

THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE ODYSSEY.

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IN the first half of this century a keen controversy was alive in the classical schools concerning the composition of the *Iliad*. It was assumed that the author did not possess the art and materials of writing; and out of certain marked peculiarities of the work it was deduced that it had been enlarged by a succession of poets. Theory after theory was advanced; of which the last perhaps is that of Grote, that it was an *Achilleid* before it became an *Iliad*. But the portions called new are in uniform style with the old, and have poetry as splendid. If anything be denoted, it is successive editions with enlargement by the original poet. Only in the later books, and possibly in the gossiping speech of Nestor in the eleventh book (where ninety-eight lines may with great advantage to the poem be wholly omitted),¹ small diversities of phraseology are observed, which suggest that the last book especially may have come down less perfect, and may have been completed by the editor with many considerable freedoms. But as a whole it is essential to the poem. We may thus say, that the controversy has ended in a substantial acknowledgment of the unity of the *Iliad*. The assumption that the author did not possess the means of writing down his poem was unproved, improbable, and a mere gratuitous invention of difficulty.

In the course of this searching discussion, the *Odyssey* was in comparison neglected. Those who favoured the unity of the *Iliad*

appear generally to have received as of course a belief that the same poet composed both epics, and Mr. Mure elaborately maintains that so it was. Hence it is not at all superfluous to go into the question. Ancient opinion here cannot justly be allowed weight on that side. The ancients accepted as the work of one poet nearly all that is printed in our editions with the great epics, besides some lost poems. If we give no authority to Herodotus, when he refers to the Cyprian Epic as Homer's, to Thucydides when he quotes the Delian Hymn, or to Aristotle in quoting from the *Margites*, we cannot reasonably give weight to current opinion concerning the *Odyssey*. If anyone ask, 'Is it *certain* then that the ancients were wrong in ascribing the Hymns to the poet of the *Iliad*?' it here suffices to reply, that no competent modern scholar can believe it. Yet it may be a satisfaction to an English reader, if we refer in illustration to a phenomenon of the Hymn to Mars (*Ares*). Mars in the *Iliad* is the type of barbarous, ignorant, brutal war; no moral element is found in him: Jupiter insults him in his misfortunes, for he is always beaten. Now contrast the Homeric Hymn to Mars. He is called, 'the Ally of Justice, the Leader of most just men,' and is identified with the planet Mars in very elegant lines, which denote a progress in astronomy far beyond Homer. The poet implores him 'to instil from on high a *mild radiance* and brave hardihood into our life,

¹ From xi. 664 to xi. 761. *Ἀντὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς* repeated will then mark the limits of interpolation. Another monstrous passage will not be missed, if omitted, viz. xx. 204-255. It is spoken while Achilles is in lion-like frenzy, xx. 164-173. Perhaps Horace's remark of 'good Homer nodding' was based on these two passages. In the latter, the anomalous verb *ἀνηρείψατο* may offend a reader of the *Iliad*. It occurs four times in the *Odyssey*.

that we may be able to *restrain* the sharp force of anger from irritating us into a path of dismal battle.' 'Do thou, O Blessed One! give us confidence to abide in the harmless ordinances of Peace, escaping the turmoil of enemies and violent deaths.' Such an address to the God of Battles appears altogether an anachronism in Pagan Greece. A Thales rather than a Homer might be the writer. No doubt it was the poetical merit of these Hymns, and their general style and metre, which made them pass as Homeric, *before criticism was born*. The belief that all the chief poems were from one author was sucked in with the mother's milk, and became a sort of religious creed, accepted as uninquiringly as the ascription of all the Hebrew Psalms to David. The Hymns with all their merit show a tendency to degenerate into rhetorical ingenuity, by amassing long strings of descriptive epithets, such as the power of the Greek language facilitates. Thus they form a transition to the Orphic poems, which remind one of Catholic glorifications of the Virgin. Many of the Hymns have local allusions, which show that they are written after the Greek colonisation of the coast of Asia. It is the more remarkable that Thucydides did not see that the Hymn to Delian Apollo, indeed the very passage which he quotes, could not possibly be from the author of the *Iliad*. It is from that hymn that the belief arose that the *Iliad* was composed by 'a blind man living in Chios.' Nevertheless, as a well-known couplet says,

Seven mighty towns contend for Homer
dead,
In which the living Homer begged his
bread;

which does but express the fact, that there were many poets concealed under the single name Homer. For us, therefore, the question whether the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were written by the same poet, is

wholly unprejudiced by any opinions of antiquity.

The first question, then, which presents itself to the student is, 'Does the poet himself, in continuing the tale of the *Iliad*, profess to continue *his own work*?' We may almost reply, *On the contrary*, his opening invocation to the Muse implies that he is *not* the same poet; for in the closing line he says, 'Of these topics, O goddess daughter of Jove, tell to us *also*, from some source or other.' The phrase to us also has only one natural interpretation; viz. 'as to the poet of the *Iliad* who invoked thee, *so also* to us.' The somewhat prosaic phrase, 'from some quarter or other' (*ἀπόθεν γε*) is unknown to the *Iliad*, and is called by the grammarians Attic. The young student, well acquainted with the *Iliad* alone, who enters the *Odyssey*, is soon struck and embarrassed by new words, even when things are not new. We should plunge into an immense sea of verbal criticism, if we tried at all duly to develop the contrast; yet it is expedient at once to remark on some words which surprise a learner. He finds in the *Odyssey* εἶρω, I say; φάω, say thou; φάε, it shone; φάεα, eyes, as in Latin poets *lumina*; κάλλιμος, fair, fine, for καλός; ἄεσε, ἄσε, he slept; βρώμη, food; ζώη, victuals; αὐτόδιον, for αὐτίκα, instantly; ἐπηεανός, plentiful; ἀποφώλιος (for ἀνωφελής?), useless, abortive; ἀδενκής, unpleasant; τηήσιος (for ἐτώσιος?), vain, empty; ἐπεσχε, he attacked; λυκάβας, a year; οἶμη, a tune; εἶμερος, slavery; ἐπηγύς, courtesy; ἄρος, a loaf; οὔλος for ὄλος, whole; οὐλή for ὠτειλή, scar, wound; οὔλε, *salve!* hail! [though οὔλος is also *ghastly*, and curly (hair)]; ἀκήριος for ἀκήρατος, unharmed, while in the *Iliad* ἀκήριος is heartless, cowardly. Besides, there is a vast addition to the development of the language. It cannot be by accident that in the *Odyssey*, as in later Greek, κόρη

means an oar, while in the *Iliad* it is only a handle, and is never said of an oar. Into syntactical peculiarities we cannot enter. It suffices at this point of the argument to say, that *primâ facie* we seem in the very language to encounter marks of a different poet.

But the new poet borrows immensely from the material of the old, with whose works he evidently had a very familiar acquaintance. This borrowing has been most strangely advanced by Mure as proof of the unity; whereas justly viewed, it is a signal disproof. No great poet would garble and pervert his own fine passages. As some people who are intimately versed in texts and words of Scripture use them needlessly, or even quite out of place, for their own small convenience, so does the later poem deal. For instance, in *Il.* v. 751 is a celebrated and splendid passage concerning the Hours, warders of Heaven and of Olympus, to whom it is 'entrusted alike to lift or to drop the curtain of darkness (*πυκινὸν νέφος*).' In the *Odyssey* the line is garbled by changing the accusative to *πυκινὸν λόχον*, *the close ambushade*, itself borrowed from the *Iliad*, but in *Od.* xi. 524 made descriptive of Ulysses's duty in the Wooden Horse! So difficult is it of explanation, that Cowper arbitrarily translates *λόχον* *the door*! Of course such a perversion of the original poet produces an unnatural phrase. Again, the winged sandals attributed to Mercury in the last book of the *Iliad* are very familiar; and the poet of the *Odyssey* applies them to Mercury in book v.; yet in book i. 96 he attributes them to the goddess Athena; which is surely a great literary offence. The earlier poet often represents his stalwart heroes as grasping something 'with stout hand,' *χειρὶ παχείῃ*: the *Odyssey* (xxi. 6) stereotypes the phrase, applying it to Penelope, where she is to be depicted in great feminine

beauty. Carelessness and haste may be here the cause: for 'slender hand' from *Iliad* v. 425 would have suited the metre as well. Just so, the description of evening, 'The sun sank down, and all the streets were shaded,' he perpetually uses, whether his travellers are in the open field, or on the sea. When he is describing the Phæacian rowers, whose sole accomplishment is that of the sailor, he gives them all witty names, alluding to nautical skill. The last is Euryalus, and he has the bad taste to add to it the phrase pilfered from the *Iliad*, *βροτολογεῖ ἴσος Ἄρηι*, 'a match for mortal-destroying Mars,' where it is quite inappropriate. In a like spirit he calls the rowers of Telemachus (iii. 402) his '*well-greaved* companions,' as if they had been heavy-armed warriors. The poet of the *Iliad* is too volatile to be logical, and with his great heroes he retains epithets out of place; but I do not think cases of this sort can be found in him. Again: in the *Iliad* wounds and slaughter are often inflicted *νηλεῖ χαλκῷ*, 'by the pitiless brass;' but in the *Odyssey* (viii. 507, xiv. 418) the phrase is misapplied for the cleaving of wood. This suggests to remark, that weapons of war in the *Iliad* are of brass or bronze, and iron is used only for knives, spits, and ploughshares, because of its rarity. Hence the phrase of the *Odyssey*, 'iron itself attracts a man' (xvi. 294), is unintelligible to a mere student of the *Iliad*, for it means, 'The very sight of a weapon of war allures a man' (to fight). *Τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἤρχε* is common in the *Iliad* as preface to a speech made to many persons; as, 'To them did [Nestor] begin addresses;' but the poet of the *Odyssey* borrows the formula out of place, when two persons are in dialogue, one speaking to one (v. 202, xvii. 184). Achilles (*Iliad* xviii. 34) had described his father Peleus as 'cursed by grievous old age.' In the *Odyssey* (xxiii. 283)

the phrase is modified into 'cursed by opulent old age,' as applied to Ulysses, who is to live long in prosperity. *Odyssey* vi. 2 seems to say that Ulysses was 'cursed by sleep and toil.' That ἀρημένοϛ meant strictly 'cursed' in the *Iliad*, is guaranteed to us by the kindred verbal ἀηρόϛ 'execrable,' ἀπαρόϛ of Sophocles.² If we admit an interval of time, we easily understand, that as the old French *gehenné* (tormented) was softened into the modern *génée* (ill at ease), so ἀρημένοϛ may have passed from its first sense *cursed* into (perhaps) *subdued*, though the latter sense has no justification in grammar. But a flagrant instance of inexcusable perversion needs closer attention. In his last words to Andromache (*Iliad* vi. 490-3) Hector bids her to go home, tend her domestic duties, and set her handmaids to their task; but 'WAR (says he) shall be a care to Men, to all men who are born in Iliou, and to me in chief.' In the *Odyssey* this is three times parodied, and each time detestably. Twice, by Telemachus to his mother. In i. 356-9 having exactly repeated the charge to her, he adds, 'But TALK shall be a care to Men, and to me in chief: for to this belongs sway in the house.' Again, in xxi. 350, all recurs, except that War (πύλεμοϛ) is now changed to the Bow (τόξον), namely, the bow of Ulysses which has been shut in a closet for twenty years! Thus the poet travesties himself too. But it is hard to say which is more ridiculous, to represent that Talk gives sway, or that the Bow gives sway, in the house. Besides this, in *Odyssey* xi. 351, the passage is put into the mouth of King Alcinoüs, who has undertaken to send Ulysses home. 'Let the stranger (says he) wait, until I make up for him

the entire gift: but ESCORT (πομπή) shall be a care to Men, and to me in chief; τοῦ γὰρ κράτοϛ ἔσθ' ἐνὶ δῆμῳ.' Again, he mocks himself, by changing *house* to *people*, with uncertain syntax. The contrast of men to women has here vanished: the pronoun τοῦ apparently means *this thing*, viz. Escort (*fem.*), and we have to translate the last clause, either, For to this belongs sway in (among) the people; or, For over this the power rests in the people. But neither gives a moderately good argument. No great poet ever thus burlesqued his own writing.

But we will pass from words to things: and first we observe the new view given of Castor and Pollux. In the *Iliad*, they are named only as brothers of Helen, whom she wonders not to see in the army of Agamemnon: but, adds the poet, *both had died in their native Lacedæmon* (iii. 243). Not a word is dropt to suggest anything miraculous in their death, nor that after death their state differed from that of other men: but the poetical phrase is used, 'them already life-gendering Earth held fast.' This very formula is garbled in the *Odyssey* (xi. 300) so as to reverse the meaning, by inserting the word ζῶντϛ, *alive*, 'both of whom life-gendering Earth holds fast *alive*.' The poet adds, 'Who even beneath Earth having honour from Jupiter, at one time live on alternate days, at another time are dead; and receive honour on the footing of gods.' Very obscure as this is, we see clearly that an entirely new superstition had had time to grow up since the poet of the *Iliad* wrote. Indeed, that hero-worship had advanced in the interval is clear, from the *Odyssey* representing Minos as judge of the dead, as also from his inexplicable allusion to Rhadaman-

² The Scholiast explains ἀρημένοϛ by βεβλαμμένοϛ, a sense evidently made for the passages. Further to prop up the error, in several lines the moderns change ἄρην to ἀρήν and ἄρηϛ to ἀρήϛ and give it the sense of *harm*. But ἄρην is more natural in the context, and ἀρή in Homer is a spondee.

thys (vii. 323). Besides, ἀλοσύδνη (marine), an epithet of Thetis in the *Iliad*, has turned into a special deity in the *Odyssey*, where we also find Leucothea worshipped by sailors. Again, in the *Iliad* we find Vulcan (Hephæstus) married to a Grace, and the meaning of this mythus is sufficiently clear. The vulgar blacksmith with his grimy trade is transformed by genius into a Dædalus, the type of artistic beauty; hence the smithy itself is said to be 'married to immortal grace.' But when the meaning of this mythus had been forgotten, the Grace was turned into Venus (Aphrodite), as in the *Odyssey*; and next rose the unseemly story which is told with such glee in that poem, concerning the adultery of Mars and Venus. The song of the bard concerning it is in a voluptuous spirit, unknown to the *Iliad*, and the comments of the gods are debasing. The notion of Vulcan, as limping and deformed, was very ancient, and is plausibly traced to Pelasgian colonies and to the rites of the Cabeiri: but even without this, we easily understand how a figure for the god who works in metal should be suggested, muscular in the chest and arms, but defective in the lower limbs, which were little needed in that trade. When such a god was married to the goddess of Beauty, the vulgar imagined that a handsome soldier as his wife's paramour fitly superseded him. But the tale is fundamentally inconsistent with the *Iliad*, where the relation of Mars to Venus is entirely pure (that of brother to sister), and Vulcan is married to a Grace. Once more: in the *Iliad* Apollo plays a large part, and is frequently named. He is described as ruling in Tenedos, Killa, and Chrysa; as having a temple in Ilium, a very wealthy temple in Pytho (Delphi), and as worshipped in Lycia (xvi. 514). Also in the *Iliad* only he is called Ἀνκηγενής, which is generally explained, 'born

at Patara in Lycia.' But there is no mention whatever of Delos, much less of his birth there, and of his eminent temple. We may with much certainty infer that the *Iliad* was written before and the *Odyssey* after the Ionian colonisation of the coast of Asia, whose religious assemblies were organised on the little island of Delos. For in the *Odyssey* both Ortygia and Delos are found: the former is in connection with Artemis (v. 123); with the latter the altar of Phœbus and sacred bay-tree (vi. 162) are named, which are a perpetual theme to all after-poets. So the Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo says (16) that Artemis was born in Ortygia, Apollo in Delos. With the political events mythology moved on. But it must be observed, that neither in the *Iliad*, nor in the *Odyssey*, nor yet in the Hymns called Homeric, is Apollo the Sun-god nor Artemis the Moon. Tethys of the *Iliad* becomes Amphitrite in the *Odyssey*.

Ceremonies of religion are often so fixed by tradition that we have no right to count on their perceptibly changing in a century or two; yet we herein find diversities not to be overlooked between the two poems. The ceremony of sacrifice preparatory to a feast is elaborately detailed in the *Iliad* several times, but unexpected additions to it are found in the *Odyssey*. Such are: 1. The care to cut off the tongues of the victims, and throw them into the fire (iii. 332, 341); which the Scholiast says was an Attic custom. 2. We have also certain new phrases. Αἶγας ἀριέμεροι is strangely explained 'skinning goats.' A professional carver (δαίτρος), i. 141, apportions the shares (iii. 66) to the guests, and δαιτροσύνη (skill in fair distribution) is recognised as an accomplishment to be acquired. Δαίτρος, δαιτρεύω, δαιτροσύνη are words unknown to the *Iliad*, though kindred words describe the dividing of spoil and the giving of an allowance of wine. The stress laid on 'the upper

flesh' is also new, and the compliment to a person (viii. 474) of sending to him previous cuts out of the back. In later Greek, as in Xenophon, *ἱεραῖον* is simply an animal destined to the butcher; all religious idea being merged. The same phenomenon meets us in the *Odyssey*. 'ἱερεύειν', xiv. 74, when Eumæus 'sacrifices' two pigs without the slightest exterior of religion, seems to be identical with *butcher*. In xxiv. 214, where Ulysses simply wants a dinner, he uses the singular phrase, Δείπνον σὺν ἱερεύσασσι, 'sacrifice for me a dinner of pigs.'

The miracles wrought by the goddess Athena in the *Odyssey* are also unparalleled in the other poem. When a god in the *Iliad* animates a hero with pre-eminent courage and strength, or terrifies and weakens him, it is by a mental action and a sort of inspiration, which does not suggest magic nor what we call miracle. The more marvellous cases, in which a hero is rescued from desperate battle and reappears in another part of the field, or a lady under divine guidance passes unseen through a crowd, are readily understood as human events under a poetic veil. Faces hidden under a vizor cannot be ascertained. Nothing is easier than that a hero, who was thought to have been slain by Achilles, may really have been at quite a different part of the field. To say that Aphrodite or Athena poured signal splendour over an Æneas or a Diomedes is little more than the pious recognition of a beautiful or terrible aspect. If Apollo three times repelled Patroclus from the towers of Troy, or smote him in the back and deprived him of strength, &c. &c. we understand simply that he was repelled, and was worn out with toil of fighting. If a god restores a whip or a spear to a hero's hand, it denotes poetically

that the hero regained it by skill. But the miracles of the *Odyssey* are acts of magic, like those of the *Arabian Nights*, and are even wrought by the stroke of a magic wand.³ Athena herein differs little from the enchantress Circe. She makes Ulysses alternately a noble and handsome hero in fine costume, or an ugly and foul beggar in vile rags. For a little moment she exhibits his better aspect to Telemachus, but presently again by a sudden touch renews his wrinkles and other ugliness. One may refer to the last book of the *Iliad* for the wand of Mercury; but it is not there used for miracle. It 'either benumbs men's eyes or awakens them;' whatever this may mean in one whose function it is to escort the dead to the house of Pluto. Thus the *Odyssey* gives a meaner view of divine agency.

The 'kindly drugs' of the *Iliad* are medical ointments. The poet cannot have been ignorant, that many things when eaten or drunk are poisonous; and he once attributes the fury of a snake to its having eaten evil drugs—a thing, no doubt, suggested by an adder's poison: but no hint appears that he was familiar with the idea that drugs could be serviceable for *enchantment*. It would seem, that in his poem Circe would be a character as much out of place as an Egyptian magician. In the *Odyssey*, when Ulysses is to be fortified against her, it is, as in the *Arabian Nights*, by a countercharm, by the herb *moly* which the god Mercury gives him. This is a new form of superstition.

But what are we to say of Mercury's complaint to Calypso? The descent of the active god, like a sea-gull, was described in lines worthy of the *Iliad* (*Od.* v. 50-55). Who would expect him to plead weariness, and to miss intermediate

³ It must be confessed that in *I.* xiii. Neptune, disguised as Calchas, strikes the Ajaxes with his augur's staff: but the effect is internal, filling them with brave vigour.

places of refreshment? Yet he says to her: 'Jupiter has sent me hither, *against my will*: for, who would willingly run across so much salt water, immeasurable; where is *no city of mortals nigh*, who offer sacrifices? &c. . . .' In the *Iliad*, Iris, not Mercury, carries Jupiter's errands; and she never complains of fatigue. The counter-complaint of Calypso is equally surprising. She accuses the gods of a very cruel jealousy, if any goddess wishes to sleep with a mortal man, and make him her dear husband. Of this jealousy she cites signal instances. It cannot be said that this is more monstrous than Jupiter's own tales of his own doings in the *Iliad*; yet it has the aspect of a further growth of credulity. Tithonus's marriage to Aurora in the *Iliad* is evidently a mere poetical version of the report that a Trojan prince married some distant Oriental queen. We may add another small matter. When the goddess Athena (*Od.* xvi. 160) approached invisibly to Telemachus, *the dogs knew her!*

As to the knowledge of geography, no advance is made in the later poem. Negatively the two have certain points in common. There is no mention of Tyrians, nor of Tyrsenians, nor of Dorian leadership in Greece; nor any closer acquaintance with Egypt, Libya, Sicily, or Italy. Seduced by a passage in *Il.* ix. concerning the wealth of Egyptian Thebes, the author of the *Odyssey* thought fit to carry Menelaus thither: but he probably believed Thebes to be a port on the Mediterranean. His own hydrography is wild and unreal, but, such as it is, it has been wholly misinterpreted. Most plainly he places Aiaia, the island of Circe, at the Dawn and Sun-rising. In going from it to Thrinacia, the first difficulty is to pass the two moving rocks through which (he says) the ship Argo escaped by favour of Juno to Jason. The unintelligible

part of the story is, why, after going from Circe to Tartarus, and returning to Circe, she sends him through this dangerous strait at all. It leads to nothing but Thrinacia, the very place which he ought to avoid. He goes as if purposely to enable his companions to commit the sin which is punished by the destruction of their ship; the sin against which he was warned: then he himself on two beams has to ride back in the waves past the fatal rocks again. Scylla and Charybdis were here on opposite sides. Evidently, then, this is one of the two Bospori, which were, no doubt, confounded into one by the poet. In order to descend into Hades, Ulysses had to go to the Cimmerians (xiii. 14). The *triangular island* (? *Θριπαστή νῆσος*, xiii. 127) on which the cows of the Sun dwelt, in this same Eastern sea, must apparently have been suggested by reports of the Crimea. The two Sirens (for there are only two in the *Odyssey*) are in the same region; also, even earlier, when Ulysses is escaping from the Cyclops, Neptune looks out after him from the mountains of the Solymi, lofty heights in Asia Minor. Evidently, then, the Sea of Marmora with the Black Sea is the 'Ocean' in which the voyages of Ulysses for ten years are made: it was not at that time known to have any northern shore. The Cimmerians were imagined to be in the darkness of the extreme north; but by identifying the 'triangular island' with Sicily, and placing Scylla and Charybdis in the Sicilian straits, interpreters have quite gone astray from the notions of the *Odyssey*. Circe, daughter of the Sun, was in the same region as Medea, in the poet's conception: she is sister of Æetes, King of Colchis, and *Perse* is their mother.

He seems to have little knowledge of Peloponnesus, even as to the

coasts. He represents Nestor as saying, that he and Diomedes ran with a favourable breeze from Lesbos to Eubœa, whence the breeze, never dropping, carried Nestor home to Pylos. He cannot have known that many winds, different in direction, were needed for this navigation. Maps did not exist, and there was nothing to guide nor to bridle fancy. It may deserve remark, that in the *Iliad* Peloponnesus is twice called the land of *Apis*: in book i. it can have no other sense, and it is justified beyond question by Æschylus and Sophocles. But the author of the *Odyssey*, quoting the very phrase of the *Iliad*, so uses it that we cannot put on it this sense; and drives us to interpret it 'a distant land,' as derived from ἀπὸ, quite against analogy. Be the grammatical question as it may, this changed sense of the word denotes a new poet. Stranger still, he supposed that Agamemnon, in order to get home from Troy to Mycenæ, needed to make (iv. 514) the promontory of Malea, the south-east corner of Peloponnesus; and because the wind would not let him, he was driven on to a coast where Ægisthus intercepted him. This promontory is always in the poet's imagination. Inability to round it carried Menelaus into his wanderings. The same cause drove Ulysses to Crete, when he was on his way to Troy; and equally on his return from Troy caused his misadventures. Crete (Κρήνη εὐρεία, xiii. 453) in the *Iliad* is all under the rule of Idomeneus, and is said to have a hundred cities. The *Odyssey* defines the number of cities as ninety, and speaks of the island in the plural, as if it were carved into many principalities, adding the plural epithet εὐρεία slavishly; but his further mention of it deserves attention. Their tongues,

says he (xix. 175), are various; some are Achæians, some are original Cretans, others are Cydonians, or Dorians, or divine Pelasgians. To the Dorians he gives the epithet *ῥιχάϊες*, which is variously interpreted: but the universal belief of commentators was, that these Dorians had migrated from Greece into Crete, which migration would seem to have been after the *Iliad* was composed, but evidently before the *Odyssey*. The Pelasgians are here and elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, equally as in the *Iliad*, sharply distinguished from Achæians, and are called *divine*, as a people seen through the haze of antiquity. It may deserve remark that once in the *Odyssey* the noun *Athena* in the singular is used for the city Athens.

But we must proceed to still more critical considerations. The poet of the *Iliad* is pre-eminent in all antiquity for various, definite and consistent delineation of character. In modern literature general opinion assigns Shakespeare as his only equal. We have to ask, Does the same power appear in the author of the *Odyssey*? I think we must simply reply, Certainly not. Ulysses and his son are the two most prominent. If he had intended to represent Telemachus as silly and cruel, we might agree that he has succeeded; but he calls him eminently pious and prudent. Consider his replies on two occasions. Athena, personating Menelaus, King of the Taphians, asks him (i. 207) whether he is a son of Ulysses. The pious youth seizes the opportunity of scoffing at his mother's chastity: 'My mother indeed says I am his son; but I for my part do not know, for no one yet has had cognisance of his own origin (γόνος).' What king's son in his senses ever yet volunteered to suggest the possibility of his own bastardy? Again, the suitor Antinous has sarcastically

said to him (i. 384): 'Telemachus! you are become a lofty orator. Beware lest Jupiter make you King of Ithaca: for that is your paternal inheritance.' He replies, 'Perhaps you will be much astonished at the avowal; but, Jupiter allowing it, that is what I should like to get. Or, do you mean to say, that this is the worst lot that can befall a man? Nay, but it is no bad thing to be a king. Instantly his house becomes rich, and he himself is more honoured.' As to his cruelty, it will be afterwards commented on. In the suitors, some distinctions of character are marked, but there is no peculiar skill in the poet to draw attention. Nausicaa, daughter of the King of the Phæacians, is very pleasantly set forth; but her tattling with a strange man against maiden chastity (without the slightest call for it), at her own initiation, is alike unseemly and against nature. Nothing to approach it is found in the *Iliad*. This poet must have lived in an Ionian community, and never have heard a young woman talk to a stranger. He means to set forth her prudence and goodness. Ulysses himself, when escaping from Polyphemus, is depicted as stupidly imprudent, and incurs just reproof from his comrades. But we must come to closer quarters with his character as drawn in the *Odyssey*.

This hero is previously well known to us in the *Iliad*, and is there celebrated for various wisdom, as well as for bodily accomplishments; but the excellences, both of mind and body, ascribed to him in the *Odyssey* are decidedly different, so as to make quite a new character. The earlier poet would not have thus changed him. In the *Iliad* he is a sturdy warrior with heavy armour: among his epithets are 'spear-famed' and 'city stormer.' He is also a good wrestler, and wins the prize in running, though no longer young, against

Antilochus, the swiftest of the youths. In the *Odyssey*, it is pretended that he was pre-eminent in archery, only Philoctetes vying with him; but in the *Iliad* he does not enter the competition for the archer's prize, and there is no hint from end to end of the poem that he had any skill of this sort. In the night expedition, where light arms are best, he carries a bow; but in darkness one archer is almost on a par with another. Indeed, according to the *Odyssey* he excels in everything *except* running; but he was then ten years older. We need not grudge him some exaltation, just as the Æneas of Virgil is grander than the Æneas of the *Iliad*. But, in fact, the hero of the *Odyssey* is quite a Proteus, or a rival of the 'admirable Crichton.' He is a first-rate joiner, a competent shipwright, a good sailor and pilot, a perfect acrobat. By hands and feet he sustains himself under the belly of a ram, and so rides safely out of Polyphemus's cave. To escape the whirlpool of Charybdis, he clings 'like a bat' to the branches of a wild-fig tree by his hands, having nothing to rest his feet on (xii. 434), and holds on till evening, when at length (*ὄψις*) the whirlpool vomits out his *cátamarán*; on which he drops most accurately, and is saved, every one of his companions being drowned. Of course, he is a capital swimmer. He is an admirable flinger of the quoit, a formidable and dexterous boxer; most powerful to draw a very stiff bow, and skilful to aim it. He claims to mow a field against any man, or drive a straight furrow in stiff soil (xiii. 365); and to be particularly clever as a menial servant, whether to cook a thousand dainties, or to 'build a fire' well; to cleave dry wood, to carve flesh meat for distribution, or pour out wine (xv. 314). These may be interpreted as false boasts; yet, on the whole, the character is not the Ulysses of the *Iliad*,

but rather the clever Greek of Juvenal.

But it is in the nature of his wisdom that the contrast of the two characters chiefly appears. In the *Iliad* he has strong common sense, as opposed to the rashness of Diomedes and Achilles. He has sagacity and promptitude, skill as an ambassador, and great power of oratory, with judgment in adapting himself to the populace and to the separate kings. He knows when to be abrupt even to Agamemnon; but he is respectful, imploring or firm, to Achilles. He can retreat precipitately before an overwhelming force, as well as stand firm when the enemy is barely superior. Thus, from all the kings, young and old, he commands high respect, though, like Ajax, he brought to the war only twelve ships. While *πολύμητις* ('various in counsel' or 'full of resource') is his current epithet, no hint appears of trickery and falsehood, nor of wanton violences and piracy.⁴ He is sent into Troy as an ambassador, not as a disguised spy. But in the *Odyssey* falsehood is his natural weapon: cleverness, not wisdom, is his attribute. Indeed, the whole atmosphere of the poem is intrigue and treachery. Antolycus, the maternal grandsire of Ulysses, is praised (xix. 395) as 'excelling all men in thievery and in the oath; an excellence which the god Mercurius gave him.' What can this mean, but skill in perjury? The goddess Athena, who, of all the Pantheon, plays by far the largest part in the *Odyssey*, is herself wholly demoralised, and sets the example of perfidious violence, urging young Telémachus to assassinate the suit-

ors, before any plot against his life by any of them is imagined. She makes a joke of Ulysses's falsehood, when he most needlessly attempts to deceive her, not recognising who she is. The word *κέρδεα* (gains) is in the *Odyssey* identified with tricks or fraud.⁵ 'He must be a gainful fellow (*κεφάλιος*) and a cheat,' says the goddess (xiii. 291), 'who would outreach thee in wiles, even were it a god that met thee. O thou unscrupulous and crafty one, insatiate of guile—so then! even in thy native land thou wouldest not renounce deceits and cheating tales, which are familiar to thee from the floor (i.e. from infancy). But come! let us have done with such talk, since both of us understand gains (i.e. fraud): for of all mortals thou by far excellest in counsel and talk; and I among all gods am celebrated for prudence and gains (fraud).' When the goddess is proud of her clever rogue, we may be sure that the poet was living in a more demoralised age than the poet of the *Iliad*. It is remarkable how he satirises his hero, in the praises bestowed on him by Alcinous (xi. 360): 'O Ulysses! when we look upon thee, we nowise assimilate thee to a deceiver and cheat, such as, among men of various stocks, black earth feeds numerous; who dress up lies, where lies might least be expected: but in thee is beauty of tales, and a noble mind,' &c. It is true, that he has no motive to deceive Alcinous. But, while in disguise of a beggar, and using deceit every moment, he borrows and alters the words of Achilles thus: 'He is hateful to me as the gates of Hades, who, yielding to poverty, uses deception.' Indeed,

⁴ The later notion of Ulysses (in the *Odyssey*, in Sophocles, in Euripides) seems founded on the ill-tempered invective (*Il.* iv. 339) which Agamemnon utters in alarm and vexation, but instantly retracts, changing the imputation of *evil wiles* to *ηπια δόξα*, kindly devices.

⁵ In vulgar use this cannot have been new; as *κέρδιστος* in *Il.* vi. 153 for *craftiest* shows; and (though the later books of the *Iliad* seem to have been tampered with) *κέρδεα* in *Il.* xxiii. 322, 515, 709. Also *καλ κερδοσύνη* in *Il.* xxii. 247; but there is some corruption. Perhaps it should be *κατὰ κερδοσύνην*.

falsehood of a malignant kind is imputed to the most gallant of the suitors, Eurymachus; and we may add, to the mighty Hercules. In the *Iliad*, this audacious, lion-hearted hero has no slur of perfidy resting on him. His war on Troy was in vengeance for the perfidy of Laomedon, and his loyalty to his own king Eurystheus equals that of Corbulus to Nero. But in the *Odyssey* (xxi. 27) he receives Iphitus (son of the celebrated Eurytus) in his house and at his table, and 'cruel! without reverence of gods,' slays him, 'being his guest,' and robs him of his twelve mares.

In an atmosphere of falsehood, truth is the exception, and receives marked comment. Thus, when the goddess advises Telemachus to go straight to Nestor and enquire concerning Ulysses (iii. 14), she adds, 'Entreat of the man himself to tell the truth, and he will not tell thee a lie, for he is very prudent;' that is, he sees where nothing is to be gained by lying. The very same words are put into the mouth of Nestor himself (iii. 327) concerning Menelaus, as if without special assurance the young Telemachus might naturally expect falsehood from his father's comrades in war. Nothing of this kind appears in the earlier poem.

When Telemachus comes into the presence of Helen, the lady says to her husband, King Menelaus, 'Never did I see anyone so like, as this young man is, to Telemachus, whom Ulysses left new-born (*νέον γεγαῶτα*) in his house,' &c. twenty years before. This shrewd Helen is represented as tricky in the extreme, and skilful in drugs—quite different from the simple-hearted, indeed silly, Helen of the *Iliad*. Menelaus tells of her, without resentment, and seemingly with pride, that when the Wooden Horse was brought into Troy, Helen three times walked round it, and called on all the Achaian chieftains, who were in-

side it, by name, *imitating the voice of each man's wife*; and one of them, Anticlus, would have answered her, but Ulysses clapt his hand firmly on the mouth of Anticlus (which is called his *μάστρακα*—his beak?) and saved all the Achaians (iv. 271).

After Helen has thrown into the wine-flagon drugs of such power that (as the poet tells us) whoever swallowed a draught would not shed a tear if his brother or son were murdered before his face, she may safely tell them any monstrous lie. Accordingly she narrates what is hard to reconcile with Ulysses's prudence. He came as a spy into Troy in the wraps of a beggar, disfigured by unsightly blows or wounds. Helen detected him; and when he tried to evade her questions, she undressed him, bathed and oiled him, clothed him in new garments, and then 'swore a hardy oath' not to betray him until he should be safe back at the Achaian galleys. Hereupon he revealed to her all the plans of the Achaians; and, having slain many of the Trojans, escaped to the Argives with much information (*φρόνιν*!). The Trojan women were full of wailing; but Helen says she was herself delighted. How to reconcile this with her attempt to entice the chieftains in the Wooden Horse to their destruction, does not appear.

Drugs in the wine come near to poison. When young Telemachus takes ship for Peloponnesus, the suitors whisper one to another (ii. 326): 'Will he bring back guards from Pylos or Sparta to massacre us? or will he get from Ephyra (of Thesprotia) deadly drugs, to mix in the bowl, and kill us all?' Such an idea is foreign to the *Iliad*; so is that of *poisoned arrows*. That such a weapon is inhuman, the poet of the *Odyssey* must have felt, for he says that Ilus (a Thesprotian chief) in reverence for the gods refused the poison to Ulysses, when he travelled in search of it. Nevertheless (as

the goddess Athena in disguise of Mentès tells Telemachus) the father of Mentès, in love to Ulysses, gratified his wish.

Wine in the *Iliad* is simply a refreshing drink, with no idea admitted of excess: in the *Odyssey* it plays a considerable part, and the word *οἰνοποτήρ* (tippler) is found. Naturally, excess is imputed to the suitors. But also at Troy, according to this poet (iii. 139), the children of Achaia, when convened for public mote by the two sons of Atreus, came 'over-weighted with wine;' whence an irreparable schism. The young princess of Phœacia, extolling her father's grandeur, says that 'he sits on his throne enjoying his wine-cup (*οἰνοποτάζων*) like an immortal.' In the *Iliad*, whether from economy or from moral precaution, Agamemnon does not allow the kings at his own table to drink at their pleasure (iv. 257), but assigns a fixed portion to each: Idomeneus alone had an exceptional freedom.

Not only the individuals in the *Odyssey* are less truthful, but the war itself is represented as essentially one of trickery⁶ (iii. 119), as is its final success by the stratagem of the Wooden Horse, to which no prospective allusion is found in the *Iliad*. When wisdom is identified with craft, wisdom seems dangerous and frightful. The wise man is thought to have skill in magic and drugs; in short, to 'deal with the devil.' Hence Minos, the wise legislator and just judge of the dead, is called *ὀλοφύρων* (*deadly-hearted*) in the *Odyssey*; no doubt, in admiration. So is Atlas, 'who knows all the depths of the seas.' Whatever the derivation of *ὀλοφύριος*, it is not

doubted to mean 'destructive,' and it is a fit epithet for the devices of Circe. Yet we have also *πάντα τὰ ὀλοφύρια*, to mean 'all the secret wisdom' of Proteus. Evidently 'deadly-hearted' is used for deep counselling.

Side by side with this demoralisation in the *Odyssey*, piracy takes a more shameless form. The raids of the *Iliad* are always veiled as the legitimate war of nation against nation, though single chieftains count on enrichment by them, as in all after-times. But in the *Odyssey* each plunders unscrupulously for his own convenience. Menelaus wanders for nearly eight years, to Cyprus, Phœnicia, Egypt, to Sidonians and Erempi, Æthiopians and Libyans, 'gathering much substance,' as he frankly tells. Indeed, he and Helen received peculiarly valuable gifts from strangers in Ægyptian Thebes! So Ulysses on his first start from Troy plunders the city of Ismarus, and slaughters the men, which the Scholiast excuses, because the Cicones had sent an auxiliary force to Priam. But the poet needed no such pretence. At the close of the *Odyssey*, Ulysses propounds to Penelope his scheme for replenishing their wealth. 'Of sheep, whose numbers the suitors have thinned, I shall get plenty by marauding; and others the Achaians will give me, until I fill all the folds,' xxiii. 157. Akin to this is the phrase of Telemachus, i. 398, 'I claim to be full master of all the house-servants, whom divine Ulysses earned for me by his maraudings.' Accordingly, the principal⁷ change in commerce discernible in the *Odyssey* is, the increase of kidnaping for the slave market, which seems there

⁶ The *παντολοῖσι δόλοισι* is probably a mere echo of *Il.* iii. 202 exaggerated.

⁷ As an epithet of a merchant, *τρώκτης* (*a nibbler*) is found in the *Odyssey*. From the Greek Anthology the word is quoted as meaning *usurer*. When no coin as yet existed, nor fixed prices, a fixed percentage for commission on sales was unimaginable. Perhaps a Phœnician captain who sold *other men's* goods, and deducted from the equivalents something for himself, was called a *nibbler*; and was sure to be accounted a *cheat* by the Greeks of that age.

an ordinary practice of traders; and the story of Eumæus suggests that slaves desiring to escape made merchandise of their masters' children. We see a reason why the peculiar word *εἶρερος* (*bondage*) should be found in this poem. That piracy was not dishonourable in the eyes of the poet, all writers since Thucydides have argued from the hearty reception given by Nestor to Telemachus and Mentor, while wholly uncertain whether they were honest men. Only after he has banqueted them, he asks frankly (meaning no offence, and giving none): 'O strangers! who are ye? whence sail ye the watery routes? Is it for business? or do ye roam at random, as plunderers over the sea, who rove abroad risking their lives, and bringing mischief to men of other lands?' Nothing in the *Iliad* is of this colour. The Dorian movements in Greece, and the Asiatic unbridled colonisation by Greeks, must have been disorganising and demoralising. The mixture of charity and violence ascribed to this state of society is curious. An unfortunate stranger in a foreign land has no resource but to beg; and if he can make it appear that he is of noble birth, he may possibly return home with large presents. Shipwreck leads to cruel plunderings, but also to warm compassion: many a rich man thinks, 'I too may some day be wrecked.' Thus Ulysses is laden with wealth by the Phæacians; yet this, through the special favour of Athena. But he invents the tale that he is in Thesprotia, amassing stores by *beggary*; and though he uses the offensively accurate phrase *ἀγυράζεσθαι*, his story passes as a thing of course. Nevertheless, we cannot press any of this as a fact of the day; it suffices to urge that

this was in the poet's imagination; but the credulity of hearers with him is too extreme. Laertes unhesitatingly believes a stranger (Ulysses himself in disguise) who tells him that in Crete he freely gave to his son Ulysses seven talents of gold, a bowl of solid silver worked with flowers, twelve cloaks, twelve carpets, twelve beautiful robes, twelve fine shirts; and allowed him to choose any four of his handsomest women slaves, well born, and trained to good accomplishment. Laertes swallows the falsehood, on the word of a perfect stranger, with no reason assigned for such liberality. At once we say, this picture has no approximation to real life. But we never say the same of characters in the *Iliad*.

While the poet imitates the lofty style of the *Iliad*, he often caricatures it, and makes it absurd. He entitles the swineherd Eumæus, 'the *divine*^s swine-feeder,' 'captain of men,' not once, but systematically. No doubt, Eumæus was a *foreman*^s among swineherds; but he was a slave from childhood, with only the coarse accomplishments of a male slave.^s In the *Iliad*, the poet sometimes apostrophises a hero, as: 'To him then, O charioteer Patroclus! *thou* didst thus reply.' This grandiloquence is in the *Odyssey* reserved for the swineherd: 'Thus didst *thou* answer, O swineherd Eumæus.' Ulysses himself bestows the epithet *divine* on his two slaves, the swineherd and the cowherd (xxi. 234, 240), though the former declares that a man loses half his virtue on the day that he becomes a slave. In the *Iliad* the chief heroes have high titles, and a few eminent men are named by paraphrase, as, The Laomedontean *might*. The *Odyssey* drives the

^s In the *Iliad* a warlike or ancient people, and every hero, is *θεός*, *divine*: but the epithet cannot descend to menials and mere industrious persons. As to *foremen*, there may have been some fuller social development when the *Odyssey* was written; for we there have the *ἐπιτομήν* and *ἐπιβούκαλος*, and *ὁδὸς ἐπιστάτης* (xvii. 455) seems to mean 'thy *major-domo*.'

principle farther. We may accept 'The sacred energy of Alcinous,' considering the benign and mysterious sway of the King of Phæacia, or rather Scheria, a Utopian island; but as applied to the most guilty of the suitors, it is rather offensive. So the often recurring phrase, *ἱερὴ ἱς Τηλεμάχοιο*, 'the sacred force of Telemachus,' is bombast. The title *sacred* is more royalistic than the *Iliad*; next, however applicable to Ulysses is the noun *ἱς* (sinew, force) in *Il.* xxiii. 720, where his 'hardy sinew' proves a match for Ajax, yet as a mere paraphrase for a stripling, it belongs only to a young giant, an Otus or Ephialtes. The extravagant use of words is a moral fact, discriminating a writer.

So is their degenerate use. We have observed upon 'stout hand' misplaced, and on *deadly* for clever, sage. There is also a depraved use of *αἰνῶς*, 'direfully, awfully,' reminding us of modern slang. In the *Odyssey* a man likes a thing 'awfully' (*αἰνῶς*), i.e. *much*; or he is 'direfully' delighted, *αἰνῶς τέρπεται*. The grand epithets of the *Iliad*, *ἀθέσφατος*, *ἄσπερος*, are systematically abused in the *Odyssey*. The former word meant, it seems, originally, 'inexpressible even to gods,' and is fitly used in the *Iliad* of 'storm ineffable.' In the *Odyssey* it is well applied to the sea; but is abused to express the *length* of a winter night and *plenty* of wine, corn, or cows. Who would call these 'ineffable'? "*Ἄσπερος*, whatever its true origin, means 'immense, immeasurable,' and in the *Iliad* is said of the depth of heaven and of ocean, besides its moral applications. In *Il.* xix. 61 it is an epithet of a *vast* battle-field; but in *Od.* xxii. 269 that line is borrowed and misapplied to the floor of the hall on which the suitors were

slain! This poet also uses it, not for *innumerably* but simply for *numerous*, as with us 'infinite' in bad style.⁹

Of the use of words in construction, only one specimen of the contrast shall be here adduced. With the words *so* and *such*, English syntax admits either, *So great a sea*, or, *Such a great sea*; but the latter formula is inadmissible in good Latin or ordinary Greek; certainly in the *Iliad*. The young student who is familiar with the *Iliad*, is puzzled to meet in the *Odyssey* *πέλαγος μέγα τοῖον*, which seems as odd as *mare magnum tale* in Latin; yet it is current in the Greek of the *Odyssey*, and is found in Hesiod. Moreover, the word *τοῖον* in the *Odyssey* occurs where it is superfluous to the syntax, as in (what some call) feminine English, 'There I met *such* a beauty!' for, a *great* beauty. The same word becomes adverbial, and is almost unintelligible. We are told that *θάμα τοῖον* means 'very often,' and that *σιγῇ τοῖον* means 'in silence thus,' *iv.* 776, *vii.* 30; alike alien to the idiom of the *Iliad*. Moreover *τοῖος* in the *Odyssey* is used for *Ἀττικῶδες* π. capable; as, *τοῖος ἀμύνειν*, capable of defending. Our limits forbid further dwelling on Greek constructions; but we crave patience of our readers, while we refer to a few more single words in detail.

Διηλεκτικῶς means *continuously*, and so the author of the *Odyssey* generally uses it; but in *iv.* 836 he misuses it for *distinctly, definitely*. '*Ὀπωπῆ* notoriously means *sight, aspect or eyesight*: three times in the *Odyssey* it is rightly used; yet the formula used rightly twice, is wrongly applied in *xvii.* 44 through carelessness: for there the sense wanted is '*report*' concerning

⁹ Nay, we once find *ἄσπερα πολλά* (innumerable many?) which seems vulgar and hardly grammatical. But we may not press the fact in this argument, for the very phrase is found in the gossiping speech of Nestor, which on other grounds we wish cut out of the *Iliad*. So too is the strange phrase *ἤλιθα πολλά*, which recurs four times in the *Odyssey*.

Ulysses. This led the Scholiast on iii. 97 to suggest a second sense for the word, from ὄρα, *voice!* founding error on error. In xi. 583, where στεύρο (engaged, promised) is improperly used for *stood*, the Scholiast throws the blame on some editor (διασκευαστήης) of the poem. Ἀπριάστην, unbought, is in *Il.* i. 99 a feminine accusative; but the poet of the *Odyssey* has mistaken it in that passage for an adverb, and has used it in a masculine connection. Θεῶν ἰατρῆν ought to mean, 'by will of the gods;' but, as Professor Malden has remarked, it is perverted into the sense, 'on account of the gods;' first in the *Odyssey*, then in after poets. Ἀμαιμάκερος, whatever it means, is shown by the use of all the poets to have nothing to do with *length*. In the *Iliad* it is an epithet of the dreadful Chimæra. But in the *Odyssey* it is applied to a mast, and apparently means *very long*. Ἀζηχῆς in the *Iliad* probably means *noisy, shrieking*; but the poet of the *Odyssey* seems to have interpreted it *vehement*, and says ἀζηχῆς φαγέμεν, to eat *greedily*. Is any reader incredulous that so powerful a poet can have made errors in Greek? Then here is an unanswerable fact. He did not know the derivation of βροτός, nor that it means *mortal*; else he could not have used the tautology θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσι (vii. 210), *mortal mortals, for mortal men*.

The writer of this article naturally has taken much pains in the verbal enquiry, and wishes that his trouble could save the trouble of others; but to exhibit further the vocabulary of the *Odyssey*, does not suit the pages of this Magazine.

We must finally consider the tragedy by which the poem is wound up. The suitors came not only from Ulysses's own realm, but 'fifty-two choice youths' from the greater island of Dulichium (xvi. 247), a foreign kingdom, so that their slaughter was an act of the greatest

rashness. And a still greater moral anomaly is the treatment of the wretched maid-servants, whom Ulysses reproaches the suitors for taking as bedfellows *against their will* (παρεννάζεσθε βιαιῶς), xxii. 37. But suppose it was *with their will*: what other Greek ever thought that women deserved to be hanged for feminine weakness? or for pert language? for that is imputed also. Ulysses indeed orders them to be hewn in pieces, and Telemachus improves it into hanging them. The whole idea is so barbarous, and told so barbarously, as to take away one's breath. Indeed the ferocity, as well as the craft, imputed to Ulysses, seems to belong to the era of the cruel tyrants, who extirpated the aristocracy to the utmost of their power; not to that of the age which we call Homeric, when a king rested on the military support of his subordinate chieftains, themselves entitled 'kings.' In the hands of such chieftains (Telemachus himself is made to inform us) rested the election to the royalty of Ithaca, if Ulysses were dead.

The poet himself thus describes the death of Antinous: 'He was about to lift a beautiful golden tankard to his lips, nor did any thought of being slaughtered cause him anxiety: who could imagine that in a company of guests a solitary man, however hardy, should bring on him evil death and black fate?' When the first victim has fallen, the suitors suppose that the shot has been accidental; but Ulysses reveals himself, and fiercely denounces them all, for courting his wife while he was alive, thus defying the gods and eating up his substance. Hereupon the bravest of them, Eurymachus, whom the people had expected Penelope to accept, makes a very temperate reply, nearly as follows: 'If you are really Ulysses, you have slain the man who to you was most

guilty; who indeed plotted against your son's life. Be satisfied with this victim, and spare your own people. We have sinned against your property, and you may justly be angry with us, until we have repaid it all to you; this we will do, amply and voluntarily, until your heart is gladdened.' Ulysses replies, that if he could get the whole of their substance, and much beside, nothing should induce him to spare the life of any of them: so let them prepare to fight it out with him. Eurymachus has a sword at his side, but is slain before he can use it. The poet thereupon felt it necessary to allow the suitors to get at some armour, lest the massacre of the defenceless excite pity; though he has hereby made the story surpass poetical credibility. But the moral phenomena alone are here pressed, as coming from a different mind and soul from the *Iliad*.

How the argument between the suitors and Ulysses stood, our poet well knew; for he puts into the mouth of Antinous's father Eupitheus (xxiv. 425) the complaint, that Ulysses carried away ships and men to Troy and lost them, one and all; then, after twenty years' absence, comes back to slaughter his own people. Laertes was superannuated before Ulysses could become king. No king is free to leave his people to simple anarchy, and not even appoint a regent; much less to expect them for ever to believe him alive when he has not been heard of for ten years. Eumæus firmly believed Ulysses to be dead: why might not Antinous? In modern England, if a widow had heard nothing of her husband for seven years, no judge in the land and no moralist would censure her re-marriage. It is incredible that the poet could seriously disapprove of it: nay, he twice tells us that Telemachus had exhorted his mother to choose a husband,

and expresses no condemnation; as though the reason assigned, that he hopes thereby to save his remaining substance, were quite sufficient. And here we have the real grievance, the suitors were offenders against Ulysses' property, by living at his expense against the customs of Greece: and Eurymachus confesses this. But property can be replaced, and the poet makes Eurymachus undertake that they will more than replace it, 'until the heart of Ulysses is gladdened;' yet, marvellous to say, in spite of this humiliation, he thinks to glorify his hero by making him cruelly implacable towards every one of the suitors, without discrimination either of Amphinomus, to whom the poet ascribes right-mindedness (*φρεσίν αγαθήσι*), or of the timid and gentle priest Leiodes, who (says he) abhorred the rudeness of the suitors, and was ever indignant with them. When he falls at the feet of Ulysses, and declares that the very women will testify to his uniform good conduct, and implores his mercy, Ulysses brutally replies, that, 'no doubt, as a priest, he often prayed that Ulysses might never come home;' so, with the word, he cuts off the suppliant's head. Since neither Amphinomus nor Leiodes are imagined to have been in the alleged plot for killing Telemachus, that evidently is not the poet's justification of the massacre. Indeed he makes the goddess Athena suggest it to Telemachus before the plot, and gives as a sufficient reason for it, the expensiveness of their entertainment. At the same time, oddly enough, he makes the faithful Eumæus most wasteful of all; for when Ulysses comes to him in garb of an old beggar, Eumæus kills two pigs (*Od.* xiv. 74) to furnish him with a single dinner, and a third, 'the best of the swine' (xiv. 414), for the supper. According to common sense and prudence, as

well as sound morals, if many had sinned in very various degrees, it was wise to wink at the possible greater guilt of some, and to accept the theory of Eurymachus that Antinous's life was a full atonement. To ordinary minds, Ulysses would seem to have been sufficiently glorified by the humble submission of the suitors and their ample repayment of damages. Since the poet on the contrary is bent on killing them all, the choice youth and flower of the chieftains, this seems to be part of the thought of an age in which whole aristocracies were exterminated by successful tyrants; who acted as did Lucius Sulla to the opposite party according to Cicero: 'quos voluit, expulit; quos potuit, occidit.'

It is in vain that one tries to parallel this with the deeds of Achilles. In his wildest fury, nothing so monstrous is imputed to him. His ferocities are against the public enemy; his signal malignity against the slayer of his friend. But, what is most cardinal, his evil deeds and evil temper are repudiated by the poet; while the poet of the *Odyssey*, himself and his goddess Athena, approve of Ulysses and sympathise with him. It is not duly observed how signally in the *Iliad* the raw pride and implacability of Achilles are held up to the reader's condemnation. Nestor in the second book strongly condemns him, though thinking Agamemnon also wrong. His outrageous refusal to accept Agamemnon's humble submission is exposed in the narrative itself, and with blunt warmth is rebuked by Ajax to his face, as afterwards tenderly yet faithfully by Patroclus: and after Patroclus's death, Achilles in agony of soul confesses his folly, which indeed in *Il.* xvi. 97-100 is represented as actually childish. His sacrifice of the twelve Trojan youths, the poet gravely rebukes; his senseless barbarity to Hector is scourged by

Apollo's invective, with whom the gods in general, and Jupiter in particular, sympathise.

But in the *Odyssey* Ulysses makes war on helpless and worthless women, as well as on men. After the suitors have been despatched, and the doomed maid-servants have been forced to wipe up the blood, Telemachus reflects that for these so honourable a death as that by the sword (which he calls *καθαρός θάνατος*, a clean death) is too good: so he hangs them all, 'like birds on a string.' Then to crown the exploits comes the bright device of Ulysses, which is to hinder the people from driving him and his son into banishment as murderers, xxiii. 120. He bids his wife and son to bathe, and dress in their best garments, and give fine clothes to all the servants, and bring 'the divine bard' to play on the lyre, and get up 'a sportive dance as if for a wedding.' They obeyed him: 'the feet of dancers made a thundering noise,' and the passers-by believed that all was jollity, and knew nothing of the slaughter! Yet somehow this device did not succeed: 'murder will out.' Old Eupheithes tries to revenge the death of his son, and has to be slain by the old Laertes. The goddess Athena, who has prompted Ulysses all along, then forbids more slaughter, reconciles the combatants by a solemn treaty, and so the poem ends.

Yet in closing, the *Odyssey* lays the foundation of a new epic, as in the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. A prophecy of Teiresias commanded Ulysses, after regaining his royal power, to wander over the continent with an oar on his shoulder, until he should reach a people who knew nothing of the sea, and eat no salt in their food, and mistake his oar for a winnowing shovel. Then he is to fix the oar in the ground, and offer sacrifices to Neptune; after this, he is to return home, and will

ive into opulent old age, until θάνατος ἐξ ἁλός, or θάνατος ἐξ ἁλοῦς (for oracles are ambiguous), whether death from the sea, or death out of the sea, or death from salt, should carry him off. It is curious, that in the *Iliad*, we have not only the hint of an *Æneid*, but in the mouth of Ulysses words which imply that some tale about Telemachus was already current. In *Iliad* ii. 260, threatening Thersites, he says: 'May I no longer be called father of Telemachus, if . . .'; and in proudly justifying his own bravery to Agamemnon, iv. 354: 'Shortly shalt thou see the fond father of Telemachus mingled in the foremost ranks.' No other hero in the *Iliad* thus seeks for honour from the name of his young son. It reminds us of the Syrian or Arabian tendency of fathers to name themselves from their sons (a *hyponymic*?) when the son is grown to man's estate; as a man who was Yusuf becomes 'Abu Jorji,' father of George.

Our business has been to contrast the *Odyssey* to the *Iliad*, and in so doing we have had to disparage it morally. This has little to do with

its occasional power as poetry. If it had been our business simply to extol the *Odyssey*, it would have been pleasant to point at its many beauties, without which indeed it never could have passed as the work of the same Homer with the *Iliad*. It is finest when it owes least to the other poem. The rhythm in the careless parts is very rough, and its plagiarism on the *Iliad* often quite offensive; but it rises into a vigour of its own, when the poetry otherwise improves. It is no slight praise to say, that many of Virgil's much admired passages are inspired by or are even translations of the *Odyssey*, to which he owed more than to the *Iliad*. In the description of scenery the poet has a richness of his own and somewhat of our modern enthusiasm. Many of his similes are in a style equal to those of the *Iliad*. Great as is the moral weakness of his plot, he has passages of great tenderness; and the devoted love of Ulysses for his native land, of Penelope for her Ulysses, have led readers to overlook that side of the poem on which it has been necessary to dwell.

