

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

A POEM WRITTEN IN EARLY YOUTH

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Freeeditorial 

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Preface.

That Poetry is the first, and most celebrated of all the fine arts, has not been denied in any age, or by any philosopher. The culture of the soul, which Sallust so nobly describes, is necessary to those refined pleasures, and elegant enjoyments, in which man displays his superiority to brutes. It is alone the elevation of the soul, not the form of the body, which constitutes the proud distinction, according to the learned historian, “*Alterum nobis cum diis, alterum cum belluis commune est.*” The noblest of the productions of man, that which inspires the enthusiasm of virtue, the energy of truth, is Poetry: Poetry elevates the mind to Heaven, kindles within it unwonted fires, and bids it throb with feelings exalting to its nature.

This humble attempt may by some be unfortunately attributed to vanity, to an affectation of talent, or to the still more absurd desire of being thought a genius. With the humility and deference due to their judgments, I wish to plead not guilty to their accusations, and, with submission, to offer these pages to the perusal of the few kind and partial friends who may condescend to read them, assured that their criticism will be tempered with mercy.

Happily it is not now, as it was in the days of Pope, who was so early in actual danger of thinking himself “the greatest genius of the age.” Now, even the female may drive her Pegasus through the realms of Parnassus, without being saluted with that most equivocal of all appellations, a learned lady; without being celebrated by her friends as a Sappho, or traduced by her enemies as a pedant; without

being abused in the Review, or criticised in society; how justly then may a child hope to pass unheeded!

In these reading days, there need be little vulgar anxiety among Poets for the fate of their works: the public taste is no longer so epicurean. As the press pours forth profusion, the literary multitude eagerly receive its lavish offerings, while the sublimity of Homer, and the majesty of Virgil, those grand and solitary specimens of ancient poetic excellence, so renowned through the lapse of ages, are by many read only as school books, and are justly estimated alone by the comparative few, whose hearts can be touched by the grandeur of their sentiments, or exalted by their kindred fire; by them this dereliction must be felt, but they can do no more than mourn over this semblance of decline in literary judgment and poetic taste. Yet, in contemplating the Poets of our own times — (for there are real Poets, though they be mingled with an inferior multitude of the common herd) — who, unsophisticated by prejudice, can peruse those inspired pages emitted from the soul of Byron, or who can be dazzled by the gems sparkling from the rich mine of the imagination of Moodie, or captivated by scenes glowing in the descriptive powers of Scott, without a proud consciousness that our day may boast the exuberance of true poetic genius? And if criticism be somewhat too general in its suffrage, may it not be attributed to an overwhelming abundance of cotemporary Authors, which induces it to err in discrimination, and may cause its praises to be frequently ill-merited, and its censures ill-deserved; as the eye, wandering over a garden where flowers are mingled with weeds, harassed by exertion, and dimmed by the brilliancy of colors, frequently mistakes the flower for the weed, and the weed for the flower.

It is worthy of remark, that when Poetry first burst from the mists of ignorance — when first she shone a bright star illuminating the then narrow understanding of the Greeks — from that period when Homer, the sublime Poet of antiquity, awoke the first notes of poetic inspiration to the praise of valor, honor, patriotism, and, best of all, to a sense of the high attributes of the Deity, though darkly and mysteriously revealed; then it was, and not till then, that the seed of every virtue, of every great quality, which had so long lain dormant in the souls of the Greeks, burst into the germ; as when the sun disperses the mist cowering o'er the face of the Heavens, illumines with his resplendant rays the whole creation, and speaks to the verdant beauties of nature, joy, peace, and gladness. Then it was that Greece began to give those immortal examples of exalted feeling, and of patriotic virtue, which have since astonished the world; then it was that the unenlightened soul of the savage rose above the degradation which assimilated him to the brute creation, and discovered the first rays of social independance, and of limited freedom; not the freedom of barbarism, but that of a state enlightened by a wise jurisdiction, and restrained by civil laws. From that period man seems to have first proved his resemblance to his Creator, and his superiority to brutes, and the birth of Poetry was that of all the kindred arts; in the words of Cicero, “*Quo minus ergo honoris erat poetis eo minora studia fuerunt.*”

It is no disparagement to an historical poem to enlarge upon its subject; but where truth is materially outraged, it ceases to be history. Homer, in his *Illiad* and *Odyssey*, and Virgil, in his *Aeneid*, have greatly beautified their subjects, so grand in themselves, and, with true poetic taste and poetic imagery, have contributed with magnificent

profusion to adorn those incidents which otherwise would appear tame, barren, and uninteresting. It is certain, however happily they have succeeded, their Poems cannot be called strictly historical, because the truth of history is not altogether undeviated from. Virgil, especially, has introduced in his Aeneid “an anachronism of nearly three hundred years, Dido having fled from Phoenicia that period after the age of Aeneas.” But in that dependance upon the truth of history which I would enforce as a necessary quality in an historical Poem, I do not mean to insinuate that it should be mere prose versified, or a suspension of the functions of the imagination, for then it could no longer be Poetry. It is evident that an historical Poem should possess the following qualifications:— Imagination, invention, judgment, taste, and truth; the four first are necessary to Poetry, the latter to history. He who writes an historical Poem must be directed by the pole-star of history, truth; his path may be laid beneath the bright sun of invention, amongst the varied walks of imagination, with judgment and taste for his guides, but his goal must be that resplendant and unchangeable luminary, truth.

Imagination must be allowed to be the characteristic, and invention the very foundation, of Poetry. The necessity of the latter in all poetic effusions is established by that magnificent translator of the greatest of Poets, Pope, in this beautiful passage: “It is the invention that in different degrees distinguishes all great geniuses: the utmost extent of human study, learning, and industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes art with all her materials, and without it, judgment itself can but steal wisely; for art is only a prudent steward, who lives on managing the riches of nature.” And in this ingenious

note the editor, Mr. Wakefield, elegantly exemplifies it: “For Poetry, in its proper acceptation, is absolutely creation, Ποιησις or invention. In the three requisites prescribed by Horace of poetic excellence, ‘Ingenium cui sit cui mens divinior at que os magna sonaturum.’ The first, ‘ingenium,’ or native fertility of intellect, corresponds to the ‘invention’ of Pope.”

The battle of Marathon is not, perhaps, a subject calculated to exercise the powers of the imagination, or of poetic fancy, the incidents being so limited; but it is a subject every way formed to call forth the feelings of the heart, to awake the strongest passions of the soul. Who can be indifferent, who can preserve his tranquillity, when he hears of one little city rising undaunted, and daring her innumerable enemies, in defence of her freedom — of a handful of men overthrowing the invaders, who sought to molest their rights and to destroy their liberties? Who can hear unmoved of such an example of heroic virtue, of patriotic spirit, which seems to be crying from the ruins of Athens for honor and immortality? The heart, which cannot be fired by such a recital, must be cold as the icy waters of the pole, and must be devoid at once of manly feeling and of patriotic virtue; for what is it that can awaken the high feelings which sometimes lie dormant in the soul of man, if it be not liberty? Liberty, beneath whose fostering sun, the arts, genius, every congenial talent of the mind, spring up spontaneously, and unite in forming one bright garland of glory around the brow of independance; liberty, at whose decline virtue sinks before the despotic sway of licentiousness, effeminacy, and vice. At the fall of liberty, the immortal Republics of Rome and Athens became deaf to the call of glory, fame, and manly virtue. “On vit

manifestement (says Montesquieu) pendant le pen de temps que dura la tyrannie des decemvirs, a quel point l'agrandissement de Rome dependoit de sa liberie: l'etat sembla avoir perdu Tame qui la faisoit mouvoir." And Bigland thus : "It was not till luxury had corrupted their manners, and their liberties were on the eve of their extinction, that the principal citizens of Athens and of E-ome began to construct magnificent houses, and to display their opulence and splendour in private life."

It may be objected to my little Poem, that the mythology of the Ancients is too much called upon to support the most considerable incidents; it may unhappily offend those feelings most predominant in the breast of a Christian, or it may be considered as injudicious in destroying the simplicity so necessary to the epic. Glover's Leonidas is commended by Lyttleton, because he did not allow himself the liberty so largely taken by his predecessors, of "wandering beyond the bounds, and out of sight, of common sense in the airy regions of poetic mythology;" yet, where is the Poet more remarkable for simplicity than Homer, and where is the author who makes more frequent use of Heathen mythology? "The Heathens," says Rollin, "addrest themselves to their gods, as to beings worthy of adoration."

He who writes an epic poem must transport himself to the scene of action; he must imagine himself possessed of the same opinions, manners, prejudices, and belief; he must suppose himself to be the hero he delineates, or his picture can no longer be nature, and what is not natural cannot please. It would be considered ridiculous in the historian or poet describing the ancient manners of Greece, to address himself to that Omnipotent Being who first called the world

out of chaos, nor would it be considered less so if he were to be silent upon the whole subject; for in all nations, in all ages, religion must be the spur to every noble action, and the characteristic of every lofty soul.

Perhaps I have chosen the rhymes of Pope, and departed from the noble simplicity of the Miltonic verse injudiciously. The immortal Poet of England, in his apology for the verse of *Paradise Lost*, declares “rhymes to be, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no true musical delight.” In my opinion, humble as it is, the custom of rhyming would ere now have been abolished amongst Poets, had not Pope, the disciple of the immortal Dryden, awakened the lyre to music, and proved that rhyme could equal blank verse in simplicity and gracefulness, and vie with it in elegance of composition, and in sonorous melody. No one who has read his translation of Homer, can refuse him the immortality which he merits so well, and for which he laboured so long. — He it was who planted rhyme for ever in the regions of Parnassus, and uniting elegance with strength, and sublimity with beauty, raised the English language to the highest excellence of smoothness and purity.

I confess that I have chosen Homes, for a model, and perhaps I have attempted to imitate his style too often and too closely; and yet some imitation is authorized by poets immortalized in the annals of Parnassus, whose memory will be revered as long as man has a soul to appreciate their merits. Virgil’s magnificent description of the storm in the first book of the *Aeneid*, is almost literally translated from Homer, where Ulysses, quitting the Isle of Calypso for “Phoeacia’s dusky shore,” is overwhelmed by Neptune. That sublime picture, “*Ponto nox incubat atra*,” and the beautiful apostrophe, “*Oh terque quaterque beati*,” is a literal

translation of the same incident in Homer. There are many other imitations, which it would be unnecessary and tedious here to enumerate. Even Milton, the pride and glory of English taste, has not disdained to replenish his imagination from the abundant fountains of the first and greatest of poets. It would have been both absurd and presumptuous, young and inexperienced as I am, to have attempted to strike out a path for myself, and to have wandered among the varied windings of Parnassus, without a guide to direct my steps, or to warn me from those fatal quicksands of literary blunders, in which, even with the best guide, I find myself so frequently immersed. There is no humility, but rather folly, in taking inferiority for a model, and there is no vanity, but rather wisdom, in following humbly the footsteps of perfection; for who would prefer quenching his thirst at the stagnant pool, when he may drink the pure waters of the fountain head? Thus, then, however unworthily, I have presumed to select, from all the poets of ancient or modern ages, Homer, the most perfect of the votaries of Apollo, whom every nation has contributed to immortalize, to celebrate, and to admire.

If I have in these pages proved what I desired, that Poetry is the parent of liberty, and of all the fine arts, and if I have succeeded in clearing up some of the obscurities of my little Poem, I have attained my only object; but if, on the contrary, I have failed, it must be attributed to my incapacity, and not to my inclination. Either way, it would be useless to proceed further, for nothing can be more true than the declaration of Bigland, “that a good book seldom requires, and a worthless one never deserves, a long preface.”

Book I.

THE war of Greece with Persia's haughty King,
No vulgar strain, eternal Goddess, sing!
What dreary ghosts to gluttoned Pluto fled.
What nations suffered, and what heroes bled:
Sing Asia's powerful Prince, who envious saw
The fame of Athens, and her might in war;
And scorns her power, at Cytherea's call
Her ruin plans and meditates her fall;
How Athens blinded, to the approaching chains
By Vulcan's artful spouse, unmoved remains;
Deceived by Venus thus, unconquered Greece
Forgot her glories in the lap of peace;
While Asia's realms, and Asia's lord prepare
To ensnare her freedom, by the wiles of war:
Hippias to exalt upon the Athenian throne,
Where once Pisistratus his father shone.
For yet her son Aeneas' wrongs impart
Revenge and grief to Cytherea's heart;
And still from smoking Troy's once sacred wall,
Does Priam's reeking shade for vengeance call,

Minerva saw, and Paphia's Queen defied,
A boon she begored, nor Jove the boon denied:
That Greece should rise, triumphant o'er her foe
Disarm th' invaders, and their power o'erthrow;
Her prayer obtained, the blue eyed Goddess flies
As the fierce eagle, thro' the radiant skies.
To Aristides then she stood confessed,
Shews Persia's arts, and fires his warlike breast:
Then pours celestial ardour o'er his frame
And points the way to glory and to fame.
Awe struck the Chief, and swells his troubled soul.
In pride and wonder thoughts progressive roll.
He inly groaned, and smote his labouring breast.
At once by Pallas, and by care opprest.
Inspired he moved, earth echoed where he trod.
All full of Heaven, all burning with the God.
Th' Athenians viewed with awe the mighty man.
To whom the Chief impassioned thus began.
"Hear, all ye Sons of Greece! Friends, Fathers, hear!
The Gods command it, and the Gods revere!
No madness mine, for mark, oh favored Greeks!
That by my month the martial Goddess speaks!

This, know Athenians, that proud Persia now
Prepares to twine thy laurels on her brow;
Behold her princely Chiefs, their weapons wield
By Venus fired, and shake the brazen shield.
I hear their shouts that echo to the skies,
I see their lances blaze, their banners rise,
I hear the clash of arms, the battle's roar,
And all the din, and thunder of the war!
I know that Greeks shall purchase just renown,
And fame impartial, shall Athena crown.
Then Greeks, prepare your arms! award the yoke,
Thus Jove commands" — sublime the hero spoke;
The Greeks assent with shouts, and rend the skies
With martial clamour, and tumultuous cries.
So struggling winds with rage indignant sweep
The azure waters of the silent deep,
Sudden the seas rebellowing, frightful rise,
And dash their foaming surges to the skies;
Burst the firm sand, and boil with dreadful roar,
Lift their black waves, and combat with the shore.
So each brave Greek, in thought aspires to fame,
Stung by his words, and dread of future shame;

Glory's own fires, within their bosom rise
And shouts tumultuous, thunder to the skies.
But Love's celestial Queen, resentful saw
The Greeks (by Pallas warned) prepare for war;
Th' indignant Goddess of the paphian bower
Deceives Themistocles with heavenly power;
The hero rising spoke, "Oh rashly blind,
What sudden fury thus has seized thy mind,
Boy as thou art, such empty dreams beware
Shall we, for griefs and wars unsought, prepare?
The will of mighty Jove, whate'er it be
Obey, and own th' Omnipotent decree.
If our disgrace and fall the fates employ.
Why did we triumph o'er perfidious Troy?
Why say, oh Chief, in that eventful hour
Did Grecian heroes crush Dardanian power?"
Him eyeing sternly, thus the Greek replies,
Renowned for truth, and as Minerva wise,
"Oh Son of Greece, no heedless boy am I
Despised in battle's toils, nor first to fly,
Nor dreams, or phrenzy call my words astray,
The heaven sent mandate pious I obey.

If Pallas did not all my words inspire,
May heaven pursue me with unceasing ire!
But if (oh grant my prayer almighty Jove)
I bear a mandate from the Courts above,
Then thro' yon heaven, let awful thunder roar
Till Greeks believe my mission, and adore!"

He ceased — and thro' the host one murmur ran,
With eyes transfixed, upon the godlike man.
But hark! o'er earth expands the solemn sound,
It lengthening grows — heaven's azure vaults resound,
While peals of thunder beat the echoing ground.

Prostrate, convinc'd divine Themistocles
Embraced the hero's hands, and clasped his knees:
"Behold me here, (the awe struck Chieftain cries
While tears repentant glisten in his eyes,)
"Behold me here, thy friendship to entreat
Themistocles, a suppliant at thy feet.
Before no haughty despot's royal throne
This knee has bent — it bends to thee alone
Thy mission to adore, thy truth to own.
Behold me Jove, and witness what I swear
By all on earth I love, by all in heav'n I fear,

Some fiend inspired my words, of dark design,
Some fiend concealed beneath a robe divine;
Then aid me in my prayer ye Gods above
Bid Aristides give me back his love!"

He spake and wept; benign the godlike man
Felt tears descend and paused, then thus began,
"Thrice worthy Greek for this shall we contend
Ah no! I feel thy worth, thou more than friend,
Pardon sincere Themistocles receive
The heart declares 'tis easy to forgive."

He spake divine, his eye with Pallas burns
He spoke and sighed, and sighed and wept by turns.
Themistocles beheld the Chief opprest,
Awe struck he paused, then rushed upon his breast,
Whom sage Miltiades with joy addressed.

"Hero of Greece, worthy a hero's name
Adored by Athens, fav'rite child of fame!
Glory's own spirit does with truth combine
To form a soul, so godlike, so divine!

Oh Aristides rise, our Chief! to save
The fame, the might of Athens from the grave.
Nor then refuse thy noble arm to lend

To guard Athena, and her state defend.
First I obedient, 'customed homage pay
To own a hero's and a leader's sway"
He said, and would have knelt; the man divine
Perceiv'd his will, and stayed the Sire's design.
"Not mine, oh Sage, to lead this gallant band
He generous said, and grasped his aged hand,
"Proud as I am in glory's arms to rise
Athenian Greeks, to shield your liberties,
Yet 'tis not mine to lead your powerful state,
Enough it is, to tempt you to be great;
Be't for Miltiades experienced sage
To curb your ardour and restrain your rage,
Your souls to temper — by his skill prepare
To succour Athens, and conduct the war.
More fits my early youth to purchase fame,
By deeds in arms t' immortalize my name."
Firmly he spake, his words the Greek inspire.
And all were hushed to listen and admire.
The Sage thus — "Most Allied to Gods! the fame
The pride, the glory of the Grecian name
E'en by thee, Chief, I swear, to whom is given

The sacred mandate of yon marble heaven —
To lead, not undeserving of thy love
T' avert the yoke, if so determines Jove.”
Amidst the host imagination rose
And paints the combat, but disdains the woes.
And heaven born fancy, with dishevelled hair,
Points to the ensanguined field, and victory there.
But soon, too soon, these empty dreams are driven
Forth from their breasts — but soothing hope is given
Hope sprung from Jove, man's sole, and envied heav'n.
Then all his glory, Aristides felt
And begged the Chieftain's blessing as he knelt:
Miltiades his pious arms out spread
Called Jove's high spirit on the hero's head,
Nor called unheard — sublime in upper air
The bird of Jove appeared to bless his prayer.
Lightning he breathed, not harsh, not fiercely bright,
But one pure stream of heaven collected light:
Jove's sacred smile lulls every care to rest,
Calms every woe, and gladdens every breast.
But what shrill blast thus bursts upon the ear;
What banners rise, what heralds forms appear;

That haughty mien, and that commanding face
Bespeak them Persians, and of noble race;
One on whose hand Darius signet beamed,
Superior to the rest, a leader seemed,
With brow contracted, and with flashing eye
Thus threatening spoke, in scornful majesty;
“Know Greeks that I, a sacred herald, bring
The awful mandate of the Persian King,
To force allegiance from the Sons of Greece,
Then earth and water give, nor scorn his peace.
For, if for homage, back reproof I bear.
To meet his wrath his vengeful wrath prepare,
For not ill vain ye scorn his dread command
When Asia’s might comes thundering in his hand.”
To whom Miltiades with kindling eye,
“We scorn Darius, and his threats defy;
And now, proud herald, shall we stoop to shame?
Shall Athens tremble at a tyrant’s name?
Persian away! such idle dreams forbear,
And shun our anger and our vengeance fear.”
“Oh! vain thy words, the herald fierce began;
Thrice vain thy dotaged words, oh powerless man,

Sons of a desert, hoping to withstand
All the joint forces of Darius' hand,
Fools, fools, the King of millions to defy
For freedom's empty name, to ask to die!
Yet stay, till Persia's powers their banners rear,
Then shall ye learn our forces to revere
And ye, oh impotent, shall deign to fear!"

To whom great Aristides: rising ire
Boiled in his breast, and set his soul on fire:
"Oh wretch accurst, the hero cried, to seek
T' insult experienced age, t' insult a Greek!
Inglorious slave! Whom truth and heaven deny
Unfit to live, yet more unfit to die:
But, trained to pass the goblet at the board
And servile kiss the footsteps of thy lord,
Whose wretched life no glorious deeds beguile
Who lives upon the semblance of a smile,
Die! thy base shade to gloomy regions fled,
Join there, the shivering phantoms of the dead.
Base slave, return to dust" — his victim then
In fearful accents cried, "Oh best of men
Most loved of Gods, most merciful, most just,

Behold me humbled, grovelling in the dust:
Not mine th' offence, the mandate stern I bring
From great Darius, Asia's tyrant King.
Oh strike not Chief, not mine the guilt, not mine,
Ah o'er those brows severe, let mercy shine
So dear to heav'n, of origin divine!
Tributes, lands, gold, shall wealthy Persia give
All, and yet more, but bid me, wretched, live!"
He trembling, thus persuades with fond entreat
And nearer prest, and clasped the hero's feet,
Forth from the Grecian breast, all rage is driv'n.
He lifts his arms, his eyes, his soul to heav'n.
"Hear, Jove omnipotent, all wise, all great
To whom all fate is known; whose will is fate.
Hear thou all-seeing one, hear Sire divine.
Teach me thy will, and be thy wisdom mine!
Behold this suppliant! life or death decree
Be thine the judgment, for I bend to thee."
And thus the Sire of Gods, and men replies,
While pealing thunder shakes the groaning skies,
The awful voice, thro' spheres unknown was driv'n
Resounding thro' the darkning realms of heaven.

Aloft in air sublime the echo rode
And earth resounds the glory of the God:
“Son of Athena, let the coward die,
And his pale ghost, to Pluto’s empire fly,
Son of Athena, our command obey,
Know thou our might, and then adore our sway.”
Th’ Almighty spake — the heavens convulsive start
From the black clouds, the whizzing lightnings dart
And dreadful dance along the troubled sky
Struggling with fate in awful mystery.
The hero heard, and Jove his breast inspired
Nor now by pity touched, but anger fired;
While his big heart within his bosom burns,
Oft from his feet the clinging slave he spurns.
Vain were his cries, his prayers ’gainst fate above,
Jove wills his fall, and who can strive with Jove?
To whom the hero — “Hence to Pluto’s sway
To realms of night, ne’er lit by Cynthia’s ray,
Hence from yon gulph, the earth and water bring
And crown with victory your mighty King.”
He said — and where the gulph of death appeared
Where raging waves, with rocks sublimely reared

He hurled the wretch at once of hope bereaved,
Struggling he fell, the roaring flood received.
E'en now for life his shrieks, his groans implore,
And now death's latent agony is o'er,
He struggling sinks, and sinks to rise no more.
The train amaz'd, behold their herald die
And Greece in arms — they tremble and they fly;
So some fair herd, upon the verdant mead
See by the lion's jaws their foremost bleed,
Fearful they fly, lest what revolving fate
Had doomed their leader, should themselves await.
Then shouts of glorious war, and fame resound,
Athena's brazen gates receive the lofty sound.
But she whom Paphia's radiant climes adore
From her own bower the work of Pallas saw:
Tumultuous thoughts, within her bosom rise
She calls her car, and at her will it flies.
Th' eternal car with gold celestial burns,
Its polished wheel on brazen axle turns:
This to his spouse by Vulcan's self was given
An offering worthy of the forge of heav'n.
The Goddess mounts the seat, and seized the reins

The doves celestial cut the aerial plains,
Before the sacred birds and car of gold
Self moved the radiant gates of heav'n unfold.
She then dismounts, and thus to mighty Jove
Begins the Mother and Queen of love.
“And is it thus, oh Sire, that fraud shall spring
From the pure breast of heaven's eternal King?
Was it for this, Saturnius' word was given
That Greece should fall 'mong nations curst of heaven,
Thou swore by hell's black flood, and heaven above.
Is this, oh say, is this the faith of Jove?
Behold stern Pallas, Athens' Sons alarms
Darius' herald crushed, and Greece in arms.
E'en now behold her crested streamers fly
Each Greek resolved to triumph or to die:
Ah me unhappy! when shall sorrow cease;
Too well I know the fatal might of Greece;
Was't not enough, imperial Troy should fall,
That Argive hands should raze the god built wall?
Was't not enough Anchises' Son should roam
Far from his native shore and much loved home?
All this unconscious of thy fraud I bore

For thou, oh Sire, t' allay my vengeance, swore
That Athens towering in her might should fall
And Rome should triumph on her prostrate wall;
But oh, if haughty Greece, should captive bring
The great Darius, Persia's mighty King,
What power her pride what power her might shall move
Not e'en the Thunderer, not eternal Jove,
E'en to thy heav'n shall rise her towering fame,
And prostrate nations will adore her name.
Rather on me thy instant vengeance take
Than all should fall for Cytherea's sake
Oh I hurl me flaming in the burning lake.
Transfix me there unknown to Olympian calm
Launch thy red bolt, and bare thy crimson arm.
I'd suffer all — more — bid my woes increase
To hear but one sad groan from haughty Greece.”
She thus her grief with fruitless rage expressed
And pride and anger swelled within her breast.
But he whose thunders awe the troubled sky
Thus mournful spake, and curbed the rising sigh:
“And is it thus celestial pleasures flow
E'en here shall sorrow reach and mortal woe!

Shall strife the heavenly powers for ever move
And e'en insult the sacred ear of Jove?
Know, oh rebellious, Greece shall rise sublime
In fame the first, nor daughter, mine the crime,
In valor foremost, and in virtue great
Fame's highest glories shall attend her state.
So fate ordains, nor all my boasted power
Can raise those virtues, or those glories low'r:
But rest secure, destroying time must come
And Athens self must own imperial Rome.
Thus the great Thunderer, and with visage mild
Shook his ambrosial curls before his child
And bending awful gave the eternal nod,
Heav'n quaked, and fate adored the parent God.
Joy seized the Goddess of the smiles and loves
Nor longer, care, her heavenly bosom moves.
Hope rose, and o'er her soul its powers displayed,
Nor checked by sorrow, nor by grief dismayed.
She thus — "Oh thou, whose awful thunders roll
Thro' heaven's etherial vaults, and shake the pole,
Eternal Sire, so wonderfully great.
To whom is known the secret page of fate.

Say, shall great Persia, next to Rome most dear
To Venus breast, shall Persia learn to fear?
Say, shall her fame, and princely glories cease
Shall Persia servile, own the sway of Greece?”
To whom the Thunderer bent his brow divine
And thus in accents heavenly and benign,
“Daughter, not mine the secrets to relate
The mysteries of all revolving fate,
But ease thy breast, enough for thee to know,
What powerful fate decrees, will Jove bestow..
He then her griefs, and anxious woes beguiled,
And in his sacred arms embraced his child.
Doubt clouds the Goddess’ breast — she calls her car,
And lightly sweeps the liquid fields of air.
When sable night midst silent nature springs,
And o’er Athena shakes her drowsy wings.
The Paphian Goddess from Olympus flies
And leaves the starry senate of the skies;
To Athens heaven’s blest towers, the Queen repairs
To raise more sufferings, and to cause more cares;
The Pylian Sage she moved so loved by fame
In face, in wisdom, and in voice the same.

Twelve Chiefs in sleep absorbed and grateful rest
She first beheld, and them she thus addrest.
“Immortal Chiefs, the fraudulent Goddess cries,
While all the hero, kindled in her eyes.
For you, these aged arms did I employ
For you, we razed the sacred walls of Troy,
And now for you, my shivering shade is driven
From Pluto’s dreary realms by urgent heaven;
Then, oh be wise, nor tempt th’ unequal tight
In open fields, but wait superior might
Within immortal Athens’ sacred wall,
There strive, there triumph, nor there fear to fall;
To own the Thunderer’s sway, then Greeks prepare.”
Benign she said, and melted into air.

End of Book I.

Book II

WHEN from the briny deep, the orient morn
Exalts her purple light, and beams unshorn;
And when the flaming orb of infant day
Glares o'er the earth, and re-illumes the sky;
The twelve deceived, with souls on fire arose,
While the false vision fresh in memory glows;
The Senate first they sought, whose lofty wall
Midst Athens rises, and o'ershadows all;
The pride of Greece, it lifts its front sublime
Unhurt amidst the ravages of time:
High on their towering seats, the heroes found
The Chiefs of Athens solemn ranged around;
One of the twelve the great Clombrotus then,
Renowned for piety, and loved by men;
"Assembled heroes, Chiefs to Pallas dear
All great in battle, and in virtue, hear!
When night with sable wings extended rose
And wrapt our weary limbs in sweet repose,
I and my friends, Cydoon famed in song,
Thelon the valiant, Herocles the strong,

Cleon and Thermosites, in battle great
By Pallas loved, and blest by partial fate.
To us and other six, while day toils steep
Our eyes in happy dreams, and grateful sleep.
The Pylian Sage appeared, but not as when
On Troy's last dust he stood, the pride of men;
Driven from the shore of Acheron he came
From lower realms to point the path to fame,
Oh glorious Chiefs, the sacred hero said
For you and for your fame, all Troy has bled;
Hither for you, my shivering shade is driv'n
From Pluto's dreary realms by urgent heav'n;
Then oh be wise, nor tempt th' unequal fight
In open field, but wait superior might
Within immortal Athens sacred wall
There strive, there triumph, nor there fear to fall!
To own the Thunderer's sway, then Greeks prepare.
Benign he said, and melted into air.
Leave us not thus I cried, Oh Pylian Sage
Experienced Nestor, famed for reverend age,
Say first, great hero, shall the trump of fame
Our glory publish, or disclose our shame?

Oh what are Athens fates? in vain I said
E'en as I spoke the shadowy Chief had fled.
Then here we flew, to own the visions sway
And heaven's decrees to adore and to obey."
He thus — and as before the blackened skies,
Sound the hoarse breezes, murmuring as they rise
So thro' th' assembled Greeks, one murmur rose
One long dull echo lengthening as it goes.
Then all was hushed in silence — breathless awe
Opprest each tongue, and trembling they adore.
But now uprising from th' astonished Chiefs,
Divine Miltiades exposed his griefs,
For well the godlike warrior Sage had seen,
The frauds deceitful of the Paphian Queen,
And feared for Greece, for Greece to whom is give
Eternal fame, the purest gift of heaven.
And yet he feared — the pious hero rose
Majestic in his sufferings in his woes;
Grief clamm'd his tongue, but soon his spirit woke,
Words burst aloft, and all the Patriot spoke.
"Oh Athens, Athens! all the snares I view
Thus shalt thou fall, and fall inglorious too!

Are all thy boasted dignities no more?
Is all thy might, are all thy glories o'er?
Oh woe on woe, unutterable grief
Not Nestor's shade, that cursed phantom chief,
But in that reverend air that lofty mien
Behold the frauds of love's revengeful Queen,
Not yet, her thoughts does vengeance cease t' employ.
Her Son Aeneas' wrongs, and burning Troy
Not yet forgotten lie within her breast,
Nor soothed by time, nor by despair deprest.
Greeks still extolled by glory, and by fame
For yet, oh Chiefs! ye bare a Grecian name.
If in these walls, these sacred walls we wait
The might of Persia, and the will of fate,
Before superior force, will Athens fall
And one o'erwhelming ruin bury all.
Then in the open plain your might essay,
Rush on to battle, crush Darius' sway;
The frauds of Venus, warrior Greeks beware,
Disdain the Persian foes, nor stoop to fear."
This said, Clombrotus, him indignant heard
Nor felt his wisdom, nor his wrath he feared,

With rage the Chief, the godlike Sage beheld.
And passion in his stubborn soul rebelled.
“Tliricc impious man, th’ infuriate Chieftain cries,
(Flames black and fearful, flashing from his eyes,)
Where lies your spirit Greeks? and can ye bow
To this proud upstart of your power so low?
What! does his aspect awe ye? is his eye
So full of haughtiness and majesty?
Behold the impious soul, that dares defy
The power of Gods and Sovereign of the sky!
And can your hands no sacred weapon wield,
To crush the tyrant, and your country shield?
On Greeks! — your sons, your homes, your country free
From such usurping Chiefs and tyranny!”
He said, and grasped his weapon — at his words
Beneath the horizon gleamed ten thousand swords,
Ten thousand swords e’en in one instant raised,
Sublime they danced aloft, and midst the Senate blazed.
Nor wisdom checked, nor gratitude repress,
They rose, and flashed before the Sage’s breast.
With pride undaunted, greatness unsubdued,
’Gainst him in arms, the impetuous Greeks he viewed

Unarmed, unawed, before th' infuriate bands,
Nor begged for life, nor stretched his suppliant hands.
He stood astounded, rivetted, oppressed.
By grief unspeakable, which swelled his breast,
Life, feeling, being, sense forgotten lie,
Buried in one wide waste of misery;
Can this be Athens! this her Senates pride?
He asked but gratitude, — was this denied?
Tho' Europe's homage at his feet were hurled
Athens forsakes him — Athens was his world.
Unutterable woe! by anguish stung
All his full soul, rushed heaving to his tongue,
And thoughts of power, of fame, of greatness o'er
He cried "Athenians!" and he could no more.
Awed by that voice of agony, that word,
Hushed were the Greeks, and sheathed the obedient sword.
They stood abashed — to them the ancient Chief,
Began — and thus relieved his swelling grief.
"Athenians! warrior Greeks! my words revere
Strike me, but listen — bid me die, but hear!
Hear not Clombrotus, when he bids you wait,
In Athens' walls, Darius and your fate;

I feel that Pallas' self, my soul inspires
My mind she strengthens, and my bosom fires;
Strike Greeks! but hear me; think not to this heart
Yon thirsty swords, one breath of fear impart;
Such slavish, low born thoughts, to Greeks unknown
A Persian feels, and cherishes alone!
Hear me Athenians! hear me, and believe,
See Greece mistaken! e'en the Gods deceive;
But fate yet wavers — yet may wisdom move
These threatening woes and thwart the Queen of Love.
Obey my counsels, and invoke for aid
The cloud compelling God, and blue eyed maid;
I fear not for myself the silent tomb,
Death lies in every shape, and death must come.
But ah! ye mock my truth, traduce my fame,
Ye blast my honor, stigmatize my name!
Ye call me tyrant when I wish thee free,
Usurper, when I live but Greece, for thee!"
And thus the Chief — and boding silence drowned
Each clam'rous tongue, and sullen reigned around,
"Oh Chief!" great Aristides first began
"Mortal yet perfect, godlike and yet man!"

Boast of ungrateful Greece I my prayer attend,
Oh I be my Chieftain, Guardian, Father, Friend!
And ye, oh Greeks! impetuous and abhorred,
Again presumptuous, lift the rebel sword,
Again your weapons raise, in hateful ire,
To crush the Leader, Hero, Patriot, Sire!
Not such was Greece, when Greeks united stood
To bathe perfidious Troy in hostile blood,
Not such were Greeks inspired by glory, then
As Gods they conquered, now they're less than men!
Degenerate race! now lost to once loved fame
Traitors to Greece, and to the Grecian name.
Who now your honors, who your praise will seek
Who now shall glory in the name of Greek!
But since such discords your base souls divide
Procure the lots, let Jove and Heaven decide.”
To him Clombrotus thus admiring cries
“Thy thoughts how wondrous, and thy words how wise!
So let it be, avert, the threatened w oes.
And Jove be present, and the right disclose;
But give me. Sire of Gods and powers above.
The heavenly vision, and my truth to prove!

Give me t' avenge the breach of all thy laws
T' avenge myself, then aid my righteous cause!
If this thou wilt, I'll to thine altars lead
Twelve bulls which to thy sacred name shall bleed,
Six snow white heifers of a race divine
Prostrate shall fall, and heap the groaning shrine,
Nor this the most — six rams that fearless stray
Untouched by man, for thee this arm shall slay.”
Thus prayed the Chief, with shouts the heavens resound
Jove weighs the balance and the lots go round!
Declare oh muse! for to thy piercing eyes
The book of fate irrevocably lies;
What lots leapt forth, on that eventful day
Who won, who lost, all seeing Goddess say!
First great Clonibrotus, all his fortune tried
And strove with fate, but Jove his prayer denied
Infuriate to the skies his arms are driven,
And raging thus upbraids the King of heaven.
“Is this the virtue of the blest abodes.
And this the justice of the God of Gods?
Can he who hurls the bolt, and shakes the sky
The prayer of truth, unblemished truth deny.

Has he no faith by whom the clouds are riven
Who sits superior on the throne of Heaven?
No wonder earth born men are prone to fall
In sin, or listen to dishonor's call
When Gods, th' immortal Gods, transgress the laws
Of truth, and sin against a righteous cause."
Furious he said, by anger's spirit fired
Then sullen from the Senate walls retired.
'Tis now Miltiades' stern fate to dare
But first he lifts his pious soul in prayer.
"Daughter of Jove! the mighty Chief began.
Without thy wisdom, frail and weak is man
A phantom Greece adores, oh show thy power,
And prove thy love in this eventful hour!
Crown all thy glory, all thy might declare!"
The Chieftain prayed, and Pallas heard his prayer.
Swayed by the presence of the power divine
The fated lot Miltiades was thine!
That hour the swelling trump of partial fame
Diffused eternal glory on thy name!
"Daughter of Jove, he cries, unconquered maid!
Thy power I own, and I confess thy aid,

For this twelve ewes upon thy shrine shall smoke
Of milk white fleece, the comeliest of their flock.
While hecatombs and generous sacrifice
Shall fume and blacken half th' astonished skies."
And thus the Chief — the shouting Greeks admire
While truth's bright spirit, sets their souls on fire:
Then thus Themistocles, "Ye Grecian host
Not now the time for triumph or for boast,
Now Greeks! for graver toils your minds prepare
Not for the strife, but council of the war.
Behold the sacred herald! sent by Greece
To Sparta's vales now hushed in leagues of peace;
Her Chiefs, to aid the common cause, t' implore
And bid Darius shun the Argive shore;
Behold liiiii here! then let the leader Greek
Command the bearer of our hopes to speak."
And thus the Sage, "Where'er the herald stands
Bid him come forth, 'tis Athens Chief commands.
And bid him speak with freedom uncontrolled,
His thoughts deliver and his charge unfold."
He said and sat — the Greeks impatient wait
The will of Sparta, and Athena's fate.

Silent they sat — so ere the whirlwinds rise,
Ere billows foam and thunder to the skies,
Nature in death-like calm her breath suspends.
And hushed in silent awe, th' approaching storm attends.
Now midst the Senate's walls the herald stands:
"Ye Greeks," he said, and stretched his sacred hands
"Assembled heroes, ye Athenian bands.
And thou beloved of Jove, our Chief, oh Sage,
Renowned for wisdom, as renowned for age,
And all ye Chiefs in battles rank divine!
No joyful mission swayed by Pallas mine,
The hardy Spartans, with one voice declare
Their will to aid our freedom and the war,
Instant they armed, by zeal and impulse driven
But on the plains of the mysterious heaven
Comets and fires were writ — an awful sign,
And dreadful omen of the wrath divine
While threatened plagues upon their shores appear
They curb their valor, all subdued by fear;
The oracles declare the will above,
And of the sister and the wife of Jove,
That not until the moons bright course was o'er

The Spartan warriors should desert their shore
Threats following threats succeed the mandate dire
Plagues to themselves, and to their harvests fire.
The Spartan Chiefs desist, their march delay
To wait th' appointed hour and heaven obey.
Grief smote my heart, my hopes and mission vain.
Their town I quitted for my native plain,
And when an eminence I gained, in woe
I gazed upon the verdant fields below,
Where nature's ample reign extending wide,
Displays her graces with commanding pride.
Where cool Eurotas, winds her limpid floods
Thro' verdant valleys, and thro' shady woods.
And crowned in majesty o'ertowering all
In bright effulgence, Sparta's lofty wall.
To these I looked farewell, and humbled, bowed
In chastened sorrow, to the thundering God.
'Twas thus I mused, when from a verdant grove
That wafts delicious perfume from above
The monster Pan, his form gigantic reared
And dreadful, to my awe struck sight appeared.
I hailed the God who reigns supreme below,

Known by the horns that started from his brow;
Up to the hips a goat, but man's his face
Tho' grim, and stranger to celestial grace.
Within his hand a shepherd's crook he bore
The gift of Dian, on th' Arcadian shore;
Before th' immortal power I, fearing, bowed
Congealed with dread, and thus addressed the God.
"Comes Hermes Son, as awful as his Sire,
To vent upon the Greeks immortal ire!
Is't not enough the mandate stern I bring
From Sparta's Chiefs, and Sparta's royal King,
That heaven enjoins them to refrain from fight
Till Dian fills again her horns with light?
Then vain their aid, ere then may Athens fall
And Persia's haughty Chiefs invest her wall.
I said and sighed, the God in accents mild
My sorrow thus, and rigid griefs beguiled.
Not to destroy I come, oh chosen Greek
Not Athens fall, but Athens fame I seek,
Then give again to honor and to fame
My power despised, and my forgotten name.
At Sparta's doom, no longer Chief repine,

But learn submission to the will divine;
Behold e'en now, within this fated hour
On Marathonian plains, the Persian power?
E'en Hippias self inspires th' embattled host
Th' Athenian's terror, as the Persian's boast;
Bid Athens rise and glory's powers attest
Enough — no more — the fates conceal the rest.
He said, his visage burned with heavenly light
He spoke and speaking, vanished from my sight
And awed, I sought where these loved walls invite
But think not, warrior Greeks, the fault is mine,
If Athens fall — it is by wrath divine.
I vainly vainly grieve, the evil springs
From him — the God of Gods, the King of Kings!"
The Herald said, and bent his sacred head
While cherished hope from every bosom fled.
Each dauntless hero, by despair deprest
Felt the deep sorrow, swelling in his breast.
They mourn for Athens, friendless and alone.
Cries followed cries, and groan succeeded groan.
Th' Athenian matrons, startled at the sound
Rush from their looms and anxious crowd around,

They ask the cause, the fatal cause is known
By each fond sigh, and each renewing groan,
While ill their arms some infant love they bear
At once for which they joy, for which they fear
Hushed on its mother's breast, the cherished child
Unconscious midst the scene of terror smiled;
On rush the matrons, they despairing seek
Miltiades adored by every Greek;
Him found at length, his counsels they entreat
Hang on his knees, and clasp his sacred feet.
Their babes before him on the ground they throw
In all the maddening listlessness of woe.
First Delopeia of the matrons chief
Thus vents her bursting soul in frantic grief
While her fond babe she holds aloft in air
Thus her roused breast, prefers a mother's prayer.
"Oh Son of Cimon for the Grecian's raise
To heaven, thy fame, thy honor, and thy praise.
Thus — thus — shall Athens and her heroes fall
Shall thus one ruin seize and bury all!
Say, shall these babes be strangers then to fame
And be but Greeks in spirit and in name?

Oh first ye Gods! and hear a mother's prayer.
First let them glorious fall in ranks of war!
If Asia triumph, then shall Hippias reign
And Athens free born Sons be slaves again!
Oh Son of Cimon! let thy influence call
The souls of Greeks to triumph or to fall!
And guard their own, their children's, country's name,
From foul dishonor, and eternal shame!"

Thus thro' her griefs, the love of glory broke.
The mother wept, but 'twas the Patriot spoke.
And as before the Greek, she bowed with grace.
The lucid drops, bedewed her lovely face.
Their shrieks, and frantic cries, the matrons cease
And death-like silence awes the Sons of Greece.
Thrice did the mighty Chief of Athens seek
To curb his feelings and essay to speak,
'Twas vain — the ruthless sorrow wrung his breast
His mind disheartened, and his soul opprest
He thus — while o'er his cheek the moisture stole
"Retire ye matrons, nor unman my soul,
Tho' little strength this aged arm retains
My swelling soul Athena's foe disdains;

Hushed be your griefs, to heav'n for victory cry
Assured we'll triumph, or with freedom die.
And ye oh Chiefs, when night disowns her sway
And pensive Dian yields her power to day,
To quit these towers for Marathon prepare
And brave Darius in the ranks of war.
For yet may Jove protect the Grecian name
And crown in unborn ages, Athens fame.”
He said — and glowing with the warlike fire,
And cheered by hope, the godlike Chiefs retire.
Now Cynthia rules the earth, the flaming God
In oceans sinks, green Neptune's old abode
Black Erebus on drowsy pinions, springs
And o'er Athena cowers his sable wings.

End of Book II

Book III.

WHEN from the deep the hour's eternal sway,
Impels the coursers of the flaming day,
The long haired Greeks, with brazen arms prepare,
Their freedom to preserve and wage the war.
First Aristides from the couch arose,
While his great mind with all Minerva glows;
His mighty limbs, his golden arms invest,
The cuirass blazes on his ample breast,
The glittering cuises both his legs infold,
And the huge shield's on fire with burnished gold
His hands two spears uphold of equal size,
And fame's bright glories kindle in his eyes;
Upon his helmet, plumes of horse hair nod
And forth he moved, majestic as a God!
Upon his snorting steed the warrior sprung
The courser neighed, the brazen armour rung.
From heaven's etherial heights the martial maid
With conscious pride, the hero's might surveyed.
Him as she eyed, she shook the gorgon shield
"Henceforth to me," she cried, "let all th' immortals yield,

Let monster Mars, the Latia regions own,
For Attica, Minerva stands alone.”

And now, th’ unconquered Chief of Justice, gains
The Senate’s walls, and there the steed detains,
Whence he dismounts — -Miltiades he seeks,
Beloved of Jove, the leader of the Greeks,
Nor sought in vain, there clad in armour bright
The Chieftain stood, all eager for the fight:
Within his aged hands two lances shine,
The helmet blazed upon his brows divine,
And as he bends beneath th’ unequal weight
Youth smiles again, when with gigantic might
His nervous limbs, immortal arms could wield
Crush foe on foe, and raging, heap the field;
Yet tho’ such days were past, and ruthless age
Transformed the warrior, to the thoughtful sage,
Tho’ the remorseless hand of silent time
Impaired each joint, and stiffened every limb,
Yet thro’ his breast, the fire celestial stole,
Throbb’d in his veins, and kindled in his soul,
111 thought, the Lord of Asia, threats no more,
And Hippias bites the dust, midst seas of gore.

Ilim as he viewed, the youthful hero's breast,
Heaved high with joy, and thus the sage addressed,
"Chief, best beloved of Pallas," he began,
"In fame allied to Gods, oh wondrous man!
Behold Apollo gilds the Athenian wall,
Our freedom waits, and fame and glory call
To battle! Asia's King and myriads dare.
Swell the loud trump, and raise the din of war."
He said impatient; then the warrior sage
Began, regardless of the fears of age:
"Not mine, oh youth, with caution to controul
The fire and glory of thy eager soul;
kSo was I wont in brazen arms to shine
Such strength, and such impatient fire were mine."
He said, and bade the trumpet's peals rebound.
High, and more high, the echoing war notes sound:
Sudden one general shout the din replies
A thousand lances blazing as they rise
And Athen's banners wave, and float along the skie?
So from the marsh, the cranes embodied fly
Clap their glad wings, and cut the liquid sky
With thrilling cries, they mount their joyful way

Vig'rous they spring, and hail the new born day,
So rose the shouting Greeks, inspired by fame
T' assert their freedom, and maintain their name.
First came Themistocles in arms renowned
Whose steed impatient, tore the trembling ground,
High o'er his helmet snowy plumes arise
And shade that brow, which Persia's might defies;
A purple mantle graceful waves behind
Nor hides his arms but floats upon the wind.
His mighty form two crimson belts unfold
Rich in embroidery, and stiff with gold.
Calimachus the Polemarch, next came
The theme of general praise and general fame.
Cynagirus who e'en the Gods would dare
Heap ranks on ranks and thunder thro' the war;
His virtues godlike; man's his strength surpassed,
In battle foremost, and in flight the last,
His ponderous helm's a shaggy lions hide
And the huge war axe clattered at his side,
The mighty Chief, a brazen chariot bore
While fame and glory hail him and adore.
Antenor next, his aid to Athens gave

Like Paris youthful, and like Hector brave;
Cleon, Minerva's priest, experienced sage
Advanced in wisdom, as advanced in age.
Agregoras, Delenus' favorite child
The parent's cares, the glorious son beguiled
But now he leaves his sire to seek his doom
His country's freedom, or a noble tomb;
And young Aratus moved with youthful pride,
And heart elated at the hero's side.
Next thou Cleones, thou triumphant moved
By Athens honoured, by the Greeks beloved:
And Sthenellus the echoing pavements trod,
From youth devoted to the martial God
Honor unspotted, crowned the hero's name,
Unbounded virtue, and unbounded fame.
Such heroes shone the foremost of the host
All Athens' glory, and all Athens' boast.
Behind a sable cloud of warriors rise
With ponderous arms, and shouting rend the skies;
These bands with joy, Miltiades inspire,
Fame fills his breast, and sets his soul on fire.
Aloft he springs into the gold wrought car

While the shrill blast resounds, to war! to war!
The coursers plunge as conscious of their load
And proudly neighing, feel they bear a God.
The snow white steeds by Pallas self were given,
Which sprung from the immortal breed of heaven,
The car was wrought of brass and burnished gold
And divers figures on its bulk were told,
Of heroes who in plunging to the fight
Shrouded Troy's glories in eternal night:
Of fierce Pelides who relenting gave
At Priam's prayer, to Hector's corpse a grave,
Here Spartan Helen, flies her native shore
To bid proud Troy majestic stand no more;
There Hector clasps his consort to his breast
Consoles her sufferings, tho' himself oppressed,
And there he rushes to the embattled field
For victory or death, nor e'en in death to yield:
Here Illium prostrate feels the Argive ire
Her heroes perished, and her towers on fire.
And here old Priam breathes his last drawn sigh
And feels 'tis least of all his griefs to die;
There his loved sire, divine Aeneas bears

And leaves his own with all a patriot's tears
While in one hand he holds his weeping boy,
And looks his last on lost unhappy Troy.
The warrior seized the reins, the impatient steeds
Foam at the mouth and spring where glory leads,
The gates, the heroes pass, th' Athenian dames
Bend from their towers, and bid them save from flames
Their walls, their infant heirs and fill the skies
With shouts, entreaties, prayers, and plaintive cries
Echo repeats their words, the sounds impart
New vigor to each Greek's aspiring heart.
Forward with shouts they press, and hastening on
Try the bold lance and dream of Marathon.
Meanwhile the Persians on th' embattled plain
Prepare for combat, and the Greeks disdain,
Twice twenty sable bulls they daily pay
Unequalled homage to the God of day;
Such worthy gifts, the wealthy warriors bring.
And such the offerings of the Persian King;
While the red wine around his altars flowed
They beg protection from the flaming God.
But the bright Patron of the Trojan war

Accepts their offerings, but rejects their prayer:
The power of love alone, dares rigid fate.
To vent on Greece her vengeance and her hate;
Not love for Persia prompts the vengeful dame,
But hate for Athens, and the Grecian name:
In Phoebus name, the fraudulent Queen receives
The hecatombs, and happy omens gives.
And now the heralds with one voice repeat
The will of Datis echoing thro' the fleet,
To council, to convene the Persian train
That Athens Chiefs should brave their might in vain,
The Chiefs and Hippias self his will obey,
And seek the camp, the heralds lead the way.
There on the couch, their leader Datis sat
In ease luxurious, and in Kingly state,
Around his brow, pride deep, and scornful played,
A purple robe, his slothful limbs arrayed.
Which o'er his form, its silken draperies fold
Majestic sweeps the ground, and glows with gold.
While Artaphernes resting at his side
Surveys th' advancing train with conscious pride.
The Elder leader, mighty Datis, then,

“Assembled Princes, great and valiant men.
And thou thrice glorious Hippias, loved by heav’n,
To whom as to thy Sire, is Athens giv’n;
Behold the Grecian banners float afar
Shouting they hail us, and provoke the war.
Then mighty Chiefs and Princes, be it yours
To warm and fire the bosoms of our powers.
That when the morn has spread her saffron light.
The Greeks may own and dread Darius’ might;
For know, oh Chiefs, when once proud Athens falls,
When Persian flames shall reach her haughty walls.
From her depression, wealth to you shall spring,
And honor, fame and glory to your King.”
He said; his words the Princes’ breast’s inspire,
Silent they bend, and with respect retire.
And now the Greeks, in able marches gain
By Pallas fired, the Marathonian plain,
Before their eyes th’ unbounded ocean rolls
And all Darius’ fleet — unawed their souls,
They fix their banners, and the tents they raise
And in the sun, their polished javelins blaze,
Their leaders self, within the brazen car

Their motions orders, and prepares for war;
Their labors o'er, the aged hero calls
The Chiefs to council midst the canvas walls.
And then the Sage, "How great the Persian host!
But let them not their strength or numbers boast,
Their slothful minds to love of fame unknown.
Sigh not for war, but for the spoil alone,
Strangers to honor's pure immortal light.
They not as heroes, but as women fight;
Groveling as proud, and cowardly as vain
The Greeks they fear, their numbers they disdain;
And now Athenians! fired by glory, rise
And lift your fame unsullied to the skies,
Your victim Persia, liberty your prize.
And now twice twenty sable bullocks bring
To heap the altars of the thundering King,
Bid twelve white heifers of gigantic breed
To Jove's great daughter, wise Minerva bleed,
And then in sleep employ the solemn night
Nor till Apollo reigns, provoke the fight."
The hero said; the warlike council o'er
They raise the lofty altars on the shore.

They pile in heaps the pride of all the wood
They fall the first, who first in beauty stood:
The pine that soars to heaven, the sturdy oak,
And cedars crackle at each hero's stroke.
And now two altars stand of equal size
And lift their forms majestic to the skies.
The heroes then twice twenty bullocks bring
A worthy offering to the thundering King.
The aged leader seized the sacred knife
Blow followed blow, out gushed the quivering life
Thro' their black hides the ruthless steel is driven
The victims groan — Jove thunders from his heaven.
And then their bulks upon the pile they lay,
The flames rush upward, and the armies pray.
Driven by the wind, the roaring fires ascend
And now they hiss in air, and now descend
With all their sap, the new cut faggots raise
Their flames to heaven, and crackle as they blaze;
And then the Sage, "Oh, thou of powers above
The first and mightiest, hear, eternal Jove!
Give us, that Athens in her strength may rise
And lift our fame and freedom to the skies!"

This said, he ceased — th' assembled warriors pour
The sacred incense, and the God adore;
Then partial Jove propitious heard their prayer
Thrice shook the heavens, and thundered thro' the air
With joy, the Greeks, the favoring sign inspires
And their breasts glow, with all the warlike fires:
And now twelve heifers white as snow they lead
To great Minerva's sacred name to bleed.
They fall — their bulks upon the pile are laid
Sprinkled with oil, and quick in flame arrayed.
And now descending midst the darkening skies
Behold the Goddess of the radiant eyes.
The ground she touched, beneath the mighty load
Earth groaning rocks, and nature hails the God.
Within her hand her father's lightnings shone,
And shield that blazes near th' eternal throne;
The Greeks with fear, her dauntless form surveyed
And trembling, bowed before the blue eyed maid.
Then favoring, thus began the power divine,
While in her eyes celestial glorys shine;
“Ye sons of Athens, loved by heaven,” she cries
“Revered by men, be valiant and be wise,

When morn awakes, Darius numbers dare
Clang your loud arms, and rouse the swelling war:
But first to yon proud fleet a herald send
To bid the Persians yield, and fight suspend,
For vainly to their God, they suppliant call,
Jove favors Greece, and Pallas wills their fall.”
She said, and thro’ the depths of air she flies
Mounts the blue heaven, and scales the liquid skies
The Greeks rejoicing thank the powers above
And Jove’s great daughter, and eternal Jove.
And now a herald to the fleet they send
To bid the Persians yield, and war suspend.
Thro’ the divided troops the herald goes
Thro’ Athens host, and thro’ th’ unnumbered foes,
Before the holy man, the Persian bands
Reverend give way, and ask what Greece demands:
He tells not all, but that he, chosen, seeks
Datis their Chief, by order of the Greeks.
The mission but in part, he, sage reveals
And what his prudence prompts him, he conceals.
Then to their Chief they lead him, where he sat
With pomp surrounded, and in gorgeous state,

Around his kingly couch, his arms were spread
Flaming in gold, by forge Cyclopean made;
And then stern Datis, frowning thus began,
“What hopes deceive thee, miserable man?
What treacherous fate allures thee thus to stray
Thro’ all our hosts? what Gods beguile the way?
Think’st thou to ’scape the Persian steel, when Greece
Our herald crushed, and banished hopes of peace?
But speak, what will the Greeks? and do they dare
To prove our might, and tempt th’ unequal war?
Or do they deign to own Darius’ sway
And yield to Persia’s might, th’ embattled day?”
To whom th’ Athenian herald made reply
“The Greeks disdain your terms, and scorn to fly,
Unknown to heroes, and to sons of Greece
The shameful slavery of a Persian peace;
Defiance stern, not servile gifts I bring,
Your bonds detested, and despised your King;
Of equal size, the Greeks two altars raise
To Jove’s high glory, and Minerva’s praise,
The God propitious heard, and from the skies
Descends the Goddess of the azure eyes,

And thus began — Assembled Greeks give ear
Attend my wisdom, nor my glory fear;
When morn awakes, Darius numbers dare
Clang your loud arms, and rouse the swelling war,
But first to yon proud fleet a herald send
To bid the Persians yield, and war suspend
For vainly to their God, they suppliant call
Jove favors Greece, and Pallas wills their fall.”
The Goddess spoke th’ Athenians own her sway
I seek the fleet, and heaven’s command obey.
The Greeks disdain your millions in the war
Nor I, oh Chief, your promised vengeance fear
Strike! but remember that the God on high
Who rules the heavens, and thunders thro’ the sky
Not unrevenged will see his herald slain
Nor shall thy threats his anger tempt in vain.”
And thus the Greek, then Datis thus replies
Flames black and fearful scowling from his eyes,
“Herald away! and Asia’s vengeance fear
Back to your phrenzied train my mandate bear,
That Greece and Grecian Gods may threat in vain,
We scorn their anger, and their wrath disdain:

For he who lights the earth and rules the skies
With happy omens to our vows replies.
When morn uprising, breathes her saffron light
Prepare to dare our millions in the fight.
Thy life I give, Darius' will to say
And Asia's hate — hence Chief, no more, away!"
He said, and anger filled the Grecian's breast
But prudent, he the rising wrath suppressed;
Indignant, thro' the canvas tents he strode
And silently invoked the thundering God.
Fears for his country in his bosom rose.
As on he wandered midst unnumbered foes;
He strikes his swelling breast and hastens on
O'er the wide plains of barren Marathon.
And now he sees the Grecian banners rise
And well armed warriors blaze before his eyes,
Then thus he spoke — "Ye Grecian bands give ear.
Ye warrior Chiefs, and Attic heroes hear!
Your will to Asia's other Prince I told
All which you bade me. Chieftains to unfold.
But Pallas' vengeance I denounced in vain,
Your threats he scorned, and heard with proud disdain,

The God, he boasts, who lights the earth and skies
With happy omens to his vows replies;
Then when the uprising morn extends her light
Prepare, ye Greeks, to dare his powers in fight.”
He said — the Greeks for instant strife declare
Their will, and arm impatient for the war.
Then he their godlike Chief, as Pallas sage,
“Obey my counsels, and repress your rage,
Ye Greeks,” he cried, “the sacred night displays
Her shadowy veil, and earth in gloom arrays;
Her sable shades, e’en Persia’s Chiefs obey
And wait the golden mandate of the day:
Such is the will of Jove, and Gods above,
And such the order of the loved of Jove.”
He said — the Greeks their leaders word obey,
They seek their tents, and wait th’ approaching day,
O’er either host celestial Somnus reigns,
And solemn silence lulls th’ embattled plains.

End of Book III.

Book IV.

AND now the morn by Jove to mortals given,
With rosy fingers opes the gates of heaven,
The Persian Princes and their haughty Lord,
Gird on their arms, and seize the flaming sword:
Forth, forth they rush to tempt the battle's roar,
Earth groans, and shouts rebelling, shake the shore
As when the storm the heavenly azure shrouds,
With sable night, and heaps on clouds, the clouds.
The Persians rose, and croud th' embattl'd plain
And stretch their warlike millions to the main;
And now th' Athenians throng the fatal field
By fame inspired, and swords and bucklers wield;
In air sublime their floating banners rise,
The lances blaze; the trumpets rend the skies.
And then Miltiades — "Athenians, hear,
Behold the Persians, on the field appear
Dreadful in arms, remember Greeks your fame,
Rush to the war, and vindicate your name;
Forward! till low in death the Persians lie,
For freedom triumph or for freedom die."

He said, his visage glows with heavenly light;
He spoke sublime, and rush'd into the fight.
And now the fury of the war began —
Lance combats lance, and man's opposed to man,
Beneath their footsteps, groans the laboring plain
And shouts re-echoing bellow to the main.
Mars rages fierce, by heroes, heroes die,
Earth rocks, Jove thunders, and the wounded cry.
What mighty Chiefs by Aristides fell,
What heroes perished, heavenly Goddess tell.
First thou, oh Feleus, felt his conquering hand,
Stretched in the dust and weltering in the sand.
Thro' thy bright shield the forceful weapon went,
Thy self in arms o'erthrown, thy corslet rent;
Next rash Antennes met an early fate,
And feared, alas! th' unequal foe too late.
And Delucus the sage, and Philo fell,
And Crotan sought the dreary gates of hell,
And Mnemons self with wealth and honor crowned,
Igvered for virtue, and for fame renowned.
He, great in battle, feared the hero's hand,
Groaning lie fell, and spurned the reeking sand:

But what bold chief thus rashly dares advance,
Tho' not in youth, he shakes the dreadful lance.
Proudly, the earth the haughty warrior trod
He looked a Monarch and he moved a God:
Then on the Greek, with rage intrepid flew
And with one blow th' unwary Greek o'erthrew;
That hour, oh Chief, and that eventful day
Had bade thee pass a shivering ghost away.
But Pallas, fearful for her fav'rite's life.
Sudden upraised thee to renew the strife;
Then Aristides with fresh vigour rose.
Shame fired his breast, his soul with anger slows,
With all his force he rushes on the foe,
The warrior bending disappoints the blow,
And thus with rage contemptuous, "Chieftain know
Hippias the loved of heaven, thine eyes behold.
Renowned for strength of arm, in battle bold,
But tell thy race, and who the man whose might
Dares cope with rebel Athens' King in fight;"
Stung to the soul, "Oh Slave, the Greek returns,
While his big heart, within his bosom burns.
Perfidious Prince, to faith and truth unknown;

On Athens' ashes, raise thy tyrant throne,
When Grecia's chiefs, and Grecia's heroes fall,
When Persia's fires, invest her lofty wall,
When nought but slaves, within her towers remain,
Then, nor till then, shalt thou, oh Hippias, reign,
Then, nor till then, will Athens yield her fame
To foul dishonor, and eternal shame;
Come on! no matter what my race or name;
For this, oh Prince, this truth unerring know
That in a Greek, you meet a noble foe.”
Furious he said, and on the Prince he sprung
With all his force; the meeting armour rung.
Struggling they raged, and both together fell,
That hour the tyrant's ghost had entered hell.
But partial fate prolonged the Prince's breath.
Renewed the combat, and forbad the death.
Meanwhile the hosts, the present war suspend.
Silent they stand, and heaven's decree attend.
First the bright lance majestic Hippias threw
But erringly the missile weapon flew;
Then Aristides hurled the thirsty dart
Struck the round shield, and nearly pierced his heart.

But the bright arms, that shone with conscious pride.
Received the blow, and turned the point aside.
And thus, the Greek, "Whom your enquiring eyes
Behold, oh Prince," th' Athenian hero cries.
"Is Aristides, called the just, a name
By Athens honored, nor unknown to fame."
Scared at the sound, and seized by sudden fright,
The Prince starts back, in mean, inglorious flight.
And now Bellona rages o'er the field
All strive elated, all disdain to yield;
And great Themistocles in arms renowned.
Stretched heaps of heroes on the groaning ground;
First by his hand, fell Delos self, divine
The last loved offspring of a noble line.
Straight thro' his neck the reeking dart was driven,
Prostrate he sinks, and vainly calls on heaven.
Next godlike Phanes, midst the Persians just,
Leucon and mighty Caudos bit the dust;
And now the Greek, with pride imprudent, dares
Victorious Mandrocles renowned in wars.
The agile Persian swift avoids the blow
Furious disarms and grasps th' unequal foe!

Th' intrepid Greek, with godlike calm awaits
His instant fall, and dares th' impending fates,
But great Cynoegirus his danger spies
And lashed his steeds, the ponderous chariot flies,
Then from its brazen bulk, he leaps to ground
Beneath his clanging arms, the plains resound.
And on the Persian rushes fierce, and raised
The clattering axe on high, which threatening blazed,
And lopped his head; out spouts the smoking gore
And the huge trunk, rolled bleeding on the shore.
And then Cynoegirus, "Thus Persian go
And boast thy victory in the shades below,
A headless form, and tell who bade thee bleed,
For know a Greek performed the wonderous deed:
But thou, Themistocles, oh hero! say
Who bade thee rush, to tempt the unequal fray?
But learn from this, thy daring to restrain,
And seek less mighty foes upon the plain."
With secret wrath, the youthful hero burned
And thus impetuous to the Chief returned;
"Such thoughts as these, unworthy those who dare
The battle's rage, and tempt the toils of war;

Heedless of death, and by no fears opprest.
Conquest my aim, I leave to heaven the rest.”
He said, and glowed with an immortal light.
Plunged ’midst the foes, and mingled in the fight.
Zeno the bravest of the Persian youth
Renowned for filial piety and truth;
His mother’s only joy; she loved to trace
His father’s features in his youthful face;
That Sire in fight o’erwhelmed, mid seas of gore
Slept unentombed, and cared for fame no more.
And now as youth in opening manhood glows
All his loved father in his visage rose,
Like him, regardful of his future fame
Resolved like him, to immortalize his name,
At glory’s call, he quits his native shore
And feeble parent, to return no more;
Oh! what prophetic griefs her bosom wrung
When on his neck in agony she hung!
When on that breast, she hid her sorrowing face,
And feared to take, or shun, the last embrace!
Unhappy youth! the fates decree thy doom,
Those flowers prepared for joy, shall deck thy tomb.

Thy mother now no more shall hail thy name
So high enrolled upon the lists of fame,
Nor check the widow's tear, the widow's sigh
For e'en her son, her Zeno's doom'd to die.
Zeno, e'en thou! for so the Gods decree,
A parents threshold opes no more for thee!
On him the hero turned his eye severe
Nor on his visage saw one mark of fear;
There manly grace improved each separate part
And joined by ties of truth, the face and heart.
The supple javelin then the Grecian tries
With might gigantic, and the youth defies.
Its point impetuous, at his breast he flung,
The brazen shield received, and mocking rung;
Then Zeno seized the lance, the Chief defied
And scoffing, thus begun, in youthful pride;
"Go, mighty Greek! to weaker warriors go.
And fear this arm, and an unequal foe;
A mother gave the mighty arms I bear,
Nor think with such a gift, I cherish fear."
He hurled the lance, but Pallas self was there,
And turned the point, it passed in empty air.

With hope renewed, again the hero tries
His boasted might, the thirsty weapon flies
In Zeno's breast it sinks, and drank the gore,
And stretched the hero, vanquished on the shore;
Gasping for utterance, and life, and breath.
For fame he sighs, nor fears approaching death.
Themistocles perceived, and bending low.
Thought of his friends, and tears began to flow
That washed the bleeding bosom of his foe.
Young Zeno then, the Grecian hero eyed
Rejects his offered aid, and all defied,
Breathed one disdainful sigh, and turned his head and died.
Such Persians did the godlike warrior slay,
And bad their groaning spirits pass away.
Epizelus the valiant, and the strong,
Thundered in fight, and carried death along;
Him not a Greek, in strength of arms surpassed,
In battle foremost, but in virtue last.
He, impious man, to combat dared defy
The Gods themselves, and senate of the sky,
E'en earth and heaven, and heaven's eternal sire,
He mocks his thunders, and disdains his ire.

But now the retributive hour is come.
And rigid justice seals the Boaster's doom.
Theseus he sees, within the fight, revealed
To him alone — to all the rest concealed.
To punish guilt, he leaves the shades below
And quits the seat of never ending woe.
Pale as in death, upon his hands he bore
Th' infernal serpent of the dreadful shore,
To stay his progress should he strive to fly
From Tart'rus far, and gain the upper sky.
This (dreadful sight!) with slippery sinews now
Wreathed round his form, and clasped his ghastly brow;
With horror struck, and seized with sudden awe
The Greek beheld, nor mingled in the war.
Withheld from combat by the force of fear
He trembling thus — "Oh say, what God draws near?
But speak thy will, if 'tis a God, oh speak!
Nor vent thy vengeance on a single Greek."
Vainly he suppliant said — o'erpowered with fright,
And instant from his eye-balls fled the sight;
Confused, distracted, to the skies he throws
His frantic arms, and thus bewails his woes.

“Almighty! thou by whom the bolts are driven!”

He said, and cast his sightless balls to heav’n

“Restore my sight, unhappy me, restore

My own loved offspring, to behold once more!

So will I honor thy divine abodes.

And learn how dreadful th’ avenging Gods!

And if — but oh forbid! you mock my prayer

And cruel fates me ever cursed declare.

Give me, to yield to fame alone my life

And fall immortalized, — in glorious strife!”

He said — the God who thunders thro’ the air,

Frowns on his sufferings and rejects his prayer.

Around his form the dreadful aegis spread

And darts fall harmless on his wretched head;

Condemned by fate, in ceaseless pain to groan,

Friendless, in grief, in agony alone.

Now Mars and death pervade on every side

And heroes fall, and swell the crimson tide.

Not with less force th’ Athenian leader shone

In strife conspicuous, nor to fame unknown,

Advanced in wisdom, and in honored years,

He not for life, but for the battle fears.

Borne swift as winds within the flying car
Now here, now there, directs the swelling war.
On every side, the foaming coursers guides.
Here praises valour, and there rashness chides;
While from his lips persuasive accents flow
T' inspire th' Athenians, or unman the foe.
The glorious Greeks rush on, with daring might
And shout and thunder, and encrease the fight.
Nor yet inglorious, do the Persians shine.
In battle's ranks, they strength and valour join.
Datis himself, impels the ponderous car.
Thro' broken ranks, conspicuous in the war,
In armour sheathed, and terror round him spread
He whirls his chariot, over heaps of dead;
Where'er he dreadful rushes, warriors fly,
Ghosts seek their hell, and chiefs and heroes die.
All pale with rage he ranks on ranks o'erthrows,
For blood he gasps, and thunders midst his foes.
Callimachus, the mighty leader found
In fight conspicuous, bearing death around.
The lance wheeled instant from the Persian's hand
Transfixed the glorious Grecian in the sand.

Fate ends the hero's life, and stays his breath
And clouds his eye balls with the shades of death:
Erect in air the cruel javelin stood,
Peirced thro' his breast, and drank the spouting blood
Released from life's impending woes and care,
The soul immerges in the fields of air:
Then, crowned with laurels, seeks the blest abodes,
Of awful Pluto, and the Stygian floods.
And now with joy great Aristides saw
Again proud Hippias thundering thro' the war,
And mocking thus, "Oh tyrant, now await
The destined blow, behold thy promised fate!
Thrice mighty King, obey my javelins call
For e'en thy godlike self's decreed to fall;"
He said, and hurled the glittering spear on high
The destined weapon hissed along the sky
Winged by the hero's all destroying hand,
It pierced the Prince, and stretched him on the sand.
Then thro' the air the awful peals were driven
And lightnings blazed along the vast of heaven.
The Persian hosts, behold their bulwark die
Fear chills their hearts, and all their numbers fly,

And reached the fleet, the shouting Greeks pursue
All Asia's millions, flying in their view.
On, on, they glorious rush, and side by side
Yet red with gore, they plunge into the tide;
For injured freedom's sake, th' indignant main
With swelling pride receives the crimson stain;
The Persians spread the sail, nor dare delay.
And suppliant call upon the King of day.
But vainly to their Gods the cowards pray.
Some of the ships th' Athenian warriors stay
And fire their bulks; the flames destroying rise
Rushing they swell, and mount into the skies.
Foremost Cynoegirus with might divine
While midst the waves, his arms majestic shine.
With blood stained hand, a Persian ship he seized
The vessel vainly strove to be released;
With fear the crew, the godlike man beheld,
And pride and shame, their troubled bosoms swelled,
They lop his limb, then Pallas fires his frame
With scorn of death, and hope of future fame:
Then with the hand remaining seized the prize
A glorious spirit kindling in his eyes.

Again the Persians wield the unmanly blow
And wreak their vengeance on a single foe.
The fainting Greek by loss of blood opprest
Still feels the patriot rise within his breast.
Within his teeth the shattered ship he held
Nor in his soul, one wish for life rebelled.
But strength decaying, fate suppress his breath
And o'er his brows, expand the dews of death;
The Elysium plains his generous spirit trod
"He lived a Hero and he died a God"
By vengeance fired, the Grecians from the deep
With rage and shouting, scale the lofty ship,
Then in the briny bosom of the main
They hurl in heaps the living and the slain.
Thro' the wide shore resound, triumphant cries,
Fill all the seas, and thunder thro' the skies.

The End.