

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT

THE DEPARTURE OF ULYSSES FROM CALYPSO

Pallas in a council of the gods complains of the detention of Ulysses in the Island of Calypso: whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty; and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, in which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwrecked, and in the last danger of death; till Lencothea, a sea-goddess, assists him, and, after innumerable perils, he gets ashore on Phaeacia.

The saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heaven with sacred light.
Then met the eternal synod of the sky,
Before the god, who thunders from on high,
Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
Pallas, to these, deploras the unequal fates
Of wise Ulysses and his toils relates:

Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying power,
The nymph's seducements, and the magic bower.
Thus she began her plaint: "Immortal Jove!
And you who fill the blissful seats above!
Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
Or bless a people willing to obey,
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And every monarch be the scourge of God.
If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
Who ruled his subjects with a father's love,
Sole in an isle, encircled by the main,
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
Unbless'd he sighs, detained by lawless charms,
And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.
Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
Nor oars to cut the immeasurable way.
And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ;
Who, pious, following his great father's fame,
To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came."

"What words are these? (replied the power who forms
The clouds of night, and darkens heaven with storms;)
Is not already in thy soul decreed,
The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
What cannot Wisdom do? Thou may'st restore

The son in safety to his native shore;
While the fell foes, who late in ambush lay,
With fraud defeated measure back their way."

Then thus to Hermes the command was given:

"Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heaven!

Go, to the nymph be these our orders borne

'Tis Jove's decree, Ulysses shall return:

The patient man shall view his old abodes,

Nor helped by mortal hand, nor guiding gods

In twice ten days shall fertile Scheria find,

Alone, and floating to the wave and wind.

The bold Phaecians there, whose haughty line

Is mixed with gods, half human, half divine,

The chief shall honour as some heavenly guest,

And swift transport him to his place of rest,

His vessels loaded with a plenteous store

Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore

(A richer prize than if his joyful isle

Received him charged with Ilion's noble spoil),

His friends, his country, he shall see, though late:

Such is our sovereign will, and such is fate."

He spoke. The god who mounts the winged winds

Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,

That high through fields of air his flight sustain

O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main:
He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye;
Then shoots from heaven to high Pieria's steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So watery fowl, that seek their fishy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood,
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep;
Thus o'er the word of waters Hermes flew,
Till now the distant island rose in view:
Then, swift ascending from the azure wave,
he took the path that winded to the cave.
Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found
(The fair-hair'd nymph with every beauty crown'd).
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze;
Cedar and frankincense, an odorous pile,
Flamed on the hearth, and wide perfumed the isle;
While she with work and song the time divides,
And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.
Without the grot a various sylvan scene
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade:
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wing their mansions form,--

The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,--
and scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
Depending vines the shelving cavern screen.
With purple clusters blushing through the green.
Four limped fountains from the clefts distil:
And every fountain pours a several rill,
In mazy windings wandering down the hill:
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
And glowing violets threw odours round.
A scene, where, if a god should cast his sight,
A god might gaze, and wander with delight!
Joy touch'd the messenger of heaven: he stay'd
Entranced, and all the blissful haunts surveyed.
Him, entering in the cave, Calypso knew;
For powers celestial to each other's view
Stand still confess'd, though distant far they lie
To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
But sad Ulysses, by himself apart,
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heard;
All on the lonely shore he sate to weep,
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep:
Toward his loved coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun:

"God of the golden wand! on what behest
Arrivest thou here, an unexpected guest?
Loved as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;
'Tis mine with joy and duty to obey.
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour
Approach, and taste the dainties of my bower."

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread
(Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosy-red);
Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
Divine refection! then, recruited, spoke:

"What moves this journey from my native sky,
A goddess asks, nor can a god deny.
Hear then the truth. By mighty Jove's command
Unwilling have I trod this pleasing land:
For who, self-moved, with weary wing would sweep
Such length of ocean and unmeasured deep;
A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze!
But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
What power so great to dare to disobey?
A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery.
The Greeks, (whose arms for nine long year employ'd

Their force on Ilion, in the tenth destroy'd,)
At length, embarking in a luckless hour,
With conquest proud, incensed Minerva's power:
Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,
With storms pursued them through the liquid world.
There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!
There all his dear companions found their grave!
Saved from the jaws of death by Heaven's decree,
The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.
Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
Straight to dismiss: so destiny commands:
Impatient Fate his near return attends,
And calls him to his country, and his friends."

E'en to her inmost soul the goddess shook;
Then thus her anguish, and her passion broke:
"Ungracious gods! with spite and envy cursed!
Still to your own ethereal race the worst!
Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only sweet of life destroy,
Did ever goddess by her charms engage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
So when Aurora sought Orion's love,
Her joys disturbed your blissful hours above,
Till, in Ortygia Dian's winged dart
Had pierced the hapless hunter to the heart,

So when the covert of the thrice-eared field
Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield,
Scarce could Iasion taste her heavenly charms,
But Jove's swift lightning scorched him in her arms.
And is it now my turn, ye mighty powers!
Am I the envy of your blissful bowers?
A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to save;
When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
And sunk his brave companions in the main,
Alone, abandon'd, in mid-ocean tossed,
The sport of winds, and driven from every coast,
Hither this man of miseries I led,
Received the friendless, and the hungry fed;
Nay promised (vainly promised) to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
'Tis past-and Jove decrees he shall remove;
Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
Go then he must (he must, if he ordain,
Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again);
But never, never shall Calypso send
To toils like these her husband and her friend.
What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
What oars to cut the long laborious way?
Yet I'll direct the safest means to go;
That last advice is all I can bestow."

To her the power who hears the charming rod;
"Dismiss the man, nor irritate the god;
Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove?"
Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
And in a moment vanished from her eye,
The nymph, obedient to divine command,
To seek Ulysses, paced along the sand,
Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
And inly pining for his native shore;
For now the soft enchantress pleased no more;
For now, reluctant, and constrained by charms,
Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
In slumber wore the heavy night away,
On rocks and shores consumed the tedious day;
There sate all desolate, and sighed alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan.
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
Till, dimmed with rising grief, they streamed again.

Here, on his musing mood the goddess press'd,
Approaching soft, and thus the chief address'd:
"Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,
No more in sorrows languish life away:

Free as the winds I give thee now to rove:
Go, fell the timber of yon lofty grove,
And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
To store the vessel let the care be mine,
With water from the rock and rosy wine,
And life-sustaining bread, and fair array,
And prosperous gales to waft thee on the way.
These, if the gods with my desire comply
(The gods, alas, more mighty far than I,
And better skill'd in dark events to come),
In peace shall land thee at thy native home."

With sighs Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
Then thus his melancholy silence broke:
"Some other motive, goddess! sways thy mind
(Some close design, or turn of womankind),
Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea,
Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety sails
The best-built ship, though Jove inspires the gales.
The bold proposal how shall I fulfil,
Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will?
Swear, then, thou mean'st not what my soul forebodes;
Swear by the solemn oath that binds the gods."

Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso eyed,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus replied:
"This shows thee, friend, by old experience taught,
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought,
How prone to doubt, how cautious, are the wise!
But hear, O earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!
And thou, O Styx! whose formidable floods
Glide through the shades, and bind the attesting gods!
No form'd design, no meditated end,
Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
The same my practice, were my fate the same.
Heaven has not cursed me with a heart of steel,
But given the sense to pity, and to feel."

Thus having said, the goddess marched before:
He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
At the cool cave arrived, they took their state;
He filled the throne where Mercury had sate.
For him the nymph a rich repast ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man sustains;
Before herself were placed the the cates divine,
Ambrosial banquet and celestial wine.
Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress'd,
Thus spoke Calypso to her godlike guest:

"Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began;)
O sprung from gods! in wisdom more than man!
Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part?
Farewell! and ever joyful mayst thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
But ah, Ulysses! wert thou given to know
What Fate yet dooms these still to undergo,
Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease.
And e'en these slighted charms might learn to please.
A willing goddess, and immortal life.
Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.
Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
Less soft my feature less august my frame?
Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth born beauties with the heavenly fair?"

"Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
Loved and adored, O goddess as thou art,
Forgive the weakness of a human heart.
Though well I see thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the difference know,
And the short date of fading charms below;
Yet every day, while absent thus I roam,

I languish to return and die at home.
Whate'er the gods shall destine me to bear;
In the black ocean or the watery war,
'Tis mine to master with a constant mind;
Inured to perils, to the worst resign'd,
By seas, by wars, so many dangers run;
Still I can suffer; their high will he done!"

Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
And rising night her friendly shade extends,
To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
When rose morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses robed him in the cloak and vest.
The nymph's fair head a veil transparent graced,
Her swelling loins a radiant zone embraced
With flowers of gold; an under robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glittering on the ground.
Forth issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
A weighty axe with truest temper steeled,
And double-edged; the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway
Then to the neighboring forest led the way.
On the lone island's utmost verge there stood
Of poplars, pine, and firs, a lofty wood,

Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or seared by heavenly fire
(Already dried). These pointing out to view,
The nymph just show'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now toils the hero: trees on trees o'erthrown
Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan:
Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
And lopp'd and lighten'd of their branchy load.
At equal angles these disposed to join,
He smooth'd and squared them by the rule and line,
(The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
With those he pierced them and with clinchers bound.
Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to out-ride the storms,
So large he built the raft; then ribb'd it strong
From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
Then o'er the vessel raised the taper mast,
With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind;
And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd
(With yielding osiers fenced, to break the force
Of surging waves, and steer the steady course).
Thy loom, Calypso, for the future sails
Supplied the cloth, capacious of the gales.
With stays and cordage last he rigged the ship,

And, roll'd on levers, launch'd her in the deep.

Four days were pass'd, and now the work complete,
Shone the fifth morn, when from her sacred seat
The nymph dismiss'd him (odorous garments given),
And bathed in fragrant oils that breathed of heaven:
Then fill'd two goatskins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with sable wine:
Of every kind, provisions heaved aboard;
And the full decks with copious viands stored.
The goddess, last, a gentle breeze supplies,
To curl old Ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now, rejoicing in the prosperous gales,
With beating heart Ulysses spreads his sails;
Placed at the helm he sate, and mark'd the skies,
Nor closed in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
There view'd the Pleiads, and the Northern Team,
And great Orion's more refulgent beam.
To which, around the axle of the sky,
The Bear, revolving, points his golden eye:
Who shines exalted on the ethereal plain,
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
The nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.
Full seventeen nights he cut the foaming way:

The distant land appear'd the following day:
Then swell'd to sight Phaeacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost;
That lay before him indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the watery waste.

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solyme's aerial brow,
The king of ocean saw, and seeing burn'd
(From AEthiopia's happy climes return'd);
The raging monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his soul he said:
"Heavens! how uncertain are the powers on high!
Is then reversed the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour; while a distant guest
I shared secure the AEthiopian feast?
Behold how near Phoenecia's land he draws;
The land affix'd by Fate's eternal laws
To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
No; if this sceptre yet commands the main."

He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the watery world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
Down rushed the night: east, west, together roar;

And south and north roll mountains to the shore.
Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd,
And question'd thus his yet unconquer'd mind;

"Wretch that I am! what farther fates attend
This life of toils, and what my destined end?
Too well, alas! the island goddess knew
On the black sea what perils should ensue.
New horrors now this destined head inclose;
Untill'd is yet the measure of my woes;
With what a cloud the brows of heaven are crown'd;
What raging winds! what roaring waters round!
'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears;
Death, present death, on every side appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
Press'd in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain!
Oh! had I died before that well-fought wall!
Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall
(Such as was that when showers of javelins fled
From conquering Troy around Achilles dead),
All Greece had paid me solemn funerals then,
And spread my glory with the sons of men.
A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Unwept, unnoted, and for ever dead!"

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,

The raft is cover'd, and the mast is broke;
Swept from the deck and from the rudder torn,
Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne;
While by the howling tempest rent in twain
Flew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
Long-press'd, he heaved beneath the weighty wave,
Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest Calypso gave;
At length, emerging, from his nostrils wide
And gushing mouth effused the briny tide;
E'en then not mindless of his last retreat,
He seized the raft, and leap'd into his seat,
Strong with the fear of death. In rolling flood,
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood
As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast,
Now to, now fro, before the autumnal blast;
Together clung, it rolls around the field;
So roll'd the float, and so its texture held:
And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,
And now the east the foamy floods obey,
And now the west wind whirls it o'er the sea.
The wandering chief with toils on toils oppress'd,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast.
(Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,
But now an azure sister of the main)
Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,
All radiant on the raft the goddess stood;

Then thus address'd him: "Thou whom heaven decrees
To Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas!
(Unequal contest!) not his rage and power,
Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
What I suggest, thy wisdom will perform:
Forsake thy float, and leave it to the storm;
Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave
With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach Phaeacia all thy nerves extend,
There Fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
This heavenly scarf beneath thy bosom bind,
And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.
Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
Return the gift, and cast it in the main:
Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away."

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she dived from whence she rose;
A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was covered with the curling sea.

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclined,
He stands suspended, and explores his mind:
"What shall I do? unhappy me! who knows
But other gods intend me other woes?"

Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine:
For scarce in ken appears that distant isle
Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge: while yet the planks sustain
The wild waves' fury, here I fix'd remain:
But, when their texture to the tempest yields,
I launch adventurous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can."

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging god a watery mountain roll'd;
Like a black sheet the whelming billows spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, beams, disparted fly; the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strews the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new-shorn,
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the chief bestrides:
There poised a while above the bounding tides,
His limbs discumbers of the clinging vest,
And binds the sacred cincture round his breast:
Then prone an ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,

Stern Neptune eyed him, and contemptuous said:

"Go, learn'd in woes, and other foes essay!

Go, wander helpless on the watery way;

Thus, thus find out the destined shore, and then

(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.

Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise

Shall last remember'd in thy best of days."

This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,

And reach high Aegae and the towery dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce earth-shaking power,

Jove's daughter Pallas watch'd the favouring hour.

Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly;

And hush'd the blustering brethren of the sky.

The drier blasts alone of Boreas away,

And bear him soft on broken waves away;

With gentle force impelling to that shore,

Where fate has destined he shall toil no more.

And now, two nights, and now two days were pass'd,

Since wide he wander'd on the watery waste;

Heaved on the surge with intermitting breath,

And hourly panting in the arms of death.

The third fair morn now blazed upon the main;

Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain;

The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,

And a dead silence still'd the watery world;
When lifted on a ridgy wave he spies
The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes.
As pious children joy with vast delight
When a loved sire revives before their sight
(Who, lingering along, has call'd on death in vain,
Fix'd by some demon to his bed of pain,
Till heaven by miracle his life restore);
So joys Ulysses at the appearing shore;
And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
The rising forests, and the tufted trees.
And now, as near approaching as the sound
Of human voice the listening ear may wound,
Amidst the rocks he heard a hollow roar
Of murmuring surges breaking on the shore;
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,
But cliffs and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight!
All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear seized his slacken'd limbs and beating heart,
As thus he communed with his soul apart;

"Ah me! when, o'er a length of waters toss'd,
These eyes at last behold the unhop'd-for coast,
No port receives me from the angry main,
But the loud deeps demand me back again.

Above, sharp rocks forbid access; around
Roar the wild waves; beneath, is sea profound!
No footing sure affords the faithless sand,
To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Dash'd on the cliffs, or heaved into the main;
Or round the island if my course I bend,
Where the ports open, or the shores descend,
Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep.
Or some enormous whale the god may send
(For many such an Amphitrite attend);
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know,
And hate relentless of my heavenly foe."
While thus he thought, a monstrous wave upbore
The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore;
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But Instant Pallas enter'd in his soul.
Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And stuck adherent, and suspended hung;
Till the huge surge roll'd off; then backward sweep
The refluent tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the polypus, from forth his cave
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands;
So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses hands,

And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
The unhappy man; e'en fate had been in vain;
But all-subduing Pallas lent her power,
And prudence saved him in the needful hour.
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore),
With longing eyes, observing, to survey
Some smooth ascent, or safe sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he spied
A failing stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declined,
And form'd a bay impervious to the wind.
To this calm port the glad Ulysses press'd,
And hail'd the river, and its god address'd:

"Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
I bend, a suppliant at thy watery throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from Neptune and the raging main
Heaven hears and pities hapless men like me,
For sacred even to gods is misery:
Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distress'd."

He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,

Before the wanderer smooths the watery way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore,
He dropp'd his sinewy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swoln heart heaved; his bloated body swell'd:
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
And lost in lassitude lay all the man,
Deprived of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking in the arms of death.
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief Leucothea's scarf unbound;
Observant of her word, he turn'd aside
His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves,
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found
A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd;
The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground;
Where on the flowery herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the sage began to say:

"What will ye next ordain, ye powers on high!
And yet, ah yet, what fates are we to try?
Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear,

Thus spent already, how shall nature bear
The dews descending, and nocturnal air;
Or chilly vapours breathing from the flood
When morning rises?--If I take the wood,
And in thick shelter of innumerable boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows;
Though fenced from cold, and though my toil be pass'd,
What savage beasts may wander in the waste?
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey
To prowling bears, or lions in the way."

Thus long debating in himself he stood:
At length he took the passage to the wood,
Whose shady horrors on a rising brow
Waved high, and frown'd upon the stream below.
There grew two olives, closest of the grove,
With roots entwined, the branches interwove;
Alike their leaves, but not alike they smiled
With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.
Nor here the sun's meridian rays had power,
Nor wind sharp-piercing, nor the rushing shower;
The verdant arch so close its texture kept:
Beneath this covert great Ulysses crept.
Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made
(Thick strewn by tempest through the bowery shade);
Where three at least might winter's cold defy,

Though Boreas raged along the inclement sky.
This store with joy the patient hero found,
And, sunk amidst them, heap'd the leaves around.
As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,
Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire:
Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
Till Pallas pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes;
And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.