

Vergil - Aeneid - Trans. Charles Billson - Book I

ARMS AND THE MAN I sing, who first from Troy,
A Doom-led exile, on Lavinian shores
Reached Italy; long tossed on sea and land
By Heaven's rude arm, through Juno's brooding ire,
And war-worn long ere building for his Gods [5]
A Home in Latium: whence the Latin race,
The Lords of Alba, and high-towering Rome.

Tell, Muse, the cause; how pained, how foiled in Will,
The Queen of Gods drove one whom Virtue crowned
Such toils to approach, and compass all that woe. [10]
Can Heavenly hearts so unrelenting prove?

An ancient town, by Tyrian settlers held,
Far off faced Italy and Tiber mouth,
Carthage, well-dowered, and schooled in roughest war.
Before all lands, men say, 'twas Juno's haunt, [15]
Before e'en Samos. There her chariot stood;
There hung her arms; there, if no Fates forbade,
She planned e'en then and nursed a world-wide Throne.
But fame had reached her that a race was sprung
From Trojan blood, her Tyrian towers to strew; [20]
From whom a sovran People, proud in arms,
Should come to Libya's bane; so rolled the Doom.
Fraught with such fear, and that remembered feud
Once for dear Argos she had waged at Troy; —
Though still the smart remained, still deep at heart [25]
Saturnia nursed the Judgment Paris gave,
Her beauty's cruel slight, the race abhorred,
The honours paid to Heaven-rapt Ganymede; —
Thus more inflamed, from Latium far she kept,
Tossed o'er all waves, the Trojans left by Greeks, [30]
Achilles' leavings, and for many a year
From sea to sea they wandered, pushed by Fate:
Such work was wrought to build the Roman Race!

Scarce beyond sight of Sicily, they spread
All sail, and merry cut the salt sea foam, [35]
When Juno, nursing deep the undying wound,
Thus to herself: "Am I to own defeat?
Not turn from Italy this Prince of Troy?
The Fates forbid me! Could not Pallas burn

The Argives' fleet, and drown them in the deep, [40]
For one man's guilt, the madness Ajax wrought?
She, from the clouds down-flinging Jove's own fire,
Shattered their ships, and blew the waters high,
Him caught in whirlwind, and his cloven breast
Fixed on the pointed rock, outbreathing flames. [45]
Yet I, Jove's Wife and Sister, I who move
The Queen of Gods, so many years make war
On one poor race! Henceforth shall any bow
To Juno, or lay tribute on her shrines?"

So mused her burning spirit, while she sought [50]
The Storm Land, where the raging South is born,
Aeolia. Here King Aeolus commands
In cavern vast the loud unruly gales,
Bridled with chains and bondage, and they roar
Indignant round their bars, till all the mount [55]
Howls discord. Throned on high, with sceptered hand,
He soothes their spirit, and controls their rage, —
Else would those raiding coursers sweep away
Seas, earth, and heaven's profound; but, fearing this,
The Almighty Father hid them in dark caves, [60]
And piled above them high the mountains' mass,
And gave a King, whose chartered rule might know
To draw the reins, or loose them, at His word;
Whom Juno then, imploring, thus addressed:

"Aeolus, to thee Heaven's Sire and all men's King, [65]
To smooth the waves gave charge, the storm to raise.
A race I love not sail the Tyrrhene Sea,
Bearing to Italy Troy's vanquished Gods.
Wing all thy Winds with rage! Submerge their ships!
Or widely scattering strew with dead the main! [70]
Twice seven young Nymphs are mine, of faultless form,
Whose fairest, Deiopea, I will join
In wedding bands, and make her all thine own,
To live thy life with thee, and make thee sire
Of beauteous offspring, for such service done." [75]

Then Aeolus: "Thine is the task, O Queen,
To choose thy wish, my duty to obey!"

My realm thou gain'st me, and the grace of Jove;
Thou grantest me with the high Gods to feast,
To bear dominion over cloud and storm." [80]

This said, he smote the hollow mountain's side
With spear reverse, and where a door is given
The embattled winds rush out, and scour the land.
Down-swooping on the sea, East Wind and South,
With Afric's squally blast, the deep abyss [85]
Together rend, and roll vast waves to shore.
The seamen shout; the cordage screams aloft.
A sudden cloud has snatched from Trojan eyes
Daylight and sky. Black Night invests the sea.
The thunder rolls; the incessant lightnings flash; [90]
And Death stares instant from all sides on all.
Aeneas' limbs relax with sudden chill.
Lifting his palms to Heaven and moaning sore,
Aloud he cries: "Thrice, four times happy, they
Whom under Troy's high wall their fathers saw [95]
Die happy deaths! O bravest of the Greeks,
Tydides! might I but have fallen, my life
Yielding to thy right hand, on Ilium's plain,
Where Hector by Achilles' spear, where tall
Sarpedon fell, where Simois rolls deep [100]
Such shields and helms and bodies of the brave!"

While yet he cries, the shrieking Northern storm
Strikes back the sail, and heavenward lifts the surge.
Oars snap: the prow swings off, and gives the sea
The ship's broad side; down breaks a mount of brine. [105]
Some hang on the wave's crest; some see the floor
'Twixt gaping seas; the surges seethe with sand.
Three ships the South Wind hurls on ambushed rocks,
Rocks named by Latins "Altars," in mid main
Bristling immense; three more on shoals and banks [110]
The East drives landward, piteous to be seen!
And strikes ashore, and heaps them round with sand.
One, leal Orontes' and the Lycians' bark,
Before Aeneas' eyes, a huge sea smites
Down on her stern. The helmsman, wrenched away [115]
Rolls headlong: but the eddy round and round

Thrice spins the ship, and gulfs her in the flood.
Rare show some swimming in the vasty race.
Arms, planks, and Trojan treasures strew the waves.
Ilioneus' and bold Achates' ships, [120]
Those which bore Abas and Aletes old,
Yield to the storm; their loosened joints admit
The ruinous deluge through each gaping chink.

Meanwhile the discord of the boiling sea,
The Storm let loose, the watery deeps up-cast, [125]
Neptune perceived, and, gravely moved, looked forth,
Lifting above the wave his tranquil brow.
Strewn o'er the sea he saw Aeneas' fleet,
He saw the Trojans spent with wind and wave,
Nor did he not perceive his sister's guile. [130]
East Wind and West he summons and bespeaks:

"What pride of ancestry hath swoll'n you thus,
That heaven and earth you now confound, and raise
Turmoil so wild, ye Winds, without my will?
Whom I — but first to smooth the troubled waves. [135]
Not thus again shall you atone your deeds!
Speed instant back! and tell your King, not his
The Sea's dominion and the Trident stern,
But mine by lot. The craggy halls are his,
Eurus, where ye are lodged: there let him vaunt, [140]
There let him reign, with all his Winds immured!"

More swift than speech, he calms the swollen flood,
Chases the gathered clouds, brings back the sun.
Cymothoe and Triton, from the rock
Thrust off the ships, by his own trident raised; [145]
He channels the great Sands, the water smoothes,
And skims with printless wheels the level sea.
As when in some great concourse often springs
A tumult, and the rabble herd grow fierce,
Till stones and torches fly, the arms of rage, — [150]
If then a man revered for worth and work
Face them, they listen, hush'd, with straining ears;
He governs them with words, and cools their heat.
So fell all Ocean's uproar, since the Sire
Looked o'er his waves, and gave his team the rein, [155]
Speeding in cloudless blue his easy car.

The o'erlaboured Trojans, straining now to gain
 What coast lies nearest, turn to Libya's shore.
 There lies a haven in a creek retired,
 Made by an island's arms, on which the sea [160]
 Breaks, and deep inlets hold the parted wave.
 On either hand two peaks of towering rock
 Menace the sky, and underneath wide-spread
 Sleeps the safe pool, o'er which a scene impends
 Of shimmering woodland, crowned by forest gloom. [165]
 Under the fronting bluff, a rock-hung cave,
 With seats of living stone, and waters sweet,
 A Sea-Nymphs' home; where the wave-weary bark
 Needs not the cable, nor the anchor's tooth.
 Here, with seven ships, the relics of his fleet, [170]
 Aeneas steers, and Trojans, sick for land,
 Leap out at last, and gain the dreamed-of shore,
 And on the sand their briny limbs repose.
 And first from flint Achates struck a spark,
 And caught in leaves, and with dry timber nursed [175]
 The flame, and fanned the fuel to a blaze.
 Then Ceres' sea-sad grain, and Ceres' arms
 They bring, world-wearied, and bestir themselves
 To bake and bray with stones their rescued meal.

Meanwhile Aeneas climbs a rock, and scans [180]
 All the wide sea, to spy, if spy he may,
 Antheus storm-toss'd, or Capys, or the arms
 High on Caicus' stern, or Phrygian sloops.
 No ships in sight, but roaming on the land
 Three stags he saw; behind them all the deer, [185]
 In one long file, go browsing down the dales.
 He paused; he seized the bow and flying shafts
 Which leal Achates bore, and first laid low
 The leaders of the herd, who proud bore up
 Their branching heads, then aimed the crowd entire, [190]
 And drove into the glens their broken ranks;
 Nor stayed, till seven huge bodies on the ground, —
 To match his tale of ships, —the Victor stretched.
 Who sought the haven, and divided all,
 And shared the wine, which on Trinacria's beach [195]
 Acestes gave, a hero's parting boon,
 Then thus with words their languish'd hearts consoled:

"Co-mates, —for troubles we have known before,—
 O worse beset! these too some God will end!
 Ye braved wild Scylla, and the rocks that roar [200]
 Through all their fissures, and the Cyclops' den
 Ye entered. Cheer your hearts! Abandon fear!
 To recollect even this may yet be sweet.
 Through many a danger, many a chance and change,
 We tend to Latium, where the Gods assure [205]
 Peace, and the realm of Troy again shall rise.
 Endure! and keep yourselves for happy days!"

Such words he spake; and, pained with anxious thought
 Masked under hopeful looks his heart-felt care.
 They, hungry for the feast, prepare their prey, [210]
 Strip hide from ribs, and bare the inward meat.
 Part carve and broach with spits the quivering flesh;
 Part fix the brazen pans, and ply the flame.
 Then, stretched on grass, recalling strength with food,
 Of venison and of wine they take their fill; [215]
 Till, hunger stayed, they move the boards, and long
 In anxious converse mourn their comrades lost,
 Twixt hope and fear surmising if they live,
 Or lie at rest, and hear no voice that calls.
 But good Aeneas mourns at heart the most [220]
 For Amycus, Orontes, and sad-starred
 Lycus, brave Gyas and Cloanthus brave.

Now came the close, when Jupiter looked down
 Over the sail-flecked sea, the lands outspread,
 The shores, the peoples wide, and on Heaven's crest [225]
 Paused, and his downward gaze on Libya fixed.
 Him then, thus pondering many an anxious thought,
 Sadly, with tear-drops in her shining eyes,
 Venus bespake: "Dread King of Gods and men,
 Regent of rule eterne, the Thunder's Lord! [230]
 What wrong can my Aeneas or Troy's sons
 Have done thee, that to them, so scourged by Death,
 For Italy's sole sake, all lands are barred?
 Firm was thy promise, Sire, that circling years
 From Troy's replenished blood at last should raise [235]
 Romans, commanders, ruling sea and land
 With sway imperial. What hath changed thy plan?
 That pledge consoled me, weighing Doom with Doom,

For Troy's sad ruin; yet a woe not less
Still dogs the suffering heroes: O Supreme! [240]
Where wilt thou place the limit of their pain?
Antenor, scaping through the Achaean hosts,
Might thread Illyrian bays, and make unharmed
Remote Liburnia and Timavus' fount,
Where through nine mouths, out of the roaring rock, [245]
Spouts the loud sea, and drowns the furrowed field.
Yet there he built Patavium, gave a home,
A name to Trojans, hung up arms of Troy,
And now in happy quiet slumbers well.
But we, thy seed, to whom high Heaven thou giv'st, [250]
Our ships all lost, for one heart's spite betrayed,
Far from Italian shores are Sundered still.
Is this faith's meed? Is this our crown restored?"

On her the Sire of Men and Gods looked down,
Smiling as when he calms the fretful sky; [255]
He gently kissed his daughter's lips, and said:
"Fear not, sweet Venus! Know, thy people's doom
Stands changeless: thou shalt see thy promised town,
Lavinium's walls, and bear to Heaven sublime
Great-souled Aeneas. Nought hath changed my plan. [260]
Know,— since this trouble gnaws thee, I will speak
More fully, and unroll the leaves of Fate, —
Long shall he fight in Italy, subdue
Fierce tribes, and in wall'd cities school his men,
Till summers three have seen him Latium's King, [265]
And three long winters crushed the Rutuli.
Ascanius then, lulus now sur-named, —
Ilius he was, while Ilium's Kingdom stood,—
With thirty rolling years shall bound his reign,
Then from Lavinium move the royal seat, [270]
And strongly fortify Long Alba's walls.
There thrice an hundred years the crown shall stay
In Hector's race, until a Vestal Queen,
Iliia, shall bear twin babes, the seed of Mars.
Then Romulus, proud in the tawny skin [275]
Of his wolf-nurse, shall follow. He shall build
The Martial City, and stamp his name on Rome.
To her no bounds I give of Space or Time,
But Empire without end. Juno herself,

Who now with fear wears earth and sea and sky, [280]
Will better her designs, and love with me
Romans, the Lords of Earth, the toga'd race.
So is my Will. A day shall come at last,
When Troy's great House beneath their yoke shall bring
Argos, and Phthia, and Mycenae's pride. [285]
A Caesar from their glorious loins shall spring, —
Ocean his realm will bound, his fame the stars,—
Julius, a name from great lulus drawn.
Him, rich with Orient spoils, shalt thou unvexed
Admit to Heaven, and vows he too shall hear. [290]
Then wars shall cease, and the rude age grow mild.
Quirinus and his Brother, white-stoled Faith,
And Vesta shall give laws, War's iron Gates
Stand closed. Within, upon her savage arms,
Inhuman Rage will sit, by thousand links [295]
Of brass chained back, and snarl with bloody fangs."

He spake; and Maia's Son from Heaven down sent,
That Carthage and her rising towers might give
Harbour to Trojans, lest, unaware of Fate,
Dido should spurn them. Through the air he oars [300]
His rapid vans, and lights on Libyan soil.
His task is done: the *savage* hearts are lulled
By God's own Will: but most o'er Dido's soul
Steal gentle thoughts, and ruth for Teucer's sons.

Now good Aeneas, tossed all night with care, [305]
When the boon light was given, resolved to try
Those unknown shores, to what strange coast the blasts
Had blown them, and who held it, man or beast, —
Desert it seemed, — and bear true tidings back.
Beneath an arching rock, o'er-hung with trees, [310]
He hid his vessels, wrapt in woodland shade,
And with Achates started, in his hand
Shaking two steel-bound spears.

Him in mid-wood

His Mother came to meet, a maid in looks,
Bearing the arms and habit of a maid, [315]
Spartan, or like Harpalyce, whose feet
Outstrip the horse, outrun the Hebrus stream.
For huntress-wise o'er shoulders she had slung
The bow to hand, and given the winds her hair,

Bare-kneed, her folds up-gathered in a knot. [320]

She first began: "Sirs, have you haply seen
One of my sisters wandering this wood,
With quiver girt, and spotted lynx's skin,
Or pressing clamorous on the foaming boar?"

Thus Venus, and thus answered Venus' son: [325]

"None of thy sisters have I heard or seen,
O — how to call thee, Maid? No mortal face,
No human voice is thine, — O Goddess, sure!
Art thou Apollo's sister, or some Nymph?
Whoe'er thou art, be gracious, ease our pain; [330]
And teach us on what shores, beneath what sky,
Outcast we wander, ignorant of place
And people, hither driven by storm and sea.
Oft at thine altars shall our victims fall."

Then Venus: "Nay, such rites are not for me. [335]

To bear the quiver Tyrian maidens use,
And the red buskin on the leg bind high.
Carthage this realm, Agenor's Tyrian town,
But Libyans bound it, tribes intractable.
Here reigns, from Tyre and from her brother fled, [340]
Queen Dido. Long her sorrows, long and dark;
But I will tread the surface of the tale.

"Sycheaus was her spouse, of Tyrian lords
The richest, and loved dearly to her woe.
To him her father yoked her still intact, [345]
With virgin rites; but on Tyre's throne her brother,
Pygmalion, sat, in guilt out-shaming all.
Wrath came between those twain. He, blind with greed
And careless of his sister's love, struck down
Impious before the shrine with furtive steel [350]
Unwarned Sycheaus, and long hid the deed,
Cheating with empty tales sick Dido's heart.
But in her dreams her lord's unburied shade
Came with a strange wan face, revealing all,
The guilty shrine, the dagger's bosom-thrust, [355]
And all the sightless horror of the House.
He bade her haste to leave her native shores,
Disclosing ancient treasures underground,
Silver and gold unsummed, her journey's aid.

She, thus distract, sought friends to share her flight, [360]

And all who loathed the tyrant King, or feared,
Muster, and seize what galleys lie to hand,
And load with gold. Pygmalion's hoarded wealth
Flies overseas: a woman rules the hour.
Where now thou see'st New Carthage lifting high [365]
Yon towers they landed, and there bought them ground,
So much, — and thence the name of Byrsa sprang,—
As they could compass with one ox's hide. —
But who are ye, sirs? From what country come?
Or whither go ye?"

To her, asking thus, [370]

With sighs he answered, drawing deep his breath:

"O Goddess! Ere from their prime source I traced
The annals of our woe, an thou could'st list,
Vesper would close heaven-gate, and lull the day.
From ancient Troy, — if haply to thine ears [375]
Troy's name hath come, — we sailed contrary seas,
Till cast on Libya by the wayward storm.
I, good Aeneas, famed above the stars,
Bear in my ships our House-Gods saved from Greeks.
Jove's kin I seek, and Italy, my Home. [380]
With twenty Phrygian barks I climbed the sea,
Led by my Goddess-mother, following Doom;
Scarce seven survive the ruining wave and wind.
I, poor, unfriended, roam these Libyan wastes,
From Europe thrust and Asia — " But no more [385]
Brooking his moan, she interrupts his grief—

"Whoe'er thou art, not unbeloved of Heaven
Thou drawest breath, methinks, who hast arrived
This Tyrian city! Hence! On to the Queen's Court!
For news I bear, thy comrades are restored, [390]
And altered winds have blown thy ships to port, —
Unless my parents taught me omens ill.
See yon twelve swans, in gallant trim array,
Whom dropping from the sky the Bird of Jove
Chased far and wide: they now, in column long, [395]
Alight, or soaring scorn the earth they trod.
As they restored with clanging wings the sky
Circle in sport, and utter songs of joy,
Not otherwise thy ships and crews now hold

Gladly the port, or cross the bar full-sail. [400]
Go, and step onward where thy path shall lead."

She said, and turned; all rosy flashed her neck;
The ambrosial locks a heavenly fragrance breathed,
Her vesture flowed to earth, and by her gait
The Goddess stood confest.

He, when he knew [405]

His mother, thus pursued her as she fled:

"Thou too unkind! Why dost thou with false shapes
Mock me so oft? Why may we not clasp hands
Together, and with unfeigned lips converse?"

Thus he upbraiding paces to the town. [410]

But round them, as they walked, the Goddess shed
A screen of mist and cloudy veil obscure,

That none might see or touch them, or delay,

Inquiring why they came. To Paphos she

Flies soaring, and delightedly regains [415]

Her home, her fane, her hundred shrines that glow
With Orient gums and with fresh garlands breathe.

Meanwhile they hasten where the pathway points;
And climb at last the hill which hangs far-stretched
Above the city and on her towers looks down. [420]

At that great town, once hovels, the thronged gates,
The clattering streets, Aeneas much admires.
Hotly the Tyrians work: some trace the walls,
The castle build, and roll up stones by hand.
Some trench a site for building. They ordain [425]

Laws, magistrates, and senators august.
Here they are digging harbours; laying here
The Theatre's deep base, and hew from rocks
Tall columns, to adorn the future stage.

As bees in Springtime, through the flowering fields, [430]

Work 'neath the sun; and train the nation's youth,
Or press the flowing honey and distend

Their cells with fragrant nectar, or their loads

From the new-comers take, or, ranged in line,

Drive from their fold the drones, a sluggard flock: [435]

Work glows, and sweet with thyme the honey smells.

"O happy men, whose Home is rising now!"

Aeneas cries, and scans the towers above:

Then enters, screened in mist, most strange to tell!
And mingles with the crowd, himself unseen. [440]

Amidst the town a grove spread lavish shade;
Where first the Poeni, tossed by sea and storm,
Dug up the Sign Queen Juno had foreshown,
A Horse's Head, — so should they be renowned
In war, and through the ages live in ease. [445]
Sidonian Dido here to Juno a fane
Designed, magnificent and divinely blest.

Steps rose to a bronze threshold, and bronze-bound
The lintels, and the grating doors were bronze.

A wondrous sight first lightened in this grove [450]

Aeneas' fear: here first he dared to hope,
And in his fretted fortunes more confide.

For while he looks o'er all the mighty fane,
Waiting the Queen; while at the prospering town

And jealous labours of the craftsmen's hands [455]

He marvels, lo! he sees the Trojan Wars,
Now blown about the world, sees Atreus' sons,
And Priam, and Achilles, foe to both.

He paused, and "O! What place," he sobbed, "what land,
Achates, is not filled with our distress? [460]

See Priam! Even here Worth finds its meed;

Tears fall, and hearts are touched by mortal things!

Fear not; this fame will surely bear thee safe."

Thus on the pictured show he feeds his heart,
Sighing, and streaming tears bedew his cheek. [465]

For there he saw how, fighting round the walls,
Pressed by Troy's chivalry, the Greeks took flight,
Or Phrygians, where Achilles urged his car.

Nor distant Rhesus' snowy tents he knew,
Which, in first sleep betrayed, Tydides heaped [470]

With bloody slaughter, and his burning steeds
Turned back to camp, or ever they should taste

Fodder of Troy, or drink of Xanthus' stream.

Elsewhere flies Troilus, his weapons lost, —

Ill-doomed, ill-matched to meet Achilles' spear! — [475]

Dragged by his steeds, fallen from the empty car,

But grasping still the reins; his neck, his locks

Are drawn in dust, where scrawls the inverted spear.

And Ilian wives were wending, suppliant,

To cruel Pallas' fane, with streaming hair, [480]

And bare the Peplus, sad, and beat the breast:
 Fixed on the ground the Goddess kept her eyes.
 Thrice had Achilles round the walls of Troy
 Dragged Hector, and would sell his corse for gold.
 Ah! deeply then Aeneas sighed to view [485]
 His comrade's spoils, his car, his very corse,
 And Priam stretching out his helpless hands.
 Himself, too, charging through Achaean chiefs,
 The Eastern troops he knew, and Memnon's arms.
 And, burning mid the fray, her Amazons [490]
 With moony shields Penthesilea led,
 Who, girt with gold beneath her naked breast,
 Dared clash with men, a warrior and a maid.

While all these wonders met the Dardan's eyes,
 While lost he stood, in one long gaze entranced, [495]
 Queen Dido to the temple paced, a train
 Of courtiers pressing round, supremely fair.
 As on Eurotas' banks, or Cynthus' hill,
 Diana leads the dance; behind her throng
 A thousand Oreads: she the quiver bears, [500]
 And treads the earth, divine above them all.
 Latona's heart with silent pleasure thrills.
 Even such was Dido: so she passed in joy
 Amidst them, busied in her city's growth;
 Then in the sacred doors, beneath the dome, [505]
 High on a throne she sat, with weapons fenced,
 Gave law and judgment, and the appointed task
 Justly to each assigned, or fixed by lot:
 When lo! Aeneas in the crowd discerns
 Antheus, Sergestus, and Cloanthus brave, [510]
 With many a Trojan, whom the blinding gale
 Had swept apart, and borne to distant shores.

Struck dumb together, both by fear and joy,
 He and Achates fain would grasp their hands,
 Yearning, but ignorance disturbs their minds, [515]
 And, veiled in hollow mist, they wait to see
 What fate was theirs, and where they left the ships,
 And why they came; for, chosen from all the fleet,
 Clamorous they near the temple, praying grace.

When they had entered, and due audience gained, [520]
 Ilioneus, their eldest, with calm front

Began:
 "O Queen! by Heaven ordained to found
 This city, and curb the unruly tribes with law!
 Thee we poor Trojans, blown o'er every sea,
 Implore. O save our ships from shameless fire! [525]
 Spare honest men; more nearly look on us!
 We are not come with steel to overthrow
 The Libyan's home, or harry prey to shore,—
 Not ours, not conquered men's, such insolence!
 A Land there is, by Greeks Hesperia named, [530]
 An old land, strong in arms and the glebe's fruit,
 Where dwelt Oenotrians; now the younger men,
 After their Chief have called it Italy.
 Thither we took our course,
 When stormy Orion rose with sudden swell, [535]
 And dashed us on blind shoals, and with bluff winds
 O'er desperate seas and rocks unvoyageable
 Dispersed us wide, and few have reached your shores.
 What race of men is here? What land so rude
 Permits this use? The welcome of the sand [540]
 Refused, they force us from their country's edge.
 If men and mortal weapons ye despise,
 Look yet for Gods remembering right and wrong!
 Aeneas was our King, and none more just
 Or righteous, or in battle more renowned. [545]
 Whom if Fate still preserves, if still he drinks
 The air of heaven, nor lies in bitter gloom,
 We fear not; nor shalt thou, if first to help,
 Repent. Sicilian arms and towns remain,
 Acestes, too, boasts the pure blood of Troy. [550]
 Grant us to beach our tempest-shaken ships,
 To shape in woods new beams, and trim new oars,
 And, if we may, with King and fellows found,
 Joyous to Italy our course pursue.
 If all is lost, if thou, great Prince, the seas [555]
 Hold, and lulus' promise is no more,
 Then seek we straits Sicilian, whence we came,
 A Home now ready, Acestes for our King."

So spake Ilioneus; the Dardans all
 Acclaiming roared. [560]
 Then, casting down her looks, Dido in brief:

"Put off your anxious fears. To use these means,
And guard my frontiers well, my hard estate
Compels me, and the newness of my realm.
Who knows not Troy, and good Aeneas' race? [565]
Their feats, their men, and that great flame of War?
Our hearts are not so dull; from Tyrian town
The Sun his horses yokes not so remote.
Whether Hesperia, Saturn's land, ye choose,
Or Eryx' country and Acestes King, [570]
Safe I will send you, and with stores assist.
Or will you stay, this realm with me to share?
'Tis yours, this city I build. Here beach your ships.
Trojans and Tyrians, — I shall deem them one.
Ah! that your King were here himself, compell'd [575]
By that same gale, Aeneas! Up the coast
Sure spies will I dispatch to Libya's ends,
Lest outcast he in town or forest stray."

Roused by these words, long since Achates bold,
And Prince Aeneas were on fire to break [580]
The shrouding mist. And first Achates urged:
"O Goddess-born! What purpose stirs thee now?
Thou see'st all safe, our ships, our friends restored,
Save one, whom in mid sea ourselves beheld
Drowned, to thy mother's words all else responds." [585]
He scarce had spoken, when the veiling cloud
Parts suddenly, and melts into the air.
Aeneas stood revealed in radiant day;
In face and shoulders God-like, for on him
His mother shed the rosy light of Youth, [590]
Fair tresses, and the charm of happy eyes,
As when man's hand adds grace to ivory,
Or Parian marbles are encinct with gold.
Then he, thus sudden, unforeseen of all,
Addressed the Queen:

"I whom ye seek am here, [595]
Trojan Aeneas, saved from Libyan seas.
O thou sole pitier of Troy's untold woe!
Thou who with us, the leavings of the Greek,
By land and sea outworn, in want of all,
Would'st share thy city and home! To render thanks [600]
Fitly, I cannot, Dido, nor could aught

Of Dardan blood o'er the wide world dispersed.
May Heaven, if any Spirits guard the Good,
If Justice aught avail, or conscious Worth,
Reward thee fitly! O what glad ages bore, [605]
What mighty parents got thee so benign!
While brooks run seaward, while the shadows move
Round mountain vales, and star-flocks graze in heaven,
Thy fame, thy name, thy praise shall still endure,
Whatever shores call me."

And both his hands [610]
Sought dear Serestus and Ilioneus;
Then all, brave Gyas and Cloanthus brave.

Astonished by his looks, then by his plight
And sore distress, Sidonian Dido spake:

"What Doom pursues thee, Goddess-born? what spite [615]
Casts thee so peril-tost on barbarous strands?
Art that Aeneas whom sweet Venus bore
Dardan Anchises by the Simois stream?
I mind how Teucer, from his land expelled,
To Sidon came, and sought to win new realms [620]
By Belus' aid. My father Belus then
Laid Cyprus waste, and swayed the captive isle.
And from that day I knew the fall of Troy,
I knew thy name, and the Pelasgian Kings.
Thy very foe would give the Trojans praise, [625]
And boast himself of Teucer's ancient stock.
O come, then, Sirs, pass underneath our roof.
Me too like fortune through a world of woe
Hath tossed, and in this land late rest hath given.
To grief not strange, I learn to aid distress." [630]

She ended, and Aeneas led within
The regal halls, ordaining sacrifice.
And to his comrades on the beach meantime
Sends twenty bulls, an hundred bristled swine,
An hundred fatling lambs, their dams beside, [635]
And joy the Wine God brings.

But in the centre of the Palace hall
A princely feast was set, where brodered cloths
Of royal purple on the boards were spread,
And massive silver; and brave deeds of yore [640]

Shone, graved in gold, the legendary tale
Of all its heroes since the race began.

Aeneas, since a father's love admits
No respite, to the ships Achates sends,
Ascanius to inform and thither guide, [645]
Ascanius, the centre of all his care.
Gifts, too, he bids him bring, from Ilium's sack
Rescued, a mantle stiff with gold inwrought,
A veil with crocus-hued acanthus flowers
Bordered, which Argive Helen erst had brought [650]
Out from Mycenae, when she came to Troy
And unpermitted love, her mother's gift;
The sceptre also which Ilione,
Eldest of Priam's daughters, bore of old,
Necklet of pearl, and jewell'd golden tiara. [655]
Hasting for these Achates seeks the ships.

But Venus in her heart new purposes,
New schemes designs, that Love shall be transformed
To sweet Ascanius' shape, and by his gifts
Stir into flame the Queen's impassioned heart. [660]
The doubtful House she fears, the twi-tongued race;
Fierce Juno galls, and care with Night returns:
So in these words she speaks to winged Love:

"Dear Son, my strength, my sole effectual might,
Son, who dost scorn the Father's thunder-stones [665]
Which slew Typhoeus, to thy knees I fly,
And pray thy godhead. How through Juno's spite
Aeneas, thine own brother, roves the world,
Thou knowest, often hast thou shared my pain.
Him now Phoenician Dido with soft words [670]
Keeps, and I fear how Juno's guest may fare.
On such a hinge of fate she will not sleep.
I plan to circumvent her, and the Queen
Invest with flame no deity may quench.
Love for Aeneas then shall bind her mine. [675]
How thou canst compass this, our purpose hear.
E'en now the princely Boy, my chiefest care,
By his dear Sire's command, the city seeks,
With gifts that sea and Trojan flames have spared.
Him, sunk in sleep, I on my holy seat, [680]

Cythera, or the Idalian hills, will hide,
Lest he should know the plot, and come between.
Thou, for one night alone shalt personate
His shape, thy boyish looks transform to his;
So, when the feast runs high, and wine-cups flow, [685]
And radiant Dido takes thee in her lap,
And fondles thee, and gives thee kisses sweet,
A poisonous secret fire thou may'st instill."

Love, at his mother's word, puts off his wings,
And walks rejoicing with lulus' gait. [690]
But o'er Ascanius' limbs the Goddess sheds
Sweet rest, and bears him to Idalian glens,
Lull'd in her lap; there soft amaracus
Folds him in flowers and fragrance-breathing shade.

Now Love, obedient, by Achates led, [695]
To Carthage gaily brought the regal gifts;
And coming found the Queen on golden seat
Throned in mid place, and proudly canopied.
There Prince Aeneas and the Lords of Troy
Reclined on purple strewings, and the slaves [700]
Poured water on their hands, and served the bread,
And brought the fine-spun napkins; while within
Were fifty maids, whose care it was to keep
The feast replenished, and the fire aflame:
Another hundred, and as many boys, [705]
All of one age, the tables spread with food
And wine-cups.

Surging through the festal doors,
The Tyrians bidden to the couches throng,
Admire the presents, and admire the Boy,
His face divinely flushed, his borrowed speech, [710]
The mantle and veil with gay acanthus wrought.

But most the hapless Queen, to ruin doomed,
Her soul can never fill, and *gazing* burns.
The Boy, the gifts, both take her heart alike.
He, having hung upon Aeneas' neck, [715]
And satisfied his feigned father's love,
Goes then to Dido. She with eyes and heart
Hugs him and fondles in her lap, nor knows
How great a God there lies. But, minding well

His Acidalian Mother, he prepares [720]
To dim Sychaeus' image, and forestall
That heart long idle with a living love.

Soon as the feast is lull'd, they move the boards,
And place great bowls, and wreath the wine with flowers.
Din fills the house, and through the spacious halls [725]
Roll voices. Burning lamps from the gilt roof
Depend, and torches overcome the night.
Then, calling for a jewell'd golden cup,
Pure wine the Queen pours in, after the use
Of Belus and his House, and silence falls. [730]

"Jove, since to thee the guest-rites are assigned,
For Tyrians and for Trojans make this day
Glorious, a day our children shall recall!
Come, Bacchus, Joy-giver, and Juno kind,
And ye, O Tyrians, give this gathering grace!" [735]

Ending, wine-tribute on the board she shed;
And first the cup touched lightly with her lips,
Then passed to Bitias, clinking it. Full slow
He quaffed the bowl, deep diving in the gold:
Then drank the other Chiefs.
Iopas, too, [740]

Made sound his golden harp, whom Atlas taught.
He sang the wandering Moon, and the Sun's toils,
The source of Man and Beast, Lightning and Storm,
Arcturus and the rainy Hyades,
And the two Bears; why winter Suns so soon [745]
Dip in the sea, what stays the laggard nights.
The Tyrians, then the Trojans, shower applause.

Nor less with divers talk the hapless Queen
Protracts the night, drinking long draughts of love;
Of Priam and of Hector asking much, [750]
Then of the armor of Aurora's son,
The steeds of Diomedes, Achilles' might.

"Nay, tell us all, O Guest! from first to last,
The Danaans' craft," quoth she, "the Trojans' fall,
Thy travels; for the seventh summer this [755]
That bears thee wandering over lands and seas."

Book II

HUSH'D WAS EACH voice, and every face intent,
When from his lofty couch the Prince began:

"Unutterable, O Queen, the pain thy words
Bid me revive; how Troy's unhappy realm
Fell to the Greek; what piteous scenes I saw [5]
And was great part of. Who, in such a tale,
From hard Ulysses' ranks, what Myrmidon
Would keep from tears? And dewy Night e'en now
Is riding down the sky, the sinking stars
Persuade to sleep. Yet, if so strong thy wish [10]
To learn in brief our woes and Troy's last hour,
Although my memory shudders and recoils,
I will assay.

"War-shattered, foiled by Fate,
As the long years roll on, the Danaan chiefs,
By Pallas' sacred art, build mountain-high, [15]
Ribbed with sawn fir, a Horse; a votive gift
For safe return, they feign; so rumour spreads.
Men chosen by lot in its blind flanks are hid
In secret, and with armed soldiery
The monstrous cavern of its belly filled. [20]

"In sight lies Tenedos, an isle renowned
Widely, and rich while Priam's kingdom stood,
Now but a bay and faithless anchorage.
They, sailing thither, on the desert coast
Lie hid; but we suppose them on the wind [25]
For Argos bound. All Troy shakes off her grief;
The Gates are open thrown, the Doric Camp,
The shores forsaken, gaily visited.
Here the Dolopians pitched, Achilles here;
Here lay the ships, here was the battlefield. [30]
Some at that fatal gift to Pallas gape,
Amazed at the vast Horse. And loudest cried
Thymoetes, 'Draw it inward, to the Keep!'
Traitorous, or so Troy's Doom already swayed:

But Capys, and the men of wiser wit, [35]
Charged them to fling in sea that Danaan snare,
Suspicious gift, and burn it over flames,
Or bore and probe the hollow haunts within:
Contrary wishes rend the uncertain crowd.

"But foremost there, with a large concourse round, [40]
Down from the Keep Laocoon runs hot,
Calling, 'O Burghers! What sad frenzy is this?
Think ye our foes are fled, or that one gift
Of Greeks is guileless? Is it thus ye know
Ulysses? In this frame lie Argives hid, [45]
Or else this engine for our walls is built,
To spy our homes, and storm us from above.
Some fraud is there! O never trust the Horse!
Though Greeks bear offerings, I fear them still!

"So saying, with great force his mighty spear [50]
Against the flanks and belly of the beast
He hurled: it stood and quivered: at the impact
The cavern groaned; and had not Heaven's decree,
Had not our hearts been froward, on his charge
We had wrecked that Argive den, and thou, O Troy! [55]
O Towers of Priam! ye were standing now!

"But lo! the while with uproar to their King
Some Dardan hinds were dragging one fast bound
With hands behind him, who, unknown to them,
Himself had given to work this very deed, [60]
And open Troy to Greeks, one stout of heart,
Doubly prepared, to trick us or to die.
The Trojan crowd flow round from every side.
Eager to see, and vie in mocking him.
Hear now the Danaans' craft, and from one crime [65]
Learn all the breed.

"For, standing in our midst, confused, unarmed,
And looking round the Phrygian ranks, he spoke:

" 'Alas! What land, what sea can now receive
Me miserable? What last resort is left? [70]
No place for me with Greeks, and Dardans too
To satisfy their hate demand my blood!"

"His anguish turned our hearts, and all assault
Fell checked. We bid him tell us of his birth,

His news, the hope on which a prisoner leant. [75]
He, when his fear is banished, thus returns:

" 'All I will tell thee true, O King! whate'er
Befall me, nor mine Argive birth deny.
That first: if Fortune moulded Sinon's life
Joyless, the jade shall never shape him false! [80]
If haply to thine ears hath come the name
Of Palamedes and his high renown;
Whom, since he blamed the war, Greeks falsely charged,
On witness base doomed innocent to die,
And life-lorn now lament, — his friend was I, [85]
A kinsman of his House, when at my prime
My needy father sent me to the wars.
While he stood firm in place, and wielded power
In the Kings' councils, we bore something too
Of name and fame; but when Ulysses' grudge, — [90]
No news I tell, — had thrust him from the light,
In grief obscure I languished, sore at heart
Resenting my friend's fall; nor held my peace,
Infatuate! but I vowed, if Fate were kind,
If I regained my Greece a conqueror, [95]
To avenge him. Thus I stirred relentless hate.
Hence first my ruin sprang. Ulysses hence
Kept threatening slanders, and among the mean
Sowed rumours dark, and sought conspiring arms:
Nor rested, till by Calchas' aid — But why [100]
Recount the graceless tale? Why hold you back,
If Greeks rank all as one, and 'tis enough
That name to hear? Take vengeance now, and sate
Ulysses' hope, the Atridae's dearest wish!"

"At that we, strangers to Pelasgian guile [105]
And guilt so heinous, burn to ask his tale,
And trembling he proceeds with treacherous soul:

" 'Fain were the Danaans oft to make retreat
From Ilium, wearied of the endless war,
O would they had gone! As oft the storm-lashed sea [110]
Bound them on shore, and the rude South deterred.
And loudest when this Horse stood ready framed
With maple beams, all heaven with tempest roared.
And when in doubt to Phoebus' shrine we sent

Eurypylos, this sad response he brought: [115]
"With blood of maiden slain you calmed the gale,
When first, O Greeks, you came to Ilium's shore.
Seek now return with blood, and sacrifice
An Argive life!"

The message went abroad,
And dazed our wits, and through our marrow shot [120]
Cold shudders, who should be the victim doomed.

Ulysses then with clamor to our midst
Calchas, the Seer, drew, and charged to unfold
God's Will. —And many of that bad plot before
Warned me, and silently foresaw the end. — [125]

Ten days within his tent Calchas is dumb,
Denouncing none, condemning none to death;
At last to loud Ulysses by concert
Scarce breaks a word, and me to the altar dooms.
All gave assent, and on one victim's head [130]
Let fall the ruin each had feared his own.

"The dreadful day had come; my rites were set;
The salted meal, the bands about my brow:
I broke away from death, I burst my bonds,
I do confess it! and all night lay deep [135]
In darkling sedge, till haply they might sail.
And now no hope is mine to see my land,
Mine own sweet boys, my father dear-desired,
Who even for my escape may pay the cost,
And with their piteous blood my guilt atone! [140]
But O! by Heaven I pray thee! by the Powers
That reverence Truth! by Faith, if any Faith
Stays in the world unspotted, to such woe
Give pity, and to sufferings undeserved!"

"Life to his tears we grant, and pity too. [145]
And Priam first his manacles and bonds
Himself bids loose, and thus benignly speaks:
'Whoso thou art, henceforth forget the Greeks!
Ours thou shalt be! Now make me answer true.
This monster Horse, why built they? Who conceived? [150]
For what? what holy vow? what craft of war?'
He said; the other, in Pelasgian guile
Well-versed, to Heaven uplifts his unbound hands.

"Ye everlasting fires inviolable,
Be witness!' he exclaimed, 'O Shrines, O Knives [155]
From which I fled! O victim bands I wore!
'Tis right to break the oaths I swear to Greeks,
Right to abhor those men, and spread abroad
Whate'er they hide: nor do my country's laws
Bind me. But thou, keep faith, thy saviour save, [160]
If speaking truth, O Troy! I well repay.

"All hope, all heart the Greeks had in their war
Stood still on Pallas' aid; but since unjust
Tydides and Ulysses, rich in crimes,
From Pallas' holy fane her fateful Sign [165]
Adventuring to tear, the sentries slew,
Seized the pure image, and with bloody palms
Dared touch her maiden chaplets, — since that day
The hopes of Greece ebbed refluent, her strength
Broke, and the Goddess turned her heart away. [170]
No doubtful portents showed Tritonia wroth.
The Statue scarce in camp, a blaze of fire
Flashed from her lifted eyes, and o'er her limbs
Ran a salt sweat, and thrice, O wondrous tale!
With shield and shivering spear from earth she leapt! [175]
"Fly!" Calchas cried, "Fly back across the main!
Troy cannot fall, unless again you seek
In Greece new omens, and bring back the grace
Which once was seated on your seaward keels!"
So now they run toward Argos on the wind [180]
For arms and Gods; and soon remeasuring sea,
Will front you unawares. So taught the Seer:
And on his charge this image they have built
For outraged Pallas, to atone their sin.
This mass immeasurable he bade them rear [185]
With oaken beams, and build it up to heaven,
So that it might not pass within your gates,
And under old religion succour Troy.
For if your hand profaned the Goddess' gift,
Ruin and death, he said,— God sooner turn [190]
The curse on him! —would fall on Priam's realm;
But if your hands should draw it up to Troy,
Asia herself should bring a world of war
On Pelops' town, and Doom await our sons.'

"Such lying tales, by Sinon's glozing art, [195]
Gained credence, and a traitor's tears entrapped
Whom not Tydides, not Achilles' self,
Not ten years mastered, nor a thousand ships.

"Now fell on us accurst a greater woe,
More dreadful far, confusing our blind wit. [200]
Laocoon, Neptune's allotted Priest,
Stood by his shrine, to sacrifice a bull:
When lo! from Tenedos, o'er tranquil sea, —
I shudder to recall! —with endless coils
Two Serpents pressed together toward the shore. [205]
Their bosoms rose above the wave, their crests
Blood-red o'er-topped the surge; their hinder parts
Trailed on the flood in mighty sinuous folds,
And lashed the roaring brine. They reach our fields,
Their blazing eyes suffused with blood and fire, [210]
And with lithe tongues beslaver mouths that hiss.
Pale at the sight we flee. Unswerving still,
They near Laocoon; and first enfold,
In snaky coiled embrace, the tiny limbs
Of his two sons, and gnaw their piteous flesh. [215]
Him then with weapons running to their aid
They seize, and swathe him in huge spires, and twice
Fold in their scales his waist, and twice his throat,
And lift above him head and towering necks.
He strains his hands the while to burst those knots, [220]
His chaplets sprent with gore and venom black,
And with such roars of anguish fills the sky
As when a wounded bull shakes from his neck
The uncertain axe, and from the altar flees.
But those twain snakes to the high fanes glide off [225]
On stern Tritonia's mount, and shelter there
Beneath the Goddess' feet and orb'd shield.

"Fresh terror then through every shuddering heart
Creeps, and men say Laocoon hath paid
Due forfeit for his crime, who impious hurled [230]
Against that sacred oak his guilty spear.

" 'Draw the dread Image home!' so all out-cry,
'Sue we the Goddess' grace!
We cleave the walls, we lay the fortress bare.

All speed the work; and lay the rolling wheels [235]
Beneath its feet, and ropes around its neck
Draw tight. The doomful engine, big with arms,
Surmounts our wall. Boys and unwedded girls
Chant hymns around, and touch the rope with glee.
It comes; it glides into the city's heart! [240]
O Fatherland! O Ilium, home of Gods!
O war-famed walls of Troy! Four times it stopped
Even at the gate, four times the arms within
Clashed, yet we urge it, blind, ill-memoried men!
And store the monster in our hallowed [245]
Keep. Cassandra e'en then her boding lips unclosed, —
Those lips which Heaven forbade us to believe.
We miserable men on our last day
Went wreathing all our fanes with festal green.

"The sky wheels round, and from the sea springs Night, [250]
In her great umbrage wrapping earth and sky
And Argive fraud. We through the town lay stretched
Silent, while slumber folded the worn flesh.
And now from Tenedos the Greek array
Came sailing through the moonlight's friendly hush, [255]
And neared the well-known strand, when the King's ship
Uplifted flames. Then, by Fate's malice saved,
Sinon by stealth undoes the wooden door,
And frees the captive Greeks. Them the opened Horse
Restores. Thessander first and Sthenelus, [260]
With dire Ulysses, from the hollow oak
Slide down a rope: then Thoas, Acamas,
Machaon, Menelaus, Peleus' seed,
And he who forged the snare, Epeus' self.
They seize the city, plunged in sleep and wine, [265]
And slay the watch; through open gates admit
All their allies, and join colleagu'ing bands.

"It was the hour when first o'er suffering men
Slumber, the boon of Heaven, most sweetly steals;
When lo! in dreams before mine eyes appeared [270]
Hector in anguish, shedding floods of tears;
Torn by the car, as once, with dust and blood
Blackened, his swollen feet pierced through by thongs.
O in what guise he was! O how unlike
Hector returning in Achilles' spoils, [275]

Or on Greek ships from launching Phrygian fire!
A squalid beard he wore, blood-boltered hair,
And all the wounds which round his native walls
So thickly scarred him. Weeping too methought
I first addressed him, drawing thus my moan: [280]

" 'O Light of Dardans! Surest Hope of Troy!
What kept thee hence so long? Whence art thou come,
Dear-hoped-for Hector? O for us outworn
After thy people's deaths and all our pain,
To see thee now! What shamelessness hath marred [285]
Thy happy visage? O what scars are these?"

"He nought replies, nor heeds my idle speech,
But, sighing deeply from the inmost heart,
'Fly, Goddess-born!' he says, 'Escape these flames!
Foes hold the wall. Down falls the pride of Troy! [290]
Enough for King and Country! If man's arm
Had power to save, they had been saved by mine!
Troy gives to thee in charge her sacred Gods;
These take to share thy doom; for these at last
Build great thy walls across the o'erwandered main! [295]
He ceased, and from the holy place brought out
Vesta, her chaplets and undying fire.

"Meanwhile confusion through the city spreads:
Loud and more loud, though far-withdrawn the house
My sire Anchises owned and deep in trees, [300]
The clamor rose, and shuddering strife drew near.

I start from sleep; I climb the topmost roof,
And stand with straining ears. As when a fire
Falls on a cornfield from the raging South;
Or when a mountain torrent drowns the land, [305]
Drowns happy crops, and all the oxen's toil,
And headlong sweeps the trees; amazed and dumb,
From some tall rock, a shepherd hears the roar.

Then truth shone clear; bare lay the guile of Greeks!
O'ertopped by flames, Deiphobus' great house [310]
Falls, and beside it burns Ucalegon.
The broad Sigeon frith reflects the blaze.

Up rise the shouts of men, the trumpets' blare.
Madly I seize my arms, in arms not less
Unpurposed, hot at heart to muster friends, [315]

And seize the Keep. Wild anger thrusts me on,
And bright before me gleams a soldier's death.

"But Panthus lo! escaped from Argive spears,
Priest of the Keep and Phoebus, Othrys' son,
Clasping his little grandson and his dear [320]
Defeated Gods, flew to my door distraught.

" 'Panthus, how goes the day? What fort is held?'
Scarce had I asked when groaning he replied:

""Tis the last day, the inevitable hour!
Trojans we are not, Troy is past, and all [325]
That glory gone. To Argos cruel Jove
Takes all. O'er the fired city Danaans rule;
High in our midst the Horse stands pouring out
Armed men; victorious Sinon, hurling fire,
Insults us. Some are at the wide-flung Gates, [330]
As many thousands as from Greece e'er came, —
Some stand to arms across the narrow ways
To bar them: edge and glittering point of steel
Stand drawn, for slaughter ripe: scarce at the Gates
Our Guards give battle, and in blind strife resist!' [335]

"Such words of Panthus, and the Will of Heaven
Mid flames and weapons drive me, where the roar
The rising shouts and the grim Fury call.
Then through the moonlight, prowest Epytus,
Rhipheus and Hypanis with Dymas came, [340]
Who rallied to our side,— with Mygdon's son,
Coroebus, who at such a time to Troy
Coming, with wild love for Cassandra fired,
Brought a son's aid to Priam and his town, —
Unhappy that the bodings of his bride [345]
He would not hear!

"Them when I saw for battle ranked and bold,
Thus I began: 'O Sirs! O hearts in vain
Most valiant! If your will be strong to join
A desperate venture, how things are ye see; [350]
The Gods, through whom we stood, from fane and shrine
Departed all; a burning town to save;
To death! and charge with me on serried arms!
One chance the conquered have, to hope for none!"

"Therewith their rage waxed fiercer, and like wolves, [355]
Raiding in darkness, whom the belly's lust
Drives blindly forwards, and their whelps at home
Wait with dry jaws; so we through foes, through steel,
Make for sure death, and to the city's midst
Press on. Around us hover night and gloom. [360]

"Of that night's work who could the tale unfold,
Or weep a tear for every murder done?
An ancient city falls, that long held sway.
In streets, in houses, at the Gods' own doors,
Lie unresisting bodies everywhere Thick-strewn. [365]
Not Trojans only pay their blood;
Oft to the conquered too manhood returns,
And the Greek conquerors fall. On every side
Panic and woe, and Death's wide-looming shade.

"There first of Greeks, among a goodly troop, [370]
Androgeus met us, and our ranks unknown
Misdeeming friendly, thus bespoke us fair:
'Haste, men: what sloth hath kept you back so long?
The rest have fired and pillage Troy, but you
From the tall ships come hither only now!' [375]

"He spoke, and instant, — for our answer won
No credence, — knew him fallen amidst his foes.
Amazed he started, checking voice and foot.
As when one toiling through a copse of briers,
Treads on a snake unseen, and shuddering shrinks [380]
From the blue neck puffed out, and rising hate;
So, scared at us, Androgeus turned to flee.
We charge; we gird them with a hedge of steel,
And strew them broadcast, strangers to the ground,
And panic-struck. Fate speeds our first assay. [385]
Then, flushed by victory, bold Coroebus cries:
'Come, follow, friends, where Fortune early points
The way to safety, where she shows us grace!
Shields let us change, and gird Greek harness on.
Courage or craft, who ask which foemen use?
They, they shall arm us!'

Saying thus, he dons [390]
Androgeus' plummy helm, and blazoned targe,
And fastens to his side an Argive brand.

Rhipeus and Dymas, all the troop, with glee
Do likewise, arming from our spoils new-won. [395]

"Mingling with Greeks, by favour not our own,
Through the blind night we press, in many a fray
Closing, and many a Greek to Orcus send.
Some to the ships escape, and running seek
The trusty shore: some in base panic climb [400]
The Horse, and hide in that familiar vault.

"Against God's Will, alas! all faith is vain!
Lo! Priam's daughter with dishevelled hair,
Cassandra, dragged from Pallas' sacred shrines,
Vainly to heaven uplifts her burning eyes, — [405]
Her eyes, for bonds her tender hands restrain.
That sight Coroebus bore not, mad with rage,
But flung himself amid the deep array,
Death-doomed. We follow, close our ranks, and charge.
But Trojan missiles from the temple's roof [410]
O'erwhelm us now: a wretched carnage springs
From our arms' fashion, our mistaken plumes.
With yells and anger for the rescued maid,
Greeks from all sides attack us, Ajax keen, [415]
Atreus' two sons, all the Dolopian host.

As, when a whirlwind breaks, South Wind and West,
And Eurus, with his orient coursers proud,
Conflicting shock: the forest roars; the sea
Neptune with savage trident stirs to foam.
They too, if any in the dark of night [420]
Our craft surprised, and routed through the town,
Show themselves now; our shields and cozening arms
At once they know, and mark our uncouth tongue.
Numbers o'erwhelm us, and Coroebus first
Before the War-Maid's altar, by the hand [425]
Of Peneus falls dead; and Rhipeus falls,

Our purest, and of honour most compact,—
The Gods gainsaid! — Dymas and Hypanis
Die, pierced by friends, nor all thy piety
Could save thee, Panthus, nor Apollo's crown! [430]

"O Ilian ashes! Death-flames of my kin!
Be witness, that I shunned not at your fall
Greek spear or perilous warfare; that my hand

Earned death, had death been doomed! But sundered thence
With Pelias and with Iphitus I pass, — [435]
One Age retards, and one Ulysses' wound, —
Where calls the clamour, straight to Priam's house.

"Here found we battle fierce, as though no fray
Elsewhere, no other carnage filled the town;
War to the death, our very roofs assailed, [440]
And to beleaguered doors the Tortoise driven.
Their ladders hug the walls; they storm the Gate;
And with their left hand to our shafts oppose
Shields, while they grasp the coping with their right.
From tower and roof the Dardans pluck defence; [445]
And, since Death meets their gaze, prepare to wield
In that last hour such missiles; gilded beams,
The stately splendours of their ancient sires,
Roll downward. Some behind the doors below
Stand with drawn blades, and guard them, closely ranked. [450]
Our spirit rose to save this House of Kings,
To help such men oppressed, and swell their force!

"A door there was, a way through Priam's house
To every room, a blind deserted gate
Rearward, whereby, while Ilium's kingdom stood, [455]
Oft unattended to her husband's kin
Came sad Andromache, and brought his boy.
Hence to the roof I pass, from whose high top
Despairing Trojans cast their bootless spears.

"High toward the stars up-built on the sheer brink [460]
A turret stood, from whence they used to scan
Troy, and the Achaean camp, and Danaan ships.
This we assailed with iron, where loose it joined
The roofs high floor, and wrenched it from the base,
And forced it forth. With sudden fall it bore [465]
A crushing ruin down, which smote the Greeks
Wide-spread: yet more come up, nor stones the while,
Nor any missiles cease.

"Lo! Pyrrhus at the Gate, who proudly flashed
Before the porch in arms of brazen sheen; [470]
Most like an adder, crammed with evil herbs,
In wintry earth long hidden, puff'd and cold,
Who throws his weeds, and, sleek with youth, involves

His slippery length to day, and rears his breast
Tall to the sun, and darts his triple tongue. [475]
With him huge Periphas, Automedon,
Who drove Achilles' steeds, and Scyrian hosts
All made the roof at once, up-hurling fire.

"But Pyrrhus 'mongst the first with two-edged axe
The portals rent, and from their hinges tore [480]
The brass-bound doors, hewed out a plank, and made,
Breaching the solid oak, a yawning gap.
The house lies open, the long halls revealed,
Priam's own chambers, chambers of dead Kings
Revealed, and warriors in the doorway massed. [485]

"But in the house lament and woeful din
Confusedly rise: the vaulted mansions wail
With women's sobs, and clamour mounts the sky.
Through the vast house mothers run to and fro,
And hug the doors, and kiss them, wild with fear. [490]
Fierce as his father, Pyrrhus presses on;
Nor bolts nor men may hold him. Doors give way
Beneath his frequent ram, and fall unhinged.
Force finds a road. The Danaans swarming in,
Slay those in front, and fill the house with troops. [495]
Not so enraged a river bursts in foam
O'er dyke and dam, and plunges on the fields,
And sweeps o'er champaign wide both flocks and folds.
I saw the ravening Pyrrhus there; I saw
The Atridae in the Gate, and Hecuba [500]
Beside her hundred daughters, and the King,
Staining with blood the flames himself had blest.
The fifty bowers that promised fruit so fair,
Doors proud with plunder and barbaric gold,
In ruin fell. Greeks take what fire hath left. [505]

"Thou askest me perchance of Priam's fate.
He, when he saw the captured city's fall,
His doors wrenched off, the foe within his home,
Old as he was, his long disused arms
Threw on his feeble back, his useless sword [510]
Girt on, and went to die among his foes.

"Amidst the house, beneath the naked sky,
Stood a great altar, and a time-worn bay

Leant over, and the House-gods wrapped in shade.
Here, round the barren shrine, sat Hecuba [515]
And all her daughters, huddled up like doves
In the black tempest, clinging to their Gods.

But when she saw her lord in arms of youth,
'Unhappy spouse! what madness makes thee take
Those arms,' she cried, 'or whither would'st thou go? [520]
Not such the aid, nor such defence the times
Require, not were my Hector here himself.

Draw here at last: this shrine will save us all,
Or thou shalt die with us.' And by her side
She placed the age-worn King in holy seat. [525]

"But lo! Polites, one of Priam's sons,
Flying from Pyrrhus' sword, through foes, through spears,
Down the long corridors and vacant halls
Runs wounded. Pyrrhus, burning on the stroke,
Chases, and grasps, and threats him with the spear; [530]
Till, just emerging in his parents' sight,
He fell, and shed his life in streaming blood.
Then Priam, though with death now compassed round,
Withheld not, nor his voice or anger spared.

" 'For such a crime,' he cries, 'for such a feat, [535]
May Heaven, if Pity dwell in Heaven to mark
Such deeds, requite thee well, and give the meed
Thou earnest, who before mine eyes hast slain
My son, and marred his father's sight with death.

Not thus Achilles, whom thou feign'st thy sire, [540]
Dealt with his foeman Priam; he revered
The suppliant's plea, and to the tomb restored
Hector's cold corpse, and sent me home to Troy.'
He spake; and hurled his weak unwarlike spear,
Which, straight recoiling from the raucous bronze, [545]
Hung idly from the buckler's central boss.

"Then Pyrrhus: Thou shalt go then with the news
To Peleus' son, my sire! Tell him, be sure,
The wicked deeds of his degenerate son!
Now die! So saying, to the very shrine [550]
He dragged him trembling, slipping in the blood
Of his own son, and held his hair, and flashed
The blade, and hid it in his side hilt-deep.

"So ended Priam's day: such doom he met,
Seeing his Troy in flames, and all her towers [555]
Down-cast; once Lord of lands and peoples wide,
Regent of Asia. Now a mighty trunk
Lies headless on the shore, a corpse unnamed.

"Then first wild fear embraced me, and I stood
Awe-struck. The form of my dear father rose [560]
Before me, as I watched that King like-aged
Pant out his life. I saw Creusa left,
My house destroyed, the peril of my boy.
With backward glance I sum the force around.
All wearied out have flagged, and on the ground [565]
Tumbled, or aching dropt into the flames.

"Now I alone was left; when, by the shrine
Of Vesta crouched, silent and close, I saw
Tyndareus' daughter, for the fires shone bright
As to and fro I passed, surveying all.
She, Trojans' hatred for their towers o'erthrown, [570]
The Greeks' revenge, her long-left husband's wrath
Fore-dreading, — common Fury of Greece and Troy!--
Had hidden, and by the altar lurked unseen.

"My heart burned hot: wrath spurred me to avenge
My falling land, and take the price of sin. [575]
Was she to look on Sparta and her land
Unscathed, and in her triumph walk a Queen,
With Trojan maids in train, and Phrygian boys,
And see her wedded home, her sons, her kin?
Had Priam died for this, and Troy been burned, [580]
And Dardan blood so often poured like sweat?
Not so. For though no memorable name
Springs from a woman's death, no victor's palm,
Yet to quench evil, and repay desert
Shall bring me praise. O sweet to glut my soul [585]
With vengeful fire, and sate my slaughtered kin!

"So raving, I advanced with furious heart;
When in my sight, not seen before so clear,
And in pure radiance gleaming through the dark,
A very Goddess, in such mien, such state [590]
As Gods behold, my gracious mother came.
She caught my hand, her rosy lips unclosed:

'Son, what great anguish stirs thy lawless wrath?
 Whence is this rage? Where lurks thy love for me?
 Wilt thou not rather see where, worn with age, [595]
 Thou hast left Anchises? if Creusa lives,
 And young lulus? All the Grecian hosts
 About them range; and, did my care not shield,
 Flames and the hostile blade had swept them off.
 Not Helen's hateful beauty thou must blame, [600]
 Nor Paris: 'tis the Gods, the severe Gods,
 Who wreck this wealth, and raze the pride of Troy.
 Look! for the cloud which dims thy mortal sight
 With mist and darkness, I will take away; —
 Whate'er thy mother bids thee, have no fear, [605]
 Nor disobey her counsels. Where thou see'st
 Yon mighty blocks uptorn, stone rent from stone,
 And eddying up together smoke and dust,
 Neptune is shaking with his trident huge
 The walls' foundations, and uprooting all [610]
 The City. Here most awful Juno holds,
 Steel-girt, the Scaean Gate, and her allies
 Calls from their ships with rage.
 And lo! Tritonia on the topmost towers
 Stands with her lurid cloud and Gorgon dread! [615]
 Courage and strength to Greeks the Sire himself
 Gives; He himself stirs Heaven to cope with Troy.
 Flee hence, my son, and give thy travail pause.
 Ne'er absent, I will guide thee safely home.'
 She spoke; and hid herself in darkest night. [620]
 Dread Shapes appear, and, warring against Troy,
 The mighty Hosts of Heaven.

"Then all the city seemed to sink in flame,
 And Neptune's Troy, uprooted from its base,
 Fell, like some world-old ash-tree on the hills [625]
 Smitten with steel, which woodmen try to fell
 With frequent hatchets: still it threatens long,
 And nods the tresses on its trembling head,
 Till, overcome with wounds, with one last groan
 Torn from its ridge, it drags a ruin low. [630]

"Down, Goddess-led, I haste, through foes, through fire.
 The spears give passage, and the flames recede.

"But when my home was reached, our ancient house,
 My father, whom I first desired to bear
 High up the hills, and whom I first approached, [635]
 Refused, since Troy was shattered, to prolong
 His days in exile, Ye, O ye whose blood
 Runs fresh,' he cried, 'in your own vigor strong,
 Turn ye to flight!

If the high Gods had willed that I should live, [640]
 They would have spared my home. Enough and more
 One sack to see, one conquered town survive!
 Here, here my corpse is laid; bid that farewell!
 Death mine own hand will find. The pitying foe
 Will spoil me soon; a tomb is little loss. [645]
 A weary while I linger, banned by Heaven,
 Useless, since me Heaven's Sire, and all men's King
 Swept with his thunder's blast, and smote with fire!

"So he kept prating, and unshaken stayed.
 With tears we plead, my wife, my little son, [650]
 And all our house, that he involve not all
 In ruin, nor press on the insistent doom.
 Still he says nay, not changing mind nor place.

"Back to the fight I rush, and choose to die,
 Most wretched! for what plan, what chance remained? [655]
 I to escape, O Father! and to leave
 Thee! Fell such slander from a parent's tongue?
 If the Gods will that nought be left of Troy,
 And thou art firm, and wilt to wreck so large
 Add thee and thine, Death's door will gape anon, [660]
 When Pyrrhus comes, who sheds the father's blood
 Before the shrine, the son's before his sire.
 Was it for this, sweet Mother, me through shafts,
 Through flames thou barest, in the heart of home
 To see my foes, to see my son, my sire, [665]
 My wife, all butchered in each other's blood?
 Arms, men, bring arms! Death calls the conquered on!
 Give me again to Greeks! Let me renew
 Battle! Not all shall perish unavenged!

"I gird the steel again, and my left arm [670]
 Strap to the targe, and step beyond my house:
 But on the theshold lo! my wife embraced

My feet, and to his father held my boy.
'If death thou seekest, bear us with thee too!
But if, well-tryed, thou hast some hope in arms, [675]
Shield first this house! To whom shall we be left,
Thy son, thy sire, and I, once called thy wife?'

"Loudly she cried, and filled the house with moans:
When suddenly a wondrous Sign uprose.
For lo! between his parents' arms and lips [680]
Above lulus' head there seemed to glow
A thin peaked light, a harmless flame, that played
About his wavy locks, and licked his brow.

With fear we trembled, and the burning hair
Shook, and with water quenched the holy flames: [685]
But old Anchises to the stars upturns
Joyful his eyes, to Heaven lifts hand and voice.
'Almighty! If any prayers bend thy Will,
Look on us, only look! If worth deserve,
O give us help! Confirm this augury!' [690]

"Scarce had the old man said, when on the left
Thunder outcrashed, and, sliding from its sphere,
A Star shot through the darkness, trailing light.
Above our palace roof we saw it glide,
And bury its splendour in dark Ida's woods, [695]
Marking a path: the long-drawn furrow glows,
And widely spreads around a sulphury fume.
Then vanquished quite my father rose erect,
Worshipped the holy Star, and prayed to Heaven.

" 'No more delay. I follow where you lead. [700]
Save, Guardian Gods! my house; my grandson save!
Yours is this omen; in your hand is Troy!
I yield; to go with thee I not refuse!
He ceased; and now more loud the fire is heard,
More near the conflagration rolls its heat. [705]

" 'Then come, dear Father! rest upon my neck;
My shoulders shall sustain thine easy load.
Whate'er befall, one peril there shall be,
One safety for us twain. With me my son
Shall walk; my wife shall follow far behind. [710]
Ye servants, heed my words. A mound there is
Beyond the city Gate, an ancient fane

Of lonely Ceres, and a cypress nigh,
Saved through long years by reverential awe.
To this one spot from divers let us come. [715]
Thou, Father, take our holy Gods of Home.
For me, fresh come from battle and from blood,
'Tis sin to touch them, till in living streams
I wash me clean.'

"Then over my broad shoulders and bent neck [720]
A cloak I spread, a tawny lion's hide,
And lift my load. lulus clasps my hand,
And follows with small steps his father's stride.
My wife comes after. Dusky ways we tread;
And I, whom late not any shafts dismayed, [725]
Not any Greeks in adverse battle ranged,
Now fear each breeze, and start at every sound,
Trembling for both, my burden and my boy.

"Now, drawing near the Gates, I deemed my way
All traversed, when a sound of many feet [730]
Springs on our ears, and, peering through the gloom,
My father cries, 'Fly, fly! my son, they come!
The gleam of brass I see, and glowing shields.'

"Then in my fear some deity unkind
Stole my distracted wit; for while I tread [735]
By-ways, and leave the street's familiar round,
Alas! my wife Creusa, rapt by Fate,
Or stopped, or lost the way, or sank foredone,
Uncertain which, ne'er to my sight restored.

Nor looks for her thus lost nor thoughts I bent, [740]
Ere to the mound we came and hallowed seat
Of ancient Ceres. Here, when all were met,
She only lacked, and failed both son and spouse.
What man, what God did not my fury accuse?
What sight more cruel was in all Troy's sack? [745]

My son, my sire, my Trojan Gods of Home,
Hid in a winding glen, I trust to friends,
The town regain, and don my shining arms;
Firm to renew each risk, and through all Troy
Returning, thrust my head on peril again. [750]

"The walls and dusky portals whence I passed
First I regain, and follow through the night

My foot-prints back, and with close eye peruse.
Dread fills my heart; the very silence daunts.
Thence home I turn, if haply there she tread, [755]
If there! The Greek invader fills the house.
The hungry fire is rolling up the roof
Wind-swept; the flames leap up and roar to heaven.

"Again I pass to Priam's towered seat.
In the void cloisters, Juno's sanctuary, [760]
Phoenix and dire Ulysses, chosen guards,
Watch o'er the spoil. There Trojan treasures, torn
From blazing shrines, and tables of the Gods,
Bowls of pure gold, and captive vestments lie
Promiscuous heaped. Around, in long array, [765]
Stand boys and trembling mothers.

"Nay more: I dared to pierce the night with cries,
Filling the streets with noise; and vainly again,
Again redoubling, called Creusa's name.
Thus storming as I ranged, in ceaseless quest, [770]
A Phantom sad, mine own Creusa's Shade,
Rose to my sight, greater than her I knew.
Spell-bound, my hair uprose, my tongue was tied.
She spake, and with these words dispelled my care:

" 'Why wilt thou yield thee to such frenzied woe, [775]
Sweet Husband? Not without the Will of Gods
It happens thus. To bear me hence with thee
Fate not permits thee, nor Olympus' Lord.

Long exile shall be thine, vast seas to plough,
And thou shalt reach Hesperia, where by tith [780]
And wealth of men smooth-sliding Tiber flows.
There joy and kingship and a royal wife

Are thine. For dear Creusa weep no more.
I shall not see the Myrmidons' proud seats,
Nor go to dwell a slave for Grecian wives, [785]
I of the Dardans, wife of Venus' son!
Nay; me the mighty Mother of the Gods
Here keeps. Farewell! Love still thy son and mine!

"Thus when she had said, into thin air diffused,
She left me weeping, fain to tell her much. [790]
Thrice round her neck I tried to throw my arms:
Thrice fled the Vision from my empty grasp,

As light as wind, and like a flying dream.

"So night was spent, and I rejoined my friends;
And wondering there a mighty host I find [795]
Of comrades streaming fresh, mothers and men
For exile thronged, a piteous group, who met
From every quarter, ready to embark
Their hearts and fortunes for what lands I chose.

"And now the Day Star rose o'er Ida's crest, [800]
Leading the morn; and still the Danaans held
The leaguered gates: no hope of help was given.
I turned; I raised my sire, and sought the hills."

Book III

"WHEN ASIA'S WEAL and Priam's guiltless race
The Immortals doomed to ruin, and proud Troy
Falls, and all Neptune's city smokes in dust,
To banishment remote and lands forlorn
Gods' voices call us; and in Ida's shade, [5]
Beneath Antandros' wall, we build a fleet;
Uncertain to what bourne our fates will lead,
And muster men. When summer scarce had sprung,
And oft my sire bade spread our sails to Fate,
I left my land with tears, I left the plain [10]
That once was Troy, to sail the homeless seas,
With friends and son, with Troy's great Gods and mine.

"Far off, in Mavors' land, the Thracians plough
Their vasty plains, where erst Lycurgus reigned;
To Troy once friendly, and our Gods allied, [15]
Ere Fortune fled. There landing, on the bay,
With fates unkind, my earliest town I trace,
And name it from my name *Aeneadae*.

"Oblations to my mother and the Gods,
To bless our works, I paid; and to Heaven's King [20]
A shining bull would slay. A mound was nigh,

Whereon grew dogwood bushes, and dense spears
Of prickly myrtle. Drawing near, I strove
To crop the leafy wood, and wreath with green
Our altars, when behold! an awful sign, [25]
Wondrous to tell! for from the uprooted stem
Which first I tore from earth, black drops of blood
Gushed forth, and stained the soil. Cold horror shook
My limbs; fear froze my blood. Yet once again
Out of another tree, I sought to tear [30]
A stubborn shoot, and probe the hidden cause.
Black from that other bark forth issued blood.

"Deep pondering, I prayed the Woodland Nymphs,
I prayed Gradivus, Lord of Getic fields,
To bless that portent, and all harm remove. [35]
But when with greater effort, 'gainst the sand
Pressing my knees, a third green spear I seize —
O shall I speak, or hold my peace? — a moan
Deep in the mound is heard, a tearful moan,
And a voice meets my ears: 'Why dost thou rend [40]
A wretched man, Aeneas? Spare my grave;
Spare to pollute pure hands. Not strange to thee
Troy bore me; no strange blood is oozing here;
Fly, fly this cruel land, this greedy shore!
For I am Polydorus. Here the steel, [45]
Sown in my flesh, hath sprouted into spears.'

"Then doubt and dread oppressed me, and I stood
Spell-bound; my hair uprose, my tongue was tied.
This Polydorus with a weight of gold [50]
Once sad-starred Priam sent in secret charge
To Thracia's Prince, mistrusting Dardan arms,
Seeing his walls girt close. When Troy was crushed,
And Fortune ebbed, to Agamemnon's arms
Turning in victory's wake, the Prince breaks through
All law, slays Polydorus, and the gold [55]
Grasps. To what acts thou drivest mortal men,
Thou impious greed of gold! When fear had fled,
To all our chiefest lords, my sire the first,
These portents I disclose, and ask their will.
One mind have all, to quit that guilty land, [60]
Leave treason's home, and give our barks the breeze.
So funeral rites we pay, earth high the mound,

