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and Vocabulary

A. C. Price

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BY

A. C. PRICE

CAMBRIDGE  
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## PREFACE

THIS book is intended not for advanced scholars, but for those who have only read a little Xenophon; and as it is not quite on the ordinary lines, it may be well to explain its plan.

Many years of teaching have convinced me that in education it is not the subjects, but the effects of the study of those subjects on the pupil, which are really important, and that, though for the attainment of certain results the study of the classics is unrivalled, those ends are not generally attained unless attention is focussed on them throughout. In my work a great problem has been how to combine the instruction needed by boys who will some day become classical scholars with teaching that will be of practical utility for those who will never open a Greek book after they leave my form; and this edition will show how I have tried to solve it. What I want is to make the boys think and work for themselves, for I believe that from their own efforts they will gain most, and that the function of a teacher or of the editor of a book like this is to stimulate and guide them, and not to do their work for them. Hence in the Introduction to this book I have tried to set forth the objects at which I think the student ought to aim, to give him hints as to the way in which to work, and to explain the main difficulties he will meet with. Notes for beginners are apt to be too learned, to pass over real stumbling-blocks, and to translate far too much, and mine, I fear, will meet with criticism; but they are at any rate what I have found

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serviceable for training boys in observation, accuracy, and judgment, and I don't think they will prove as hard as they look. The explanation of most puzzles as to constructions is given in the grammatical sections of the Introduction, and, as I want to force boys to use those sections, the great bulk of the Notes consists of references to and illustrations of points mentioned therein. Of questions of text and scansion little is said—they belong to a later stage—and of translations I have been very chary, for they are precisely the things which the student ought to puzzle out for himself. I don't see, however, that his task need be made too hard, and I know that parents often complain of the cost of a lexicon when a boy is only going to learn Greek for a short time. I have appended, then, a very full Vocabulary, in which much of what would usually be included in the Notes is inserted, and the meanings given are designedly simple so that the pupil may exercise his ingenuity in discovering more appropriate renderings.

My experience has been that, treated in this way, Homer can be read with ease and profit by beginners; that the boys work with more zest when they understand that they are gaining something tangible from their labour; and that even the scientists and mathematicians are glad to have had the training. I shall be curious to learn if other schoolmasters agree with me.

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## INTRODUCTION

## § 1. HISTORY OF THE POEMS.

It is remarkable how little the world knows of some of its greatest writers. Of many of the books of the Bible not even the names of their authors have survived; of the life of Shakespeare hardly anything is told us; and as to Homer, the supposed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the very fact of his existence is a matter of doubt.

Herodotus says that **Homer** lived some 400 years before himself, i.e. *c.* 850 B.C.; but he gives no evidence for his statement, and various dates have been assigned to the poet, ranging roughly from the twelfth to the sixth century: the earliest recorded mention of his name seems to be by a certain Callinus who lived in the earlier part of the seventh century. As to his country too there was great controversy. A well-known epigram runs thus:

ἔπτα πόλεις διερίζουσιν περὶ ῥίζαν Ὀμήρου,  
Σμύρνα, Ῥόδος, Κολόφων, Σαλαμίν, Ἴος, Ἄργος, Ἀθήναι,

but at least twenty cities claimed Homer as their own. Simonides—whether the poet of Amorgos or that of Ceos is doubtful—ascribed *Iliad*, VI, 146, to *the man of Chios*, and Thucydides (III, 104) thought that Homer was alluded to in the line

τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ, οἰκεῖ δὲ Χίῳ ἐνὶ παιπαλοέσση,

but in this the historian seems to have been mistaken. The idea however that the poet, like Milton, was blind was very prevalent; but it may have been partly due to

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the fact that blind men—e.g. Demodocus in the *Odyssey*—apparently sometimes earned a living as minstrels. From a tradition that Homer was connected with Maeonia (i.e. Lydia) comes the name *Maeonides*, applied to him by some Latin writers.

To the Greeks however of the classical age Homer was undoubtedly a real person, and so great was his reputation that, as was the case with some of the Hebrew prophets, works were assigned to him with which he certainly had nothing to do. Even as to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the evidence is very weak. To begin with, it is most unlikely that we have the poems in their original form. In the days when they were composed writing, if known at all, was known probably only to a few, and men instead of reading books listened to poems recited at banquets and festivals by the **minstrels** (*ᾄδοι*) attached to the households of great chieftains, or the professional **rhapsodists**<sup>1</sup>, who wandered over the Greek world. Of the former we have instances in Phemius in *Od.* I and Demodocus in *Od.* VIII: of the latter we get a picture in the *Ion* of Plato. Such recitations, however, were probably confined to isolated episodes, depending on the knowledge of the reciter and the circumstances under which he was reciting, and we are told, though the statement is of somewhat late date, that at Athens in the latter part of the sixth century B.C. the Homeric Poems were collected and arranged at the direction of Peisistratus, and it was provided that at the great Panathenaic festival they should be recited in their proper order. Whether before this they were merely separate ballads is uncertain, but, in any case, these

<sup>1</sup> “Rhapsodist” seems to be derived from *ῥάπτειν* + *ᾄδός*, because either (a) they stitched words together in verses, or (b) they recited hexameters unbroken by stanzas or antistrophes, or (c) they recited poems the different parts of which were continuous like a piece of needlework.

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arrangements (if true) would have had the effect of fixing the text and making the Poems as a whole familiar to the Greeks, and it was not long before written copies must have been fairly numerous, for "Homer" became a school-book, and we are told by Plato that boys had copies of the Poems, and by Plutarch that Alcibiades chastised a teacher who had no copy in his school. We hear also in Pindar, Plato, and Strabo of persons called **Homeridae**. Who these were we do not know for certain, but Pindar is probably alluding to rhapsodists, and Strabo to some kind of guild of reciters who lived in Chios and claimed kinship with the poet. Plato's Homeridae however seem to have been students engaged in commenting on and editing the Poems. Of such students the most famous were the **Alexandrian critics** of c. 270—150 B.C.—Zenodotus, Aristophanes and Aristarchus—to whom the present division into books is due. It was apparently about the close of the Alexandrian period that doubts were first raised as to whether the Poems were the work of only one man; but as to the doubters—the **Chorizontes** (or *separators*) they were called—we know hardly anything, and their influence seems to have been very slight. At any rate it was not till the publication in 1795 of the *Prolegomena ad Homerum* by Prof. F. A. Wolf of Halle (who himself owed much to English and French writers), that the great controversy known as the **Homeric Question** really began. The point at issue was the authorship of the Poems. The traditional view, as we have seen, was that they were the work of one man, and this is still maintained by some scholars and would probably be the opinion of the ordinary reader—as indeed it has been of not a few men of literary eminence—on account of the general consistency of the narrative and its unity of style. But—just as is the case with the Jewish Pentateuch—minute study reveals numerous discrepancies, and this has caused doubt as to

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whether the old tradition is correct. Critics; for instance, have noticed:

(1) considerable differences between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in language, ideas, customs, facts;

(2) within each of the Poems—and especially in the *Iliad*—many inconsistencies in the narrative, and large portions which seem to have little or nothing to do with the main story;

(3) many passages—phrases, lines, episodes—which appear to be mere repetitions or variations of others;

(4) scattered over the Poems a remarkable combination of alternative forms of inflexion and words borrowed from different dialects;

(5) a certain number of cases in which later ideas have apparently been welded with an older story.

Difficulties have also been raised as to how such long poems could have been composed and transmitted before writing was known, and what could have been the motive for composing them when there were no readers and the *Iliad* alone, as Prof. Gilbert Murray says, would have occupied from 20 to 24 hours of steady declamation.

On the other hand it has been urged that the discrepancies have been exaggerated; that in every great author inconsistencies may be detected; that rhapsodists probably introduced and modified passages to suit the special circumstances of the places at which they were reciting; that writing was probably in use among the Greeks long before the earliest date of which we have evidence; that memories were stronger when books were rare—even in Xenophon's time there were Athenians who knew the Poems by heart; that for a minstrel at a chieftain's court there would have been no difficulty in continuing his narration from night to night; and that if the Poems were not composed by one man the fact of their general consistency is at least as hard to account for

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as on the other supposition their inconsistencies are. The controversy is still unsettled, but on the whole the theory that the Poems are composite productions—whether as collections of separate lays or as expansions of an original core—seems to have found most favour with modern scholars, and that version of it which is perhaps now most generally accepted may be briefly summarized as follows.

The Poems appear to be European, not Asiatic, in origin, for their sympathy is with the Greeks rather than with the Trojans, and they show much more knowledge of the western than of the eastern coast of the Aegean. Further, they are not the work of a race in a primitive stage but depict an advanced state of civilization. Nor would they appeal to a democratic or commercial community, but seem rather—to quote Dr Leaf's words—“court-poems . . . composed to be sung in the splendid palaces of a ruling aristocracy.” On the other hand the dialect of the Poems is mainly Ionic, mixed however with forms which are thought to be Aeolic, i.e. the language used in N.W. Asia Minor. Hence it is suggested that the origin of the Poems is to be found in lays composed among the Achaeans in Greece and carried by them across the Aegean when they migrated to the northern part of Asia Minor to escape from the Dorian invaders, and it should be noticed that in the Poems the Greeks are usually spoken of as Achaeans and that of the great changes brought about in Greece by the coming of the Dorians no traces are to be found. These lays appear to have been borrowed and adapted by the Ionians, and transmitted orally among the singers and rhapsodists until, possibly in the sixth century, they were committed to writing, and the text was fixed much as we have it now. To the reciters probably many interpolations, great or small, were due; but putting these aside modern scholars think that they can detect distinct stages in the development of the poems. Dr Leaf, for instance, has

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suggested that the nucleus of the *Iliad* (with which alone we are here concerned) was the *Mḗνις*, or Wrath of Achilles, comprising perhaps Books 1, ix, xvi, xix (part), xx (part), xxii; that to this there was added by the same or another poet a second stratum including Books ii (except the Catalogue), iii-vii, 312, much of xiii and perhaps part of xvii, and devoted mainly to glorifying the heroes of the great Achæan families; and that the rest of the *Iliad* may form a third stratum consisting of additions made possibly after the migration into Asia (c. 1000 B.C.) and completed c. 800 B.C.

§ 2. WHY THE POEMS HAVE BEEN  
REGARDED SO HIGHLY.

The uncertainty however as to the authorship of the Poems is after all not a matter of prime importance, as the champions of the rival theories themselves admit. "For practical purposes," says Mr Gladstone, "Homer is but one; and his works by common consent are handled as an organic whole," and the doubt as to who wrote the *Iliad* "can in no way," says Dr Leaf, "detract from the magical power which the poem has held over the mind of man from the very earliest days." Let us turn then to the Poems themselves, and see if we can discover in **what their power and charm consist.**

To the ancient Greeks undoubtedly the cause lay partly in their subject-matter. Homer stood to them somewhat in the same relation as the Bible to the Jews. He was, to begin with, the main source of the popular notions as to the gods, depicting them indeed, as Plato complained, not always in an edifying manner, but yet with a remarkable freedom from the grossness in which other authors indulged; and it has been often pointed out that, so far as religious and ethical ideas are concerned, the tone of his writings is distinctly higher than

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the mythology with which it is linked. "There is no tampering," says Mr Gladstone, "with the greatest moral laws: as far as Homer knows right he works it out loyally into the tissue of his poems... The cause for which the Trojans fight is a bad cause and receives the defeat which it deserves... In every single case where he portrays a character radically vicious Homer contrives that it shall be regarded not only with disapproval but with aversion." The Poems thus served also as a kind of text-book of morality. "Homer," says Shelley, "embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character; nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector, and Ulysses: the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism, and persevering devotion to an object, were unveiled to the depths in these immortal creations; the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration." That this is not mere theory is shown by the fact that Xenophon makes one of the characters in his *Symposium* say that Homer, the prince of poets, had treated of almost all human affairs, and so if anyone wished to become a prudent ruler of his house or an orator or a general, or to resemble Achilles, Ajax, Nestor, or Odysseus, he should study Homer. Moreover in Homer the Greeks found the earliest history of their race. "If you take up the *Iliad* as a record of history," says Prof. Murray, "you will soon put it down as so much mere poetry. But if you read it as fiction you will at every page be pulled up by the feeling that it is not free fiction. The poet does not invent whatever he likes. He believes himself to be dealing with real events and real people, to be recording and explaining things that have value only or primarily because they are supposed

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to be true." Thucydides referred to him as an authority, and the Athenians in their contest with the Megarians for Salamis appealed to the Poems as evidence for their claim. Further, he was the great national poet, telling as he did of the first great action of united Greece and the earliest triumph of Greeks over Asiatics. "I believe," says Isocrates, "that the poetry of Homer won greater glory because he nobly praised those who warred against the barbarian."

To the modern reader naturally such considerations do not similarly appeal. It does not much matter to us whether the Trojan War really took place as described, or whether, as Prof. Murray suggests, "much of the fighting which Homer locates at Troy...is really a reminiscence of old tribal wars on the mainland of Greece," for to us Homer is not a text-book of theology, of morals, of history, but literature—an aspect of his work to which there is singularly little reference in Greek writers, though, if only from the remarks of Aristotle in his *Poetics*, we can see that there were certainly some who were conscious of his transcendent merits as an author.

Now in literature there are two things to consider—the matter and the manner, i.e. the story and the way in which it is handled. So far as the story is concerned the *Odyssey* has more unity and is certainly more interesting than the *Iliad*, for in the latter the real subject—the Wrath of Achilles—is to a large extent obscured by the number of extraneous incidents and digressions, and Achilles himself, with his sulks and his savage treatment of his vanquished foe, is not altogether an ideal hero. Of course, if the theory of the gradual expansion of the Poems is correct, the original author cannot be held responsible for the later additions to his work, but Prof. Mackail is perhaps not far wrong when he speaks of the *Iliad* as a second-rate subject made into a first-rate poem by the genius of a great poet. When however we try to



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discover in what this genius consists we soon find we are asking a question to which the answer is bound to be imperfect. Genius is a gift of nature, not an art that can be acquired or a thing that can be analysed into its component parts. The mind of a great poet differs *toto caelo* from that of an ordinary man, and all that we can do is to call attention to a few superficial but characteristic features in which Homer seems to excel. Mr Gladstone, for instance, sums them up under two heads—the thought in strict proportion to the subject, the language fitted exactly to the thought. Matthew Arnold, going more into detail, lays special stress on four points—the rapidity of movement, the plainness of words and lucidity of style, the simplicity and directness of ideas, the air of dignity that pervades the whole work. Leigh Hunt doubts whether even Shakespeare could have told a story as well as Homer and praises the latter for his “passionate sincerity,” his truth in “painting events and circumstances after real life,” his skill in seeing “what is proper to be told and what to be kept back, what is permanent, affecting, and essential,” his imagination “which brings supernatural things to bear on earthly without confounding them.” Sir Richard Jebb emphasizes the skill with which he has traced types of character which have since stood out clearly before the imagination of the world, e.g. Achilles, the embodiment of heroic might, violent in anger as in sorrow, but capable of chivalrous and tender compassion; Odysseus, combining resourceful intelligence with heroic endurance; loving Andromache; loyal Penelope; remorseful sensitive Helen; the maiden Nausicaa; imperious genial Zeus: the main outlines clearly drawn, but details suppressed, and much left to the imagination of the reader. Emerson was struck by his cheerfulness—“Homer,” he says, “lies in sunshine.” Prof. Murray calls attention to his “vibrating sympathy,” his “intensity of imagination” pervading

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even the ordinary things of life, his language “more gorgeous than Milton’s yet as simple and direct as that of Burns,” and the way in which he takes us into “a world somehow more splendid than any created by other men.” In any case, whatever be the secret of Homer’s charm, that charm is perennial. “O lovely and immortal privilege of genius,” says Leigh Hunt, “that can stretch its hand out of the wastes of time, thousands of years back, and touch our eyelids with tears”; and this indeed is perhaps the surest proof of the greatness of an author, that his work is never obsolete but is still read and enjoyed centuries after his death.

§ 3. TO APPRECIATE THEM NEEDS  
CAREFUL STUDY.

In reading then a masterpiece of literature like the *Iliad* our primary object ought to be to realize and appreciate its charm, i.e. to enjoy it. This does not mean however to skim it over carelessly with an eye only to the story or plot: if that were all Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare* might almost as well be read as the dramas themselves. Of course in an epic poem or a drama the genius of the poet is seen in the actions and incidents which develop and illustrate the story, but it finds at least equal scope in the choice and arrangement of the words and in the thoughts they attempt to express. A great author never writes a sentence without a purpose, never uses a word without intending it to tell, and we cannot thoroughly grasp his greatness—and that includes his charm—until we have got to the bottom of the meaning he desires to convey. This cannot be done without an effort, but the effort is well worth making, for, besides the immediate end in view, the habit thus acquired is invaluable and if once gained is as a rule gained for ever. There are few things for which I have

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been more grateful than that I was compelled as a boy to read two or three plays of Shakespeare minutely with the much-reviled notes of Mr Aldis Wright. In English, however, except in the case of difficult authors, the habit is not easy to acquire, for the apparent familiarity of the words tempts the pupil to read too fast, and to content himself with the general drift of a passage without a full comprehension of its exact meaning, skipping all that seems hard or dull and going on to what looks more attractive. Every boy knows what an immense amount of description of furniture or scenery there seems to be in a French novel, but he is rarely conscious that there is quite as much in his English stories, only he does not read it, whereas in the foreign tongue he cannot see so easily what to omit; and such is still more the case in Latin and Greek, in which the very difficulty of the languages and their remarkable capacity for expressing different shades of meaning force the student to look narrowly into every sentence and teach him precision and taste in the use of words; this indeed is one of the main arguments for a classical education, and one of the great objections to the theory that classical authors might just as well be read in "cribs." Before then we can appreciate Homer we must be reasonably sure that we understand him, and this implies a good deal.

## § 4. POINTS TO NOTICE.

First there are the **words** to consider. In ordinary talk we use words very carelessly—we speak for instance of *mortals* or *persons* or *individuals* when we merely mean *men*—but a great author is much more accurate in his language, and we shall be making mistakes if we consider that *άνήρ* is used in the same sense as *άνθρωπος* or that *ξένος* is equivalent to *φίλος*. Every word has its appropriate meaning, every tense and case its special reason,

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every particle its peculiar force, though it must be confessed that we cannot always appreciate these niceties of usage and not infrequently it is quite impossible to render them adequately in English. The **order** too of the words in a sentence is most important. Shift it and the whole meaning may be changed. The student should read the passage aloud in Greek and notice on what word or words the emphasis seems to fall. This will call his attention also to a third thing—that **sound** is an important element in the poet's charm. And there is more in this than is sometimes thought. Not only are the lines metrical and the words sonorous, but there is also great variety in the rhythm, and besides this there is a subtle assonance, or recurrence of similar sounds, too frequent to be merely accidental. Take, for instance, the opening lines of this book, and notice the recurrence of the sound of *o* in lines 1 and 2; how *πόρον* is taken up by *ποταμοίο* in 1; the repetition of the dentals *τ* and *δ* in 2 and 3; the thrice repeated *π* in 4, followed by the double initial *α* in *Ἀχαιοὶ ἀτυζόμενοι*; the *τ* in five successive words in 5, and so on. This "alliteration," as it is called, is constantly found in poets. It is the regular mark of Anglo-Saxon verse, and is very conspicuous in Swinburne, e.g.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow,  
The heart's division divideth us.  
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree.

In Latin it is quite common. It is found also in Hebrew, though what is noteworthy there is the repetition not so much of a sound as of an idea or of an emphatic word. This last can also be seen in Homer, for there is a distinct tendency when a word, and especially a striking one, has been used to repeat it again within a few lines, e.g.

41 and 42 ἔδωκεν (both at end of a line).  
53 *μεγαλήτορα*. 55 *μεγαλήτορες*.

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62 *έρύξει*. 63 *έρύκει* (both at end).65 and 68 *μεμαώς*.128 and 133 *εἰς ὃ κε*.173 *έρυσσάμενος*. 175 *έρύσσαί*. 176 *έρυσσεσθαι*.243 and 246 *έριποῦσα*.255 and 271 *ὔπαιθα*.302 and 307 *ύψόσε*.386 *ἄητο*. 395 *ἄητον*.395 *ἀνήκεν*. 396 *ἀνήκας* (both at end).471 *ἀγροτέρη*. 486 *ἀγροτέρας*.539 and 548 *ἀλάλκοι* (both at end).566 *ἀνθρώπων*. 569 *ἄνθρωποι* (both at end).

Sometimes there is a slight variation, e.g.

482 *μένος ἀντιφέρεσθαι*. 488 *μένος ἀντιφερίζεις* (both at end).

Sometimes the words are different but resemble one another somewhat in form or sound, e.g.

59 *πολιῆς* and *πολέας*.523 *ἀνήκε*. 524 *έφηκεν*. 525 *ἔθηκεν* (all at end).534 *ἀλέντες*. 536 *ἄληται* (both at end).

Possibly we may refer to the same tendency the repetition of phrases, so familiar to every reader of Homer, e.g.

*ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα* (73, 368, 409, 419; slightly varied in 121, 427).*χείρι παχείη* (175, 403, 424).*έρύκακε δῶρα θεοῖο* (165; slightly varied in 594).*σμερδαλέον κονάβιζεν* (255; slightly varied in 593).*εὐρύ ρέων* (157, 186, 304).*θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ* (342, 381).*λοιγὸν ἀλάλκοι* (138, 250, 539).*κῦδος ἀρέσθαι* (543, 596).*δαικταμένων αἰζήων* (146, 301).*κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων* (140, 170; slightly varied in 33).*δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς* (39, 49, 67, etc.).

P. H.

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*ποδάρκης Ἀχιλλεύς* (149, 265; slightly varied in 222).*οὐρανὸν εὐρύν* (267, 272, 522).*λευκώλενος Ἥρη* (377, 418, 434, 512).*ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων* (461, 478).

In several of the above references slight variations have been noted, and these, by suggesting the other phrase, seem rather to emphasize the repetition; but in the following passages there appears to be a distinct attempt to avoid the recurrence of a word.

241 *πόδεσσιν*. 247 *ποσί*. 269 *ποσσίν*. 271 *ποδοῖν*.505 *ποσί*. 507 *πρωτί*. 514 *πρός*.

The striking change of ἄλταο (85) to ἄλτεω (86) is probably to be accounted for by the second line having crept into the text at a later date, but these lines will illustrate also the way in which Homer often links one line on to its predecessor by the repetition of an emphatic word or something equivalent to it. Cf. ἄξιοῦ in 158, *τρῖς* in 177.

## § 5. HINTS AS TO TRANSLATION.

Such then are some of the points to which we must attend if we would understand Homer. But it is one thing to understand an author and quite another to translate him. I do not believe it is ever possible to convey the full and exact force of one language through the medium of another. Dickens translated into French and Shakespeare into German seem hardly the same Dickens and Shakespeare with whom we are familiar, and the distinguished scholars to whom we owe our best versions of the classics would be the first to acknowledge the imperfections of their work. The fact is that in no two languages are the words exactly equivalent in meaning, and the associations which invest them are often quite different, and—especially in the case of the classical

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tongues as compared with English—the turns of expression and the structure of the sentences are entirely dissimilar. How many persons have been misled in the Prayer Book version of the Psalter by the use of such words as *soul*, *hell*, *vanity*, *saints*, *poor*, *worship*, etc., to represent very different ideas in the original Hebrew? How in translating Horace can we keep the metaphors in *vitulus*, *juvenca*, etc., without falling into bathos? How can we render into English the meaning of such a phrase as *esprit de corps*, or of words like *virtus*, *ἀρετή*, *καλός*, *πορφύρεος*, or of the epithets *δῖος*, and *διογενής*, or the subtle influence of the Greek particles or its middle voice? Translation is really a very difficult art, and to attain to even moderate success in it requires considerable knowledge of both tongues and no little refinement in the use of words; and hence it is that in translating the classics we are not only learning Latin and Greek but are training ourselves to use the English language correctly. There is no royal road to perfection and it is only by practice that power can be gained. A good plan is to take a passage of some fifty lines or so and to write out a translation of it with the greatest care so as to bring out the full force of the original in the best possible English, and to revise this at intervals until you are—I will not say satisfied, but—convinced that you can do no more to it. Then, if you can, get some good scholar to criticize it, or compare it with some really good translation, such as that of Messrs Lang, Leaf and Myers. Take care however not to consult the latter till you have completed your own version, for there is danger lest the model be turned into a crutch, and instead of racking his own brains the student be tempted to borrow the words of his “crib.” Such books, I believe, ought only to be used when the difficulties are insoluble—and there are not many such cases in Homer—or for correcting your own version when completed, or for getting some

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idea of those authors or portions of authors which you cannot or do not wish to tackle in their original tongue. What you are aiming at is not only the translation of Homer, but the improvement of your own powers, and crib-using is like dram-drinking: it may help for the moment but it inevitably enfeebles him who has recourse to it.

As to the style of your translation a few hints may be of service. The first and most important thing is to be lucid—to be quite sure that you understand what Homer wishes to say, and to put it into English in such a way that your meaning will be absolutely clear to others: vagueness and obscurity are always a sign of either a muddled head or deficient power of expression. Lucidity alone however is not enough: your version should retain all that it can of the characteristics of the original. The language of Homer is of an antique type, and his style is marked by simplicity and dignity. To preserve these features you cannot do better than model your diction on that of the Authorized Version of the Bible. It is a good working rule too to prefer a short word to a long one and an English (i.e. Anglo-Saxon) word to one derived from another tongue, e.g. don't use *juvenile* for *boy*, *person* for *man*, *virgin* for *maiden*, *narrate* for *tell*, etc. Remember also not to be too free. You are not re-writing Homer but translating him, so keep as close to the original as possible, and do not, unless absolutely compelled, turn actives into passives and objects into subjects. On the other hand your English must not be awkward. The constructions of one language are not always congenial to another. Greek, for instance, likes participles, Latin long sentences with subordinate clauses, often introduced by relative pronouns. English likes neither, so don't carry such classical constructions into your version. One of your chief difficulties will be to bring out the due force of the **particles** with which



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Homer abounds. The same particle cannot always be translated in the same way, and sometimes, especially when two or three come together, it is impossible to express them adequately in English, at any rate on paper, for in reading aloud or recitation their influence might be shown by a gesture, a look, or a change of tone or emphasis. Among the particles that give most trouble are:

$\alpha\pi\alpha$  ( $\alpha\pi$ ,  $\rho\acute{\alpha}$ )—apparently connected with root of  $\alpha\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\kappa\omega$  and so perhaps originally meant *fittingly* or *accordingly*. It is often used to indicate a consequence or a reason. N.B.  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho = \gamma\acute{\epsilon} + \alpha\pi\alpha$ .

$\gamma\acute{\epsilon}$ —calls attention to a word or fact, but does not intensify the meaning or imply that the fact is true.

$\delta\eta$ —originally a temporal particle = *now* ( $\delta\eta = \delta\eta + \delta\acute{\eta}$ ) or *at length*, but often seems to do little more than add emphasis.

$\eta$ —denotes a strong affirmation. It is often used to strengthen other words e.g.  $\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ ,  $\eta\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ ,  $\eta\tau\omicron\iota$  and perhaps  $\tau\acute{\iota}\eta$ . This must be distinguished from  $\eta\acute{\epsilon}$  ( $\eta$ ), which = (a) *than*, after comparatives; (b) *either . . . or*. N.B. Monro says that when used in the second part of a disjunctive question it should be written  $\eta\epsilon$  ( $\eta$ ): the first part, it may be noticed, is sometimes merely implied.

$\nu\acute{\upsilon}$ —a shortened form of  $\nu\acute{\upsilon}\nu$  = *now*. It is used as an affirmative particle rather less emphatic than  $\delta\eta$ .

$\omicron\upsilon\nu$ —in Homer does not = *therefore*, but *after all* or *be this as it may*.

$\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho$ —is connected with  $\pi\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}$  which in its adverbial use = *beyond* or *exceedingly*. Hence it emphasizes the truth of the word which it qualifies, and as some opposition seems often to be implied it can sometimes be rendered by *although*.

$\tau\acute{\epsilon}$ —besides its ordinary connective use is often employed to mark an assertion as general or indefinite.

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*roí*—denotes a kind of restricted affirmation and = *at least* or *yet surely*. Whether it was originally the dative of *σύ* (= *I tell you*) is doubtful.

## § 6. METRE.

One other suggestion I would make. Homer is a poet, and to translate him into prose is to lose the majestic metre which is one of his greatest charms. Try to turn then at least one episode into verse. The result may not be brilliant, but the attempt will teach you better than any amount of reading the difference between poetry and prose; it will train your ear to appreciate rhythm, and it will help you to realize more fully the greatness of your author. There have been many translations of Homer into verse. Here, for instance, is Pope's rendering of the opening lines of this book.

And now to Xanthus' gliding stream they drove,  
Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove.  
The river here divides the flowing train,  
Part to the town fly diverse o'er the plain,  
Where late their troops triumphant bore the fight,  
Now chased, and trembling in ignoble flight:  
(These with a gather'd mist Saturnia shrouds,  
And rolls behind the rout a heap of clouds)  
Part plunge into the stream: old Xanthus roars,  
The flashing billows beat the whiten'd shores:  
With cries promiscuous all the banks resound,  
And here, and there, in eddies whirling round,  
The flouncing steeds and shrieking warriors drown'd.  
As the scorch'd locusts from their fields retire,  
While fast behind them runs the blaze of fire;  
Driven from the land before the smoky cloud,  
The clustering legions rush into the flood:  
So plunged in Xanthus by Achilles' force,  
Roars the resounding surge with men and horse.

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And here is the far more scholarly version of Lord Derby.

But when they came to eddying Xanthus' ford,  
 Fair-flowing stream, born of immortal Jove,  
 Achilles cut in twain the flying host ;  
 Part driving toward the city, o'er the plain,  
 Where on the former day the routed Greeks,  
 When Hector raged victorious, fled amain.  
 On, terror-struck, they rushed ; but Juno spread,  
 To baffle their retreat, before their path  
 Clouds and thick darkness : half the fugitives  
 In the deep river's silvery eddies plunged :  
 With clamour loud they fell ; the torrent roared ;  
 The banks around re-echoed ; here and there  
 They, with the eddies wildly struggling, swam.  
 As when, pursued by fire, a hovering swarm  
 Of locusts riverward direct their flight,  
 And as the insatiate flames advance, they cower  
 Amid the waters ; so a mingled mass  
 Of men and horses, by Achilles driven,  
 The deeply-whirling stream of Xanthus choked.

What, however, I would recommend you to do is to copy the poet's own rhythm, that **metre** which, as developed some thousand years later by Vergil, Tennyson called *the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man*. Whence Homer got it we know not, but it was marvelously suited to his subject, for Epic poetry is above all characterized by dignity—dignity of subject, dignity of characters, dignity of language, dignity of scale, dignity of metre—and of all metres the hexameter is perhaps the most dignified. Read, for instance, the two versions given above, and then read the passage in the original Greek, and notice how much more weighty and majestic the lines of Homer sound than those of his translators. But the hexameter is not a metre suitable to all languages. By the Greeks and Romans with their sonorous words and their distinction of syllables according to quantity

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(i.e. as long and short) it was used with success, notably by Homer and Vergil, but the two great Epic poets of later times, Dante and Milton, found other metres suit them better, and by modern writers the hexameter is rarely used, for Ascham is not far wrong when he says *Carmen Hexametrum doth rather trotte and hoble than runne smoothly in our English tong*. Still even in English there are a few poems in which the metre has been used with some success, and from such those who have had no practice in classical versification may perhaps most easily gain some idea of its nature. Here, for instance, are the opening lines of Longfellow's *Courtship of Miles Standish*:

In the Old | Colony | days, in | Plymouth the | land of the | Pilgrims,  
To and | fro in a | room of his | simple and | primitive | dwelling,  
Clad in a | doublet and | hose, and | boots of | Cordovan | leather,  
Strode, with a | martial | air, Miles | Standish the | Puritan | Captain.

Read these lines aloud, and notice how each one naturally breaks into six parts, where the vertical lines are drawn: these parts are called *feet*. Some of the feet have three syllables and others have two: in the former (called *dactyls*) the stress falls on the first syllable, in the latter (*spondees*) almost equally on both. Notice also that in the first four feet of a line dactyls and spondees may be used indifferently, but the fifth foot must be a dactyl, and the sixth a spondee, and in Greek and Latin, where syllables are distinguished according to "quantity," the scheme would run thus

- u u | - u u | - u u | - u u | - u u | - u |

[To find out which syllables are long and which are short you should consult the section headed *Prosody* in your grammars.]

It is rare to find a line consisting entirely of spondees—Mr Gladstone says there are only four instances in Homer—or with all the feet except the sixth dactyls. A fair

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number of lines however—about four per cent. in Homer—have a spondee instead of a dactyl in the fifth foot: in most cases this is when the line ends with a word of four or more syllables. As a general rule Homer may be said to prefer dactyls and Vergil spondees, but both poets avoid monotony, the chief danger of this metre, by skilfully intermixing the two kinds of feet, as well as by bringing sentences to an end at different parts of a line, and especially by what is called *caesura*, i.e. splitting up a foot between two words: in Homer the caesura is very common in the third foot. Compared however with Vergil and Ovid Homer is strikingly free in his treatment of the hexameter. He does not care how many syllables there are in the words that end his lines. He lengthens and shortens syllables to suit his convenience. He crushes two vowels into one if necessary. His practice with regard to *elision* (i.e. the cutting off of a vowel at the end of a word before a vowel at the beginning of the next) seems remarkably lax. Much of this apparent license was probably due to the fact that the Poems were originally intended for recitation, and, as the pronunciation of a word depends greatly on the pleasure of the speaker, spelling does not become rigid till reading and writing become common. Even now people do not agree in the pronunciation of such words as *either*, *illustrated*, *laboratory*, *reminiscence*, and it is not long since *balcony* was pronounced as *balcōny*, *tea* as *tay*, *Satan* as *Sātan*. Moreover at the time when the Poems were composed there seem to have been letters in use which were afterwards dropped. The sound of *γ*, for instance, appears originally to have been heard before *ὦς* and possibly *ἴεμαι*, and by comparison with corresponding words in Latin—e.g. *ἀλς* and *sal*, *ἔξ* and *sex*, *ἄλλομαι* and *salio*, *οἶνος* and *vinum*, *εἴκοσι* and *viginti*—we can detect the loss of *σ* and *Ϝ*, and this may account for much that seems exceptional in scansion and also in grammar.

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## § 7. GRAMMAR.

To the **grammar** of Homer great attention ought to be paid; for, though the primary object of reading the Poems is to enjoy them as literature, the style in which they are written is so different from the Attic Greek to which we are accustomed that they cannot easily be understood unless we grasp first the peculiarities of their language, and this will have the further advantage that, as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the oldest Greek writings that we possess, we find in them the origin and explanation of many of the forms and constructions used by later authors. It is just the same in English. We read Chaucer primarily as literature, but we can also get from him much that is of the highest interest and value with regard to the history of our language. To say that the two ends are incompatible is absurd, though I fear that both teachers and examiners have been too often to blame for devoting their attention so exclusively to the minutiae of grammar that the literary charm of an author is entirely lost to the pupil. I will only attempt then to call attention here to those points which seem essential for the right comprehension of this book.

Before going into details there are three things which should be carefully borne in mind. (1) The language of the Poems is of course Greek, but it is Greek of a very old type, as far removed from that of Xenophon and Euripides as the language of Chaucer and Wiclif is from the English spoken at the present day. (2) It is in the main the dialect used not in Attica but in the Ionian cities of Asia Minor, intermixed to a certain extent with words and forms taken from other dialects and apparently at different periods. (3) Words and inflexions are treated with the greatest freedom and without the slightest regard for consistency. Augments, for instance, are inserted or omitted at pleasure; alternative forms