force he proved,(230)  
Resistless when he raged, and, when he stopp'd, unmoved.

On him the war is bent, the darts are shed,  
And all their falchions wave around his head:  
Repulsed he stands, nor from his stand retires;  
But with repeated shouts his army fires.  
"Trojans! be firm; this arm shall make your way  
Through yon square body, and that black array:  
Stand, and my spear shall rout their scattering power,  
Strong as they seem, embattled like a tower;  
For he that Juno's heavenly bosom warms,  
The first of gods, this day inspires our arms."

He said; and roused the soul in every breast:  
Urged with desire of fame, beyond the rest,  
Forth march'd Deiphobus; but, marching, held  
Before his wary steps his ample shield.  
Bold Merion aim'd a stroke (nor aim'd it wide);

The glittering javelin pierced the tough bull-hide;  
But pierced not through: unfaithful to his hand,  
The point broke short, and sparkled in the sand.  
The Trojan warrior, touch'd with timely fear,  
On the raised orb to distance bore the spear.  
The Greek, retreating, mourn'd his frustrate blow,  
And cursed the treacherous lance that spared a foe;  
Then to the ships with surly speed he went,  
To seek a surer javelin in his tent.

Meanwhile with rising rage the battle glows,  
The tumult thickens, and the clamour grows.  
By Teucer's arm the warlike Imbrius bleeds,  
The son of Mentor, rich in generous steeds.  
Ere yet to Troy the sons of Greece were led,  
In fair Pedaeus' verdant pastures bred,  
The youth had dwelt, remote from war's alarms,  
And blest in bright Medesicaste's arms:  
(This nymph, the fruit of Priam's ravish'd joy,  
Allied the warrior to the house of Troy:)  
To Troy, when glory call'd his arms, he came,  
And match'd the bravest of her chiefs in fame:  
With Priam's sons, a guardian of the throne,  
He lived, beloved and honour'd as his own.  
Him Teucer pierced between the throat and ear:  
He groans beneath the Telamonian spear.

As from some far-seen mountain's airy crown,  
Subdued by steel, a tall ash tumbles down,  
And soils its verdant tresses on the ground;  
So falls the youth; his arms the fall resound.  
Then Teucer rushing to despoil the dead,  
From Hector's hand a shining javelin fled:  
He saw, and shunn'd the death; the forceful dart  
Sung on, and pierced Amphimachus's heart,  
Cteatus' son, of Neptune's forceful line;  
Vain was his courage, and his race divine!  
Prostrate he falls; his clanging arms resound,  
And his broad buckler thunders on the ground.  
To seize his beamy helm the victor flies,  
And just had fastened on the dazzling prize,  
When Ajax' manly arm a javelin flung;  
Full on the shield's round boss the weapon rung;  
He felt the shock, nor more was doom'd to feel,  
Secure in mail, and sheath'd in shining steel.  
Repulsed he yields; the victor Greeks obtain  
The spoils contested, and bear off the slain.  
Between the leaders of the Athenian line,  
(Stichius the brave, Menestheus the divine,)  
Deplored Amphimachus, sad object! lies;  
Imbrius remains the fierce Ajaces' prize.  
As two grim lions bear across the lawn,  
Snatch'd from devouring hounds, a slaughter'd fawn.

In their fell jaws high-lifting through the wood,  
And sprinkling all the shrubs with drops of blood;  
So these, the chief: great Ajax from the dead  
Strips his bright arms; Oileus lops his head:  
Toss'd like a ball, and whirl'd in air away,  
At Hector's feet the gory visage lay.

The god of ocean, fired with stern disdain,  
And pierced with sorrow for his grandson slain,  
Inspires the Grecian hearts, confirms their hands,  
And breathes destruction on the Trojan bands.  
Swift as a whirlwind rushing to the fleet,  
He finds the lance-famed Idomen of Crete,  
His pensive brow the generous care express'd  
With which a wounded soldier touch'd his breast,  
Whom in the chance of war a javelin tore,  
And his sad comrades from the battle bore;  
Him to the surgeons of the camp he sent:  
That office paid, he issued from his tent  
Fierce for the fight: to whom the god begun,  
In Thoas' voice, Andraemon's valiant son,  
Who ruled where Calydon's white rocks arise,  
And Pleuron's chalky cliffs emblaze the skies:

"Where's now the imperious vaunt, the daring boast,  
Of Greece victorious, and proud Ilion lost?"

To whom the king: "On Greece no blame be thrown;  
Arms are her trade, and war is all her own.  
Her hardy heroes from the well-fought plains  
Nor fear withholds, nor shameful sloth detains:  
'Tis heaven, alas! and Jove's all-powerful doom,  
That far, far distant from our native home  
Wills us to fall inglorious! Oh, my friend!  
Once foremost in the fight, still prone to lend  
Or arms or counsels, now perform thy best,  
And what thou canst not singly, urge the rest."

Thus he: and thus the god whose force can make  
The solid globe's eternal basis shake:  
"Ah! never may he see his native land,  
But feed the vultures on this hateful strand,  
Who seeks ignobly in his ships to stay,  
Nor dares to combat on this signal day!  
For this, behold! in horrid arms I shine,  
And urge thy soul to rival acts with mine.  
Together let us battle on the plain;  
Two, not the worst; nor even this succour vain:  
Not vain the weakest, if their force unite;  
But ours, the bravest have confess'd in fight."

This said, he rushes where the combat burns;

Swift to his tent the Cretan king returns:  
From thence, two javelins glittering in his hand,  
And clad in arms that lighten'd all the strand,  
Fierce on the foe the impetuous hero drove,  
Like lightning bursting from the arm of Jove,  
Which to pale man the wrath of heaven declares,  
Or terrifies the offending world with wars;  
In streamy sparkles, kindling all the skies,  
From pole to pole the trail of glory flies:  
Thus his bright armour o'er the dazzled throng  
Gleam'd dreadful, as the monarch flash'd along.

Him, near his tent, Meriones attends;  
Whom thus he questions: "Ever best of friends!  
O say, in every art of battle skill'd,  
What holds thy courage from so brave a field?  
On some important message art thou bound,  
Or bleeds my friend by some unhappy wound?  
Inglorious here, my soul abhors to stay,  
And glows with prospects of th' approaching day."

"O prince! (Meriones replies) whose care  
Leads forth the embattled sons of Crete to war;  
This speaks my grief: this headless lance I wield;  
The rest lies rooted in a Trojan shield."

To whom the Cretan: "Enter, and receive  
The wonted weapons; those my tent can give;  
Spears I have store, (and Trojan lances all,  
That shed a lustre round the illumined wall,  
Though I, disdainful of the distant war,  
Nor trust the dart, nor aim the uncertain spear,  
Yet hand to hand I fight, and spoil the slain;  
And thence these trophies, and these arms I gain.  
Enter, and see on heaps the helmets roll'd,  
And high-hung spears, and shields that flame with gold."

"Nor vain (said Merion) are our martial toils;  
We too can boast of no ignoble spoils:  
But those my ship contains; whence distant far,  
I fight conspicuous in the van of war,  
What need I more? If any Greek there be  
Who knows not Merion, I appeal to thee."

To this, Idomeneus: "The fields of fight  
Have proved thy valour, and unconquer'd might:  
And were some ambush for the foes design'd,  
Even there thy courage would not lag behind:  
In that sharp service, singled from the rest,  
The fear of each, or valour, stands confess'd.  
No force, no firmness, the pale coward shows;  
He shifts his place: his colour comes and goes:



A dropping sweat creeps cold on every part;  
Against his bosom beats his quivering heart;  
Terror and death in his wild eye-balls stare;  
With chattering teeth he stands, and stiffening hair,  
And looks a bloodless image of despair!  
Not so the brave--still dauntless, still the same,  
Unchanged his colour, and unmoved his frame:  
Composed his thought, determined is his eye,  
And fix'd his soul, to conquer or to die:  
If aught disturb the tenour of his breast,  
'Tis but the wish to strike before the rest.

"In such assays thy blameless worth is known,  
And every art of dangerous war thy own.  
By chance of fight whatever wounds you bore,  
Those wounds were glorious all, and all before;  
Such as may teach, 'twas still thy brave delight  
T'oppose thy bosom where thy foremost fight.  
But why, like infants, cold to honour's charms,  
Stand we to talk, when glory calls to arms?  
Go--from my conquer'd spears the choicest take,  
And to their owners send them nobly back."

Swift at the word bold Merion snatch'd a spear  
And, breathing slaughter, follow'd to the war.  
So Mars armipotent invades the plain,

(The wide destroyer of the race of man,)  
Terror, his best-beloved son, attends his course,  
Arm'd with stern boldness, and enormous force;  
The pride of haughty warriors to confound,  
And lay the strength of tyrants on the ground:  
From Thrace they fly, call'd to the dire alarms  
Of warring Phlegyans, and Ephyrian arms;  
Invoked by both, relentless they dispose,  
To these glad conquest, murderous rout to those.  
So march'd the leaders of the Cretan train,  
And their bright arms shot horror o'er the plain.

Then first spake Merion: "Shall we join the right,  
Or combat in the centre of the fight?  
Or to the left our wonted succour lend?  
Hazard and fame all parts alike attend."

"Not in the centre (Idomen replied):  
Our ablest chieftains the main battle guide;  
Each godlike Ajax makes that post his care,  
And gallant Teucer deals destruction there,  
Skill'd or with shafts to gall the distant field,  
Or bear close battle on the sounding shield.  
These can the rage of haughty Hector tame:  
Safe in their arms, the navy fears no flame,  
Till Jove himself descends, his bolts to shed,

And hurl the blazing ruin at our head.  
Great must he be, of more than human birth,  
Nor feed like mortals on the fruits of earth.  
Him neither rocks can crush, nor steel can wound,  
Whom Ajax fells not on the ensanguined ground.  
In standing fight he mates Achilles' force,  
Excell'd alone in swiftness in the course.  
Then to the left our ready arms apply,  
And live with glory, or with glory die."

He said: and Merion to th' appointed place,  
Fierce as the god of battles, urged his pace.  
Soon as the foe the shining chiefs beheld  
Rush like a fiery torrent o'er the field,  
Their force embodied in a tide they pour;  
The rising combat sounds along the shore.  
As warring winds, in Sirius' sultry reign,  
From different quarters sweep the sandy plain;  
On every side the dusty whirlwinds rise,  
And the dry fields are lifted to the skies:  
Thus by despair, hope, rage, together driven,  
Met the black hosts, and, meeting, darken'd heaven.  
All dreadful glared the iron face of war,  
Bristled with upright spears, that flash'd afar;  
Dire was the gleam of breastplates, helms, and shields,  
And polish'd arms emblaz'd the flaming fields:

Tremendous scene! that general horror gave,  
But touch'd with joy the bosoms of the brave.

Saturn's great sons in fierce contention vied,  
And crowds of heroes in their anger died.  
The sire of earth and heaven, by Thetis won  
To crown with glory Peleus' godlike son,  
Will'd not destruction to the Grecian powers,  
But spared awhile the destined Trojan towers;  
While Neptune, rising from his azure main,  
Warr'd on the king of heaven with stern disdain,  
And breathed revenge, and fired the Grecian train.  
Gods of one source, of one ethereal race,  
Alike divine, and heaven their native place;  
But Jove the greater; first-born of the skies,  
And more than men, or gods, supremely wise.  
For this, of Jove's superior might afraid,  
Neptune in human form conceal'd his aid.  
These powers enfold the Greek and Trojan train  
In war and discord's adamant chain,  
Indissolubly strong: the fatal tie  
Is stretch'd on both, and close compell'd they die.

Dreadful in arms, and grown in combats grey,  
The bold Idomeneus controls the day.  
First by his hand Othryoneus was slain,

Swell'd with false hopes, with mad ambition vain;  
Call'd by the voice of war to martial fame,  
From high Cabetes' distant walls he came;  
Cassandra's love he sought, with boasts of power,  
And promised conquest was the proffer'd dower.  
The king consented, by his vaunts abused;  
The king consented, but the fates refused.  
Proud of himself, and of the imagined bride,  
The field he measured with a larger stride.  
Him as he stalk'd, the Cretan javelin found;  
Vain was his breastplate to repel the wound:  
His dream of glory lost, he plunged to hell;  
His arms resounded as the boaster fell.  
The great Idomeneus bestrides the dead;  
"And thus (he cries) behold thy promise sped!  
Such is the help thy arms to Ilion bring,  
And such the contract of the Phrygian king!  
Our offers now, illustrious prince! receive;  
For such an aid what will not Argos give?  
To conquer Troy, with ours thy forces join,  
And count Atrides' fairest daughter thine.  
Meantime, on further methods to advise,  
Come, follow to the fleet thy new allies;  
There hear what Greece has on her part to say."  
He spoke, and dragg'd the gory corse away.  
This Asius view'd, unable to contain,

Before his chariot warring on the plain:  
(His crowded coursers, to his squire consign'd,  
Impatient panted on his neck behind:)  
To vengeance rising with a sudden spring,  
He hoped the conquest of the Cretan king.  
The wary Cretan, as his foe drew near,  
Full on his throat discharged the forceful spear:  
Beneath the chin the point was seen to glide,  
And glitter'd, extant at the further side.  
As when the mountain-oak, or poplar tall,  
Or pine, fit mast for some great admiral,  
Groans to the oft-heaved axe, with many a wound,  
Then spreads a length of ruin o'er the ground:  
So sunk proud Asius in that dreadful day,  
And stretch'd before his much-loved coursers lay.  
He grinds the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And, fierce in death, lies foaming on the shore.  
Deprived of motion, stiff with stupid fear,  
Stands all aghast his trembling charioteer,  
Nor shuns the foe, nor turns the steeds away,  
But falls transfix'd, an unresisting prey:  
Pierced by Antilochus, he pants beneath  
The stately car, and labours out his breath.  
Thus Asius' steeds (their mighty master gone)  
Remain the prize of Nestor's youthful son.

Stabb'd at the sight, Deiphobus drew nigh,  
And made, with force, the vengeful weapon fly.  
The Cretan saw; and, stooping, caused to glance  
From his slope shield the disappointed lance.  
Beneath the spacious targe, (a blazing round,  
Thick with bull-hides and brazen orbits bound,  
On his raised arm by two strong braces stay'd,)  
He lay collected in defensive shade.  
O'er his safe head the javelin idly sung,  
And on the tinkling verge more faintly rung.  
Even then the spear the vigorous arm confess'd,  
And pierced, obliquely, king Hypsenor's breast:  
Warm'd in his liver, to the ground it bore  
The chief, his people's guardian now no more!

"Not unattended (the proud Trojan cries)  
Nor unrevenged, lamented Asius lies:  
For thee, through hell's black portals stand display'd,  
This mate shall joy thy melancholy shade."

Heart-piercing anguish, at the haughty boast,  
Touch'd every Greek, but Nestor's son the most.  
Grieved as he was, his pious arms attend,  
And his broad buckler shields his slaughter'd friend:  
Till sad Mecistheus and Alastor bore  
His honour'd body to the tented shore.

Nor yet from fight Idomeneus withdraws;  
Resolved to perish in his country's cause,  
Or find some foe, whom heaven and he shall doom  
To wail his fate in death's eternal gloom.  
He sees Alcathous in the front aspire:  
Great Æsyetes was the hero's sire;  
His spouse Hippodame, divinely fair,  
Anchises' eldest hope, and darling care:  
Who charm'd her parents' and her husband's heart  
With beauty, sense, and every work of art:  
He once of Ilion's youth the loveliest boy,  
The fairest she of all the fair of Troy.  
By Neptune now the hapless hero dies,  
Who covers with a cloud those beauteous eyes,  
And fetters every limb: yet bent to meet  
His fate he stands; nor shuns the lance of Crete.  
Fix'd as some column, or deep-rooted oak,  
While the winds sleep; his breast received the stroke.  
Before the ponderous stroke his corslet yields,  
Long used to ward the death in fighting fields.  
The riven armour sends a jarring sound;  
His labouring heart heaves with so strong a bound,  
The long lance shakes, and vibrates in the wound;  
Fast flowing from its source, as prone he lay,  
Life's purple tide impetuous gush'd away.



Then Idomen, insulting o'er the slain:  
"Behold, Deiphobus! nor vaunt in vain:  
See! on one Greek three Trojan ghosts attend;  
This, my third victim, to the shades I send.  
Approaching now thy boasted might approve,  
And try the prowess of the seed of Jove.  
From Jove, enamour'd of a mortal dame,  
Great Minos, guardian of his country, came:  
Deucalion, blameless prince, was Minos' heir;  
His first-born I, the third from Jupiter:  
O'er spacious Crete, and her bold sons, I reign,  
And thence my ships transport me through the main:  
Lord of a host, o'er all my host I shine,  
A scourge to thee, thy father, and thy line."

The Trojan heard; uncertain or to meet,  
Alone, with venturous arms the king of Crete,  
Or seek auxiliar force; at length decreed  
To call some hero to partake the deed,  
Forthwith Æneas rises to his thought:  
For him in Troy's remotest lines he sought,  
Where he, incensed at partial Priam, stands,  
And sees superior posts in meaner hands.  
To him, ambitious of so great an aid,  
The bold Deiphobus approach'd, and said:

"Now, Trojan prince, employ thy pious arms,  
If e'er thy bosom felt fair honour's charms.  
Alcathous dies, thy brother and thy friend;  
Come, and the warrior's loved remains defend.  
Beneath his cares thy early youth was train'd,  
One table fed you, and one roof contain'd.  
This deed to fierce Idomeneus we owe;  
Haste, and revenge it on th' insulting foe."

Æneas heard, and for a space resign'd  
To tender pity all his manly mind;  
Then rising in his rage, he burns to fight:  
The Greek awaits him with collected might.  
As the fell boar, on some rough mountain's head,  
Arm'd with wild terrors, and to slaughter bred,  
When the loud rustics rise, and shout from far,  
Attends the tumult, and expects the war;  
O'er his bent back the bristly horrors rise;  
Fires stream in lightning from his sanguine eyes,  
His foaming tusks both dogs and men engage;  
But most his hunters rouse his mighty rage:  
So stood Idomeneus, his javelin shook,  
And met the Trojan with a lowering look.  
Antilochus, Deipyrus, were near,  
The youthful offspring of the god of war,

Merion, and Aphareus, in field renown'd:  
To these the warrior sent his voice around.  
"Fellows in arms! your timely aid unite;  
Lo, great Æneas rushes to the fight:  
Sprung from a god, and more than mortal bold;  
He fresh in youth, and I in arms grown old.  
Else should this hand, this hour decide the strife,  
The great dispute, of glory, or of life."

He spoke, and all, as with one soul, obey'd;  
Their lifted bucklers cast a dreadful shade  
Around the chief. Æneas too demands  
Th' assisting forces of his native bands;  
Paris, Deiphobus, Agenor, join;  
(Co-aids and captains of the Trojan line;)   
In order follow all th' embodied train,  
Like Ida's flocks proceeding o'er the plain;  
Before his fleecy care, erect and bold,  
Stalks the proud ram, the father of the bold.  
With joy the swain surveys them, as he leads  
To the cool fountains, through the well-known meads:  
So joys Æneas, as his native band  
Moves on in rank, and stretches o'er the land.

Round dread Alcathous now the battle rose;  
On every side the steely circle grows;

Now batter'd breast-plates and hack'd helmets ring,  
And o'er their heads unheeded javelins sing.  
Above the rest, two towering chiefs appear,  
There great Idomeneus, Æneas here.  
Like gods of war, dispensing fate, they stood,  
And burn'd to drench the ground with mutual blood.  
The Trojan weapon whizz'd along in air;  
The Cretan saw, and shunn'd the brazen spear:  
Sent from an arm so strong, the missive wood  
Stuck deep in earth, and quiver'd where it stood.  
But OEnomas received the Cretan's stroke;  
The forceful spear his hollow corslet broke,  
It ripp'd his belly with a ghastly wound,  
And roll'd the smoking entrails on the ground.  
Stretch'd on the plain, he sobs away his breath,  
And, furious, grasps the bloody dust in death.  
The victor from his breast the weapon tears;  
His spoils he could not, for the shower of spears.  
Though now unfit an active war to wage,  
Heavy with cumbrous arms, stiff with cold age,  
His listless limbs unable for the course,  
In standing fight he yet maintains his force;  
Till faint with labour, and by foes repell'd,  
His tired slow steps he drags from off the field.  
Deiphobus beheld him as he pass'd,  
And, fired with hate, a parting javelin cast:

The javelin err'd, but held its course along,  
And pierced Ascalaphus, the brave and young:  
The son of Mars fell gasping on the ground,  
And gnash'd the dust, all bloody with his wound.

Nor knew the furious father of his fall;  
High-throned amidst the great Olympian hall,  
On golden clouds th' immortal synod sate;  
Detain'd from bloody war by Jove and Fate.

Now, where in dust the breathless hero lay,  
For slain Ascalaphus commenced the fray,  
Deiphobus to seize his helmet flies,  
And from his temples rends the glittering prize;  
Valiant as Mars, Meriones drew near,  
And on his loaded arm discharged his spear:  
He drops the weight, disabled with the pain;  
The hollow helmet rings against the plain.  
Swift as a vulture leaping on his prey,  
From his torn arm the Grecian rent away  
The reeking javelin, and rejoin'd his friends.  
His wounded brother good Polites tends;  
Around his waist his pious arms he threw,  
And from the rage of battle gently drew:  
Him his swift coursers, on his splendid car,  
Rapt from the lessening thunder of the war;

To Troy they drove him, groaning from the shore,  
And sprinkling, as he pass'd, the sands with gore.

Meanwhile fresh slaughter bathes the sanguine ground,  
Heaps fall on heaps, and heaven and earth resound.

Bold Aphareus by great Æneas bled;  
As toward the chief he turn'd his daring head,  
He pierced his throat; the bending head, depress'd  
Beneath his helmet, nods upon his breast;  
His shield reversed o'er the fallen warrior lies,  
And everlasting slumber seals his eyes.

Antilochus, as Thoon turn'd him round,  
Transpierced his back with a dishonest wound:  
The hollow vein, that to the neck extends  
Along the chine, his eager javelin rends:  
Supine he falls, and to his social train  
Spreads his imploring arms, but spreads in vain.

Th' exulting victor, leaping where he lay,  
From his broad shoulders tore the spoils away;  
His time observed; for closed by foes around,  
On all sides thick the peals of arms resound.  
His shield emboss'd the ringing storm sustains,  
But he impervious and untouch'd remains.

(Great Neptune's care preserved from hostile rage

This youth, the joy of Nestor's glorious age.)

In arms intrepid, with the first he fought,

Faced every foe, and every danger sought;  
His winged lance, resistless as the wind,  
Obeys each motion of the master's mind!  
Restless it flies, impatient to be free,  
And meditates the distant enemy.  
The son of Asius, Adamas, drew near,  
And struck his target with the brazen spear  
Fierce in his front: but Neptune wards the blow,  
And blunts the javelin of th' eluded foe:  
In the broad buckler half the weapon stood,  
Splinter'd on earth flew half the broken wood.  
Disarm'd, he mingled in the Trojan crew;  
But Merion's spear o'ertook him as he flew,  
Deep in the belly's rim an entrance found,  
Where sharp the pang, and mortal is the wound.  
Bending he fell, and doubled to the ground,  
Lay panting. Thus an ox in fetters tied,  
While death's strong pangs distend his labouring side,  
His bulk enormous on the field displays;  
His heaving heart beats thick as ebbing life decays.  
The spear the conqueror from his body drew,  
And death's dim shadows swarm before his view.  
Next brave Deipyrus in dust was laid:  
King Helenus waved high the Thracian blade,  
And smote his temples with an arm so strong,  
The helm fell off, and roll'd amid the throng:

There for some luckier Greek it rests a prize;  
For dark in death the godlike owner lies!  
Raging with grief, great Menelaus burns,  
And fraught with vengeance, to the victor turns:  
That shook the ponderous lance, in act to throw;  
And this stood adverse with the bended bow:  
Full on his breast the Trojan arrow fell,  
But harmless bounded from the plated steel.  
As on some ample barn's well harden'd floor,  
(The winds collected at each open door,)  
While the broad fan with force is whirl'd around,  
Light leaps the golden grain, resulting from the ground:  
So from the steel that guards Atrides' heart,  
Repell'd to distance flies the bounding dart.  
Atrides, watchful of the unwary foe,  
Pierced with his lance the hand that grasp'd the bow.  
And nailed it to the yew: the wounded hand  
Trail'd the long lance that mark'd with blood the sand:  
But good Agenor gently from the wound  
The spear solicits, and the bandage bound;  
A sling's soft wool, snatch'd from a soldier's side,  
At once the tent and ligature supplied.

Behold! Pisander, urged by fate's decree,  
Springs through the ranks to fall, and fall by thee,  
Great Menelaus! to enhance thy fame:



High-towering in the front, the warrior came.  
First the sharp lance was by Atrides thrown;  
The lance far distant by the winds was blown.  
Nor pierced Pisander through Atrides' shield:  
Pisander's spear fell shiver'd on the field.  
Not so discouraged, to the future blind,  
Vain dreams of conquest swell his haughty mind;  
Dauntless he rushes where the Spartan lord  
Like lightning brandish'd his far beaming sword.  
His left arm high opposed the shining shield:  
His right beneath, the cover'd pole-axe held;  
(An olive's cloudy grain the handle made,  
Distinct with studs, and brazen was the blade;)   
This on the helm discharged a noble blow;  
The plume dropp'd nodding to the plain below,  
Shorn from the crest. Atrides waved his steel:  
Deep through his front the weighty falchion fell;  
The crashing bones before its force gave way;  
In dust and blood the groaning hero lay:  
Forced from their ghastly orbs, and spouting gore,  
The clotted eye-balls tumble on the shore.  
And fierce Atrides spurn'd him as he bled,  
Tore off his arms, and, loud-exulting, said:  
  
"Thus, Trojans, thus, at length be taught to fear;  
O race perfidious, who delight in war!

Already noble deeds ye have perform'd;  
A princess raped transcends a navy storm'd:  
In such bold feats your impious might approve,  
Without th' assistance, or the fear of Jove.  
The violated rites, the ravish'd dame;  
Our heroes slaughter'd and our ships on flame,  
Crimes heap'd on crimes, shall bend your glory down,  
And whelm in ruins yon flagitious town.  
O thou, great father! lord of earth and skies,  
Above the thought of man, supremely wise!  
If from thy hand the fates of mortals flow,  
From whence this favour to an impious foe?  
A godless crew, abandon'd and unjust,  
Still breathing rapine, violence, and lust?  
The best of things, beyond their measure, cloy;  
Sleep's balmy blessing, love's endearing joy;  
The feast, the dance; whate'er mankind desire,  
Even the sweet charms of sacred numbers tire.  
But Troy for ever reaps a dire delight  
In thirst of slaughter, and in lust of fight."

This said, he seized (while yet the carcass heaved)  
The bloody armour, which his train received:  
Then sudden mix'd among the warring crew,  
And the bold son of Pylaemenes slew.  
Harpalion had through Asia travell'd far,

Following his martial father to the war:  
Through filial love he left his native shore,  
Never, ah, never to behold it more!  
His unsuccessful spear he chanced to fling  
Against the target of the Spartan king;  
Thus of his lance disarm'd, from death he flies,  
And turns around his apprehensive eyes.  
Him, through the hip transpiercing as he fled,  
The shaft of Merion mingled with the dead.  
Beneath the bone the glancing point descends,  
And, driving down, the swelling bladder rends:  
Sunk in his sad companions' arms he lay,  
And in short pantings sobb'd his soul away;  
(Like some vile worm extended on the ground;)  
While life's red torrent gush'd from out the wound.

Him on his car the Paphlagonian train  
In slow procession bore from off the plain.  
The pensive father, father now no more!  
Attends the mournful pomp along the shore;  
And unavailing tears profusely shed;  
And, unrevenged, deplored his offspring dead.

Paris from far the moving sight beheld,  
With pity soften'd and with fury swell'd:  
His honour'd host, a youth of matchless grace,

And loved of all the Paphlagonian race!  
With his full strength he bent his angry bow,  
And wing'd the feather'd vengeance at the foe.  
A chief there was, the brave Euchenor named,  
For riches much, and more for virtue famed.  
Who held his seat in Corinth's stately town;  
Polydus' son, a seer of old renown.  
Oft had the father told his early doom,  
By arms abroad, or slow disease at home:  
He climb'd his vessel, prodigal of breath,  
And chose the certain glorious path to death.  
Beneath his ear the pointed arrow went;  
The soul came issuing at the narrow vent:  
His limbs, unnerved, drop useless on the ground,  
And everlasting darkness shades him round.

Nor knew great Hector how his legions yield,  
(Wrapp'd in the cloud and tumult of the field:)  
Wide on the left the force of Greece commands,  
And conquest hovers o'er th' Achaian bands;  
With such a tide superior virtue sway'd,  
And he that shakes the solid earth gave aid.  
But in the centre Hector fix'd remain'd,  
Where first the gates were forced, and bulwarks gain'd;  
There, on the margin of the hoary deep,  
(Their naval station where the Ajaces keep.

And where low walls confine the beating tides,  
Whose humble barrier scarce the foe divides;  
Where late in fight both foot and horse engaged,  
And all the thunder of the battle raged,)   
There join'd, the whole Boeotian strength remains,  
The proud Iaonians with their sweeping trains,  
Locrians and Phthians, and th' Epaeon force;  
But join'd, repel not Hector's fiery course.  
The flower of Athens, Stichius, Phidas, led;  
Bias and great Menestheus at their head:  
Meges the strong the Epaeon bands controll'd,  
And Dracius prudent, and Amphion bold:  
The Phthians, Medon, famed for martial might,  
And brave Podarces, active in the fight.  
This drew from Phylacus his noble line;  
Iphiclus' son: and that (Oileus) thine:  
(Young Ajax' brother, by a stolen embrace;  
He dwelt far distant from his native place,  
By his fierce step-dame from his father's reign  
Expell'd and exiled for her brother slain:)  
These rule the Phthians, and their arms employ,  
Mix'd with Boeotians, on the shores of Troy.  
  
Now side by side, with like unwearied care,  
Each Ajax laboured through the field of war:  
So when two lordly bulls, with equal toil,

Force the bright ploughshare through the fallow soil,  
Join'd to one yoke, the stubborn earth they tear,  
And trace large furrows with the shining share;  
O'er their huge limbs the foam descends in snow,  
And streams of sweat down their sour foreheads flow.  
A train of heroes followed through the field,  
Who bore by turns great Ajax' sevenfold shield;  
Whene'er he breathed, remissive of his might,  
Tired with the incessant slaughters of the fight.  
No following troops his brave associate grace:  
In close engagement an unpractised race,  
The Locrian squadrons nor the javelin wield,  
Nor bear the helm, nor lift the moony shield;  
But skill'd from far the flying shaft to wing,  
Or whirl the sounding pebble from the sling,  
Dexterous with these they aim a certain wound,  
Or fell the distant warrior to the ground.  
Thus in the van the Telamonian train,  
Throng'd in bright arms, a pressing fight maintain:  
Far in the rear the Locrian archers lie,  
Whose stones and arrows intercept the sky,  
The mingled tempest on the foes they pour;  
Troy's scattering orders open to the shower.  
  
Now had the Greeks eternal fame acquired,  
And the gall'd Ilians to their walls retired;

But sage Polydamas, discreetly brave,  
Address'd great Hector, and this counsel gave:

"Though great in all, thou seem'st averse to lend  
Impartial audience to a faithful friend;  
To gods and men thy matchless worth is known,  
And every art of glorious war thy own;  
But in cool thought and counsel to excel,  
How widely differs this from warring well!  
Content with what the bounteous gods have given,  
Seek not alone to engross the gifts of Heaven.  
To some the powers of bloody war belong,  
To some sweet music and the charm of song;  
To few, and wondrous few, has Jove assign'd  
A wise, extensive, all-considering mind;  
Their guardians these, the nations round confess,  
And towns and empires for their safety bless.  
If Heaven have lodged this virtue in my breast,  
Attend, O Hector! what I judge the best,  
See, as thou mov'st, on dangers dangers spread,  
And war's whole fury burns around thy head.  
Behold! distress'd within yon hostile wall,  
How many Trojans yield, disperse, or fall!  
What troops, out-number'd, scarce the war maintain!  
And what brave heroes at the ships lie slain!  
Here cease thy fury: and, the chiefs and kings

Convoked to council, weigh the sum of things.  
Whether (the gods succeeding our desires)  
To yon tall ships to bear the Trojan fires;  
Or quit the fleet, and pass unhurt away,  
Contented with the conquest of the day.  
I fear, I fear, lest Greece, not yet undone,  
Pay the large debt of last revolving sun;  
Achilles, great Achilles, yet remains  
On yonder decks, and yet o'erlooks the plains!"

The counsel pleased; and Hector, with a bound,  
Leap'd from his chariot on the trembling ground;  
Swift as he leap'd his clanging arms resound.  
"To guard this post (he cried) thy art employ,  
And here detain the scatter'd youth of Troy;  
Where yonder heroes faint, I bend my way,  
And hasten back to end the doubtful day."

This said, the towering chief prepares to go,  
Shakes his white plumes that to the breezes flow,  
And seems a moving mountain topp'd with snow.  
Through all his host, inspiring force, he flies,  
And bids anew the martial thunder rise.  
To Panthus' son, at Hector's high command  
Haste the bold leaders of the Trojan band:  
But round the battlements, and round the plain,



For many a chief he look'd, but look'd in vain;  
Deiphobus, nor Helenus the seer,  
Nor Asius' son, nor Asius' self appear:  
For these were pierced with many a ghastly wound,  
Some cold in death, some groaning on the ground;  
Some low in dust, (a mournful object) lay;  
High on the wall some breathed their souls away.

Far on the left, amid the throng he found  
(Cheering the troops, and dealing deaths around)  
The graceful Paris; whom, with fury moved,  
Opprobrious thus, th' impatient chief reproved:

"Ill-fated Paris! slave to womankind,  
As smooth of face as fraudulent of mind!  
Where is Deiphobus, where Asius gone?  
The godlike father, and th' intrepid son?  
The force of Helenus, dispensing fate;  
And great Othryoneus, so fear'd of late?  
Black fate hang's o'er thee from th' avenging gods,  
Imperial Troy from her foundations nods;  
Whelm'd in thy country's ruin shalt thou fall,  
And one devouring vengeance swallow all."

When Paris thus: "My brother and my friend,  
Thy warm impatience makes thy tongue offend,

In other battles I deserved thy blame,  
Though then not deedless, nor unknown to fame:  
But since yon rampart by thy arms lay low,  
I scatter'd slaughter from my fatal bow.  
The chiefs you seek on yonder shore lie slain;  
Of all those heroes, two alone remain;  
Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer,  
Each now disabled by a hostile spear.  
Go then, successful, where thy soul inspires:  
This heart and hand shall second all thy fires:  
What with this arm I can, prepare to know,  
Till death for death be paid, and blow for blow.  
But 'tis not ours, with forces not our own  
To combat: strength is of the gods alone."  
These words the hero's angry mind assuage:  
Then fierce they mingle where the thickest rage.  
Around Polydamas, distain'd with blood,  
Cebrion, Phalces, stern Orthaeus stood,  
Palmus, with Polypoetes the divine,  
And two bold brothers of Hippotion's line  
(Who reach'd fair Ilion, from Ascania far,  
The former day; the next engaged in war).  
As when from gloomy clouds a whirlwind springs,  
That bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful wings,  
Wide o'er the blasted fields the tempest sweeps;  
Then, gather'd, settles on the hoary deeps;

The afflicted deeps tumultuous mix and roar;  
The waves behind impel the waves before,  
Wide rolling, foaming high, and tumbling to the shore:  
Thus rank on rank, the thick battalions throng,  
Chief urged on chief, and man drove man along.  
Far o'er the plains, in dreadful order bright,  
The brazen arms reflect a beamy light:  
Full in the blazing van great Hector shined,  
Like Mars commission'd to confound mankind.  
Before him flaming his enormous shield,  
Like the broad sun, illumined all the field;  
His nodding helm emits a streamy ray;  
His piercing eyes through all the battle stray,  
And, while beneath his targe he flash'd along,  
Shot terrors round, that wither'd e'en the strong.

Thus stalk'd he, dreadful; death was in his look:  
Whole nations fear'd; but not an Argive shook.  
The towering Ajax, with an ample stride,  
Advanced the first, and thus the chief defied:

"Hector! come on; thy empty threats forbear;  
'Tis not thy arm, 'tis thundering Jove we fear:  
The skill of war to us not idly given,  
Lo! Greece is humbled, not by Troy, but Heaven.  
Vain are the hopes that haughty mind imparts,

To force our fleet: the Greeks have hands and hearts.  
Long ere in flames our lofty navy fall,  
Your boasted city, and your god-built wall,  
Shall sink beneath us, smoking on the ground;  
And spread a long unmeasured ruin round.  
The time shall come, when, chased along the plain,  
Even thou shalt call on Jove, and call in vain;  
Even thou shalt wish, to aid thy desperate course,  
The wings of falcons for thy flying horse;  
Shalt run, forgetful of a warrior's fame,  
While clouds of friendly dust conceal thy shame."

As thus he spoke, behold, in open view,  
On sounding wings a dexter eagle flew.  
To Jove's glad omen all the Grecians rise,  
And hail, with shouts, his progress through the skies:  
Far-echoing clamours bound from side to side;  
They ceased; and thus the chief of Troy replied:

"From whence this menace, this insulting strain?  
Enormous boaster! doom'd to vaunt in vain.  
So may the gods on Hector life bestow,  
(Not that short life which mortals lead below,  
But such as those of Jove's high lineage born,  
The blue-eyed maid, or he that gilds the morn,)  
As this decisive day shall end the fame

Of Greece, and Argos be no more a name.  
And thou, imperious! if thy madness wait  
The lance of Hector, thou shalt meet thy fate:  
That giant-corse, extended on the shore,  
Shall largely feast the fowls with fat and gore."

He said; and like a lion stalk'd along:  
With shouts incessant earth and ocean rung,  
Sent from his following host: the Grecian train  
With answering thunders fill'd the echoing plain;  
A shout that tore heaven's concave, and, above,  
Shook the fix'd splendours of the throne of Jove.