

VIII.

THE STAY IN PHAEACIA.

SOON as the early rosy-fingered dawn appeared, revered Alcinoüs rose from bed, and up rose also high-born Odysseus, spoiler of cities. And now revered Alcinoüs led the way to the assembly-place of the Phaeacians, which lay beside the ships. When they were come, they took their seats on polished stones, set side by side; while Pallas Athene went throughout the town in likeness of the page of wise Alcinoüs, planning a safe return for brave Odysseus; and approaching one and another man, she gave the word:

“Come hither, Phaeacian captains and councilors, come, hasten to the assembly to hear about the stranger who came but lately to the house of wise Alcinoüs, when cast away at sea. In form he is like the immortals.”

With words like these she stirred in each a zeal and a desire, and speedily the assembly-place and all its seats were filled with those who came. Then many marveled when they saw the wise son of Laërtes; for Athene cast a wondrous grace about his head and shoulders, and made him taller than before and stouter to behold, that so he might find favor in all Phaeacian eyes as one of power and worth, and that he might win too the many games in which the Phaeacians tried Odysseus. So when they were assembled and all had come together, Alcinoüs thus addressed them, saying:

“Hearken, Phaeacian captains and councilors, and let me tell you what the heart within me bids. This stranger — who he is I do not know — came hither as a wanderer from peoples east or west. He begs us for assistance and prays it be assured. Then let us, even as heretofore, furnish assistance promptly; for never has a stranger reached my halls and tarried long distressed for lack of aid. Come, let us launch into the sacred sea a black ship, freshly fitted, and let the two and fifty youths be chosen from the land who have at former times been found the best. Then after lashing carefully the oars upon the pins, all disembark and take a hasty meal, coming for this to me; I will make good provision for you all. These are my orders to the youths. But for the rest of you, you sceptred kings, come to my goodly palace, that there within my hall we entertain the stranger; let none refuse; and call the sacred bard, Demodocus, for surely God has granted him exceeding skill in song, to cheer us in whatever way his soul is moved to sing.”

So saying, he led the way, the sceptred princes followed, and a page went to seek the sacred bard, while two and fifty picked young men departed, as he ordered, to the shore of the barren sea. On coming to the ship and to the sea, they launched the black ship into deep water, put mast and sail in the black ship, fitted the oars into their leathern slings, all in due order, and up aloft spread the white sail. Out in the stream they moored her, then took their way to the great house of wise Alcinöus. Filled were the porticoes, the courts, and rooms with those already come; many were there, both young and old. In their behalf Alcinöus sacrificed twelve sheep, eight white-

toothed swine, two swing-paced oxen ; these the men flayed and served, and made a merry feast.

Meanwhile the page drew near, leading the honored bard. The muse had greatly loved him, and had given him good and ill : she took away his eyesight, but gave delightful song. Pontonoüs placed for him among the feasters a silver-studded chair, backed by a lofty pillar, and hung the tuneful lyre upon its peg above his head, and the page showed him how to reach it with his hands. By him he set a tray and a good table, and placed thereon a cup of wine to drink as need should bid. So on the food spread out before them they laid hands. Now after they had stayed desire for drink and food, the muse impelled the bard to sing men's glorious deeds, a lay whose fame was then as wide as is the sky. He sang the strife of Odysseus with Pelian Achilles, — how they once quarreled at the gods' high feast with furious words, and Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced in spirit when the bravest of the Achaeans quarreled ; for Phoebus Apollo had by oracle declared it so should be, at hallowed Pytho, when Agamemnon crossed its stony threshold to ask for a response. Then was the day the tide of woe began to roll on Trojans and on Danaans, according to the will of mighty Zeus.

So sang the famous bard. Meanwhile Odysseus clutched his great purple cloak in his stout hands and drew it round his head, hiding his beautiful face ; for he felt shame before the Phaeacians as from beneath his brow he dropped the tears. But when the sacred bard paused in the song, Odysseus dried his tears, took from his head the cloak, and seizing his double cup poured offerings to the gods. Then as the other would begin again, cheered on to sing by the Phaea-

cian chiefs, — for they enjoyed the story, — again would Odysseus, covering his head, break into sobs. And thus he hid from all the rest the tears he shed; only Alcinoüs marked him and took heed, for he sat near and heard his deep-drawn sighs; and to the Phaeacians, who delight in oars, he straightway said:

“Hearken, Phaeacian captains and councilors! Now have we satisfied desire for the impartial feast and for the lyre, which is the fellow of the stately feast. Let us then come away and try all kinds of games, so that the stranger, going home, may tell his friends how greatly we surpass all other men in boxing, wrestling, leaping, speed of foot.”

So saying, he led the way, the others followed after. The page hung on its peg the tuneful lyre, then took by the hand Demodocus and led him from the hall, guiding his steps along the selfsame road by which the rest of the Phaeacian chiefs went forth to view the games. Thus to the assembly-place they came, a great troop following after, thousands in number; and many a gallant youth stood waiting there. Forth stood Acroneüs, Ocyalus and Elatreus, Nauteus and Prymneus, Anchialus and Eretmeus, Ponteus and Proreus, Thoön, Anabasineüs and Amphialus the son of Polyneüs, son of the carpenter. Forth also stood a youth like murderous Ares, Euryalus, the son of Naubolus, who was the first in beauty and in stature of all Phaeacians after brave Laodamas. Forth stood three sons of good Alcinoüs, — Laodamas, Halius, and matchless Clytoneüs. At first they tried each other in the foot-race. Straight from a mark their track was measured; and all flew swiftly off together, raising the dust along the plain. Best in the race was gallant Clytoneüs; and by such space as at the plough

the mule-course runs, so far he shot ahead and reached the crowd; the rest were left behind. Next in the hardy wrestling-match they had a trial, and here Euryalus surpassed all champions. At leaping Amphialus was foremost of them all, while at the discus the leader was Elatreus. In boxing it was Laodamas, the good son of Alcinoüs. So when all hearts were gladdened by the games, up spoke Laodamas, son of Alcinoüs:

“Come, friends, and let us ask the stranger if he knows games and has some skill in any. In build, at all events, he is no common man, — in thighs, and calves, and arms above, strong neck, and massive chest. Fit years he does not lack, only he has been broken down by many hardships; for nothing, I believe, is worse than sea-life for weakening a man, however strong he be.”

Then answered him Euryalus, and said: “Laodamas, what you have said is rightly spoken. Go, challenge him yourself, and give the message.”

Now when the good son of Alcinoüs heard his words, he went and stood before them all and thus addressed Odysseus:

“Come, good old stranger, do you also try the games, if you have skill in any. Games you should know. There is no greater glory for a man in all his life than what he wins with his own feet and hands. Come then, and try! Drive trouble from your heart! Your journey hence shall not be long delayed. Already the ship is launched, the sailors ready.”

Then wise Odysseus answered him and said: “Laodamas, why mock me with this challenge? Sorrow is on my heart far more than games; for in times past much have I borne and much have toiled, and now I

sit in your assembly longing for my home and supplicate your king and all this people."

Then answered back Euryalus, and mocked him to his face: "No indeed, stranger, you do not look like one expert in games, much as these count with men; rather like one busied with ships of many oars, captain of seamen who are traders, one whose mind is on his cargo, watching freights and greedy gains. You are not like an athlete."

But looking sternly on him wise Odysseus said: "Stranger, your words are rude. You seem a reckless person. So true it is that not to all alike the gods grant grace, in stature, wisdom, and the power of speech. For one man is in look inferior, but God crowns his words with beauty, and men behold him and rejoice; with sure effect he speaks and a sweet modesty; he shines where men are gathered, and as he walks the town men gaze as on some god. And one again in look is like the immortals, but his is not the crowning grace of words. So you, in look, are excellent, — better God could not fashion, — but you are weak in judgment. You stirred the very soul within my breast by talking so unmannerly. No! I am not unskilled in games, as you declare; I was among the best, I think, while I could trust my vigorous age and these my arms. Now I am overwhelmed with pain and trouble; for much have I endured, cleaving my way through wars of men and through the boisterous seas. Still even so, all woe-worn as I am, I will attempt the games, because your words were galling; you provoked me, talking thus."

He spoke, and with his cloak still on he sprang and seized a discus larger than the rest and thick, heavier by not a little than those which the Phaea-

cians were using for themselves. This with a twist he sent from his stout hand. The stone hummed as it went; down to the ground crouched the Phaeacian oarsmen, notable men at sea, at the stone's cast. Past all the marks it flew, swift speeding from his hand. Athene marked the distances, taking a human form, and thus she spoke and cried aloud:

“A blind man, stranger, could pick you out that mark by feeling merely, because it is not huddled in the crowd, but lies ahead of all. Have a good heart, this bout at least; for no Phaeacian will reach that or overpass it.”

She spoke, and glad was long-tried royal Odysseus, pleased that he saw a true friend in the ring. And now with lighter heart he called to the Phaeacians:

“Come up to that, young men! Soon I will send another as far, I think, or farther. And if there is one among you all whose heart and spirit bids, come, let him try me — for you vexed me very sore — in boxing, wrestling, or the foot-race even; it matters not to me; let any Phaeacian try, except Laodamas. He is my host, and who would quarrel with his entertainer? Witless the man must be, and altogether worthless, who challenges his host to games when in a foreign land; he hinders his own welfare. None of the rest I either dread or scorn, but I will gladly know you all and prove you face to face. Not at all weak am I in any games men practice. I understand full well handling the polished bow, and I should be the first to strike my man by sending an arrow in the throng of foes, however many comrades stood around and shot at their men too. None except Philoctetes excelled me with the bow at Troy, when we Achaeans tried the bow. All others I declare I

far surpass, all that are living now and eating bread on earth. The men of former days I will not seek to rival — Hercules, and Eurytus of Oechalia, — for these would rival with the bow immortals even. Wherefore great Eurytus died all too soon ; no old age came upon him in his home, because in wrath Apollo slew him ; for Eurytus had challenged him to try the bow. I send the spear farther than other men an arrow. Only I fear that in the foot-race some Phaeacian may outstrip me ; for rudely battered have I been on many waters, because I had no ease at sea for any length of time ; therefore my joints are weakened.”

So he spoke, and all were hushed to silence ; only Alcinoüs answering said : “ Stranger, without discourtesy to us is all you say ; you merely seek to show the prowess that is yours ; indignant that the man beside you in the ring insulted you, though surely no man would dispraise your prowess who knew within his heart what it was fit to say. But listen now to words of mine, that you may have tales to tell to other heroes when, feasting in your hall with wife and children, you recollect our prowess and the feats Zeus has vouchsafed us from our fathers’ days till now. We are not faultless boxers, no, nor wrestlers ; but in the foot-race we run swiftly, and in our ships excel. Dear to us ever is the feast, the harp, the dance, changes of clothes, warm baths, and bed. Come then, Phaeacian dancers, the best among you make us sport, that so the stranger on returning home may tell his friends how we surpass all other men in sailing, running, in the dance and song. Go, one of you, forthwith, and fetch Demodocus the tuneful lyre that lies within our hall.”

So spoke godlike Alcinoüs, and a page sprang to fetch from the king's house the hollow lyre. Then rose the appointed umpires, nine in all, whose public work it was to order all things at the ring; they smoothed the dancing-ground and cleared a fair wide ring. Meanwhile the page drew near and brought his tuneful lyre to Demodocus, who thereupon stepped to the centre, and round him stood young men in the first bloom of years, skillful at dancing. They struck the splendid dance-ground with their feet; Odysseus watched their twinkling feet, and was astonished.

And now the bard, touching his lyre, began a beautiful song about the loves of Ares and crowned Aphrodite: how at the first they lay together in the palace of Hephaestus, privily; and many a gift he gave, and wronged the bed of lord Hephaestus. Soon to Hephaestus came the tell-tale Sun, who had observed their meeting. And when Hephaestus heard the galling tale, he hastened to his smithy meditating evil in his heart, there set upon its block the mighty anvil and forged him fetters none might break or loose, fetters to hold securely. So after he had wrought his snare, in anger against Ares, hastening to the chamber where his own dear bed was set, around its posts on every side he dropped his toils; and many too hung drooping from the rafter, like delicate spiderwebs which nobody could see, not even the blessed gods, so shrewdly were they fashioned. Then after he had spread the snare all round the bed, he made a show of going off to Lemnos, that stately citadel which in his sight is far the dearest of all spots on earth. Now Ares of the golden rein had kept no careless watch, and so espied craftsman Hephaestus setting forth. He hastened to the house of famed

Hephaestus, keen for the love of fair-crowned Cytherea. She, just come home from visiting her sire, the powerful son of Kronos, was sitting down. He came within the door, and holding her by the hand he spoke and thus addressed her :

“Come, dear, to bed, and let us take our pleasure ; for Hephaestus is no longer here at home, but gone at last to Lemnos, to the harsh-tongued Sintians.”

He spoke, and pleasant it seemed to her to lie beside him. So the pair went and laid them down in bed, and all about them dropped the toils fashioned by shrewd Hephaestus ; it was not in their power to move or raise a limb. This they saw only then when there was no escape. But on them came the famous strong-armed god, who had turned back before he reached the land of Lemnos ; for in his stead the Sun kept watch and told him all. He hastened to the house, with heavy heart, stood at the porch, wild rage upon him, and raised a fearful cry, calling to all the gods :

“O Father Zeus, and all you other blessed gods that live forever, come see a sight for laughter, deeds not to be endured ! For I being lame, this Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, ever dishonors me and gives her love to deadly Ares, since he is handsome and is sound of limb, while I was born a cripple. Yet nobody is to blame for that but my two parents, — would they had never given me birth ! But you shall see where lie the loving pair who stole into my bed. I smart to see them ! And yet I think they will not lie much longer thus, however great their love. Shortly they will not wish to sleep together ; but still my snare and mesh shall hold them, till her father pays me back the many wedding gifts I gave to get the shameless girl, — seeing his child was fair, though not true-hearted.”

He spoke, and the gods gathered at the brazen threshold of his house. Poseidon came, who girds the land, the fortune-bringer Hermes came, and the far-working king Apollo. The goddesses for shame all stayed at home. So at the portal stood the gods, the givers of good things, and uncontrollable laughter broke from the blessed gods as they beheld the arts of shrewd Hephaestus; and glancing at his neighbor one would say:

“Wrong-doing brings no gain. Slow catches swift; as here Hephaestus, who is slow, caught Ares, who is swiftest of the gods that hold Olympus, — catching him by his craft, though lame himself. Now Ares owes the adulterer’s fine.”

So they conversed together. And now to Hermes spoke the king, the son of Zeus, Apollo: “O Hermes, son of Zeus, guide, giver of good things, would you not like, though loaded down with heavy bonds, to lie in bed by golden Aphrodite?”

Then answered him the guide, the Speedy-comer: “Would it might be, far-shooting king Apollo, though thrice as many bonds, bonds numberless, should hold me fast, and all you gods and goddesses should come and see, would I might lie by golden Aphrodite!”

He spoke, and laughter rose among the immortal gods. But Poseidon did not laugh; he earnestly entreated Hephaestus, the great craftsman, to loosen Ares. And speaking in winged words he said:

“Loose him, and I engage, as you desire, that he shall pay all dues before the immortal gods.”

Then said to him the famous strong-armed god: “Poseidon, girder of the land, ask not for this. From triflers, even pledges in the hand are trifles. How

could I hold you bound before the immortal gods, if Ares should evade both debt and bond and flee?"

Then said to him the earth-shaker, Poseidon:
"Hephaestus, even if Ares does evade the debt and flee, still I myself will pay."

Then answered him the famous strong-armed god:
"I cannot and I must not say you nay."

So saying, mighty Hephaestus raised the net, and the pair loosed from out the net, so very strong, sprang up forthwith. He went to Thrace; but she, the laughter-loving Aphrodite, came to Cyprus, into the town of Paphos, where is her grove and fragrant shrine. There did the Graces bathe her and anoint her with imperishable oil, such as bedews the gods that live forever, and they arrayed her in a dainty robe, a marvel to behold.

So sang the famous bard. Odysseus joyed in heart to hear, as did the others also, the Phaeacian oarsmen, notable men at sea.

And now Alcinoüs called on Halius and Laodamas to dance alone, for with them none could vie. So taking in their hands a goodly purple ball, which skillful Polybus had made them, one, bending backward, flung it toward the dusky clouds; the other, leaping upward from the earth, easily caught the ball before his feet touched ground again. Then after they had tried the ball straight in the air, they danced upon the bounteous earth with tossings to and fro. Other young men beat time for them, standing around the ring, and a loud sound of stamping rose. Then to Alcinoüs said royal Odysseus:

"Mighty Alcinoüs, renowned of all, you boasted that your dancers were the best, and now it is proved true. I am amazed to see."

He spoke; revered Alcinoüs was glad, and to the Phaeacians, who delight in oars, he straightway said: "Hearken, Phaeacian captains and councilors! This stranger truly seems a man of understanding. Come then, and let us give such guest-gift as is meet. Twelve honored kings bear sway throughout the land and are its rulers, and a thirteenth am I. Let each present him a spotless robe and tunic and a talent of precious gold. And let us speedily fetch all together, so that the stranger, having these in hand, may come to supper glad at heart. Let too Euryalus give satisfaction to the man, by word and gift, for his speech was unbecoming."

He spoke, and all approved and gave their orders, and for the bringing of the gifts each man sent forth his page. But Euryalus made answer to the king and said: "Mighty Alcinoüs, renowned of all, I will indeed give satisfaction to the stranger, as you bid; for I will give this brazen blade. Its hilt is silver, and a sheath of fresh-cut ivory incloses it. Of great worth he will find it."

So saying, he put into Odysseus' hands the silver-studded sword, and speaking in winged words he said: "Hail, good old stranger! If any word was uttered that was harsh, straight let the sweeping winds bear it away. But the gods grant that you may see your wife and reach your land; for long cut off from friends you have been meeting hardship."

Then wise Odysseus answered him and said: "You too, my friend, all hail! May the gods grant you fortune, and may you never miss the sword you give, making amends besides in what you say."

He spoke, and round his shoulders slung the silver-studded sword. As the sun set, the noble gifts were

there; stately pages bore them to the palace of Alcinöus, where the sons of good Alcinöus, receiving them, laid the fair gifts before their honored mother. But for the princes revered Alcinöus led the way, and entering the house they sat them down on the high seats. Then to Arete spoke revered Alcinöus:

“Bring hither, wife, a serviceable chest, the best you have, and lay therein a spotless robe and tunic. Then heat upon the fire a caldron for the stranger and warm some water, that, having bathed and seen all gifts put safely by which the gentle Phaeacians brought him, he may enjoy the feast and hear the singer’s song. Moreover I will give him my goodly golden chalice, that as he pours libations at his hall to Zeus and to the other gods he may be mindful all his days of me.”

He spoke, and Arete told the maids to set a great kettle on the fire as quickly as they could. They set the kettle which supplied the bath upon the blazing fire, they poured in water, put the wood beneath, and lighted. Around the belly of the kettle crept the flame, and so the water warmed. Meanwhile Arete brought the stranger a goodly chest from out the chamber; she put therein the beautiful gifts, — the clothing and the gold which the Phaeacians gave, — and she herself put in a robe and goodly tunic, and speaking in winged words she said:

“Look to the lid yourself and quickly tie the cord, lest some one rob you on the way, when sailing by and by, on the black ship, you rest in pleasant sleep.”

When long-tried royal Odysseus heard these words, he straightway fitted on the lid and quickly tied the cunning knot which potent Circe once had taught him. Thereafter the housewife called him to come to

the bath and bathe ; and he was pleased to see the steaming water, for he was not used to care like this since he had left fair-haired Calypso's home ; but there he had as constant care as if he were a god. Now when the maids had bathed him and anointed him with oil and put upon him a goodly coat and tunic, forth from the bath he came and went to join the drinkers ; and Nausicaä, with beauty given her of the gods, stood by a column of the strong-built roof and marveled at Odysseus as she looked into his eyes, and speaking in winged words she said :

“Stranger, farewell! When you are once again in your own land, remember me, and how before all others it is to me you owe the saving of your life.”

Then wise Odysseus answered her and said : “Nausicaä, daughter of generous Alcinoüs, Zeus grant it so — he the loud thunderer, husband of Here — that I go home and see my day of coming. Then would I there too, as to any god, give thanks to you forever, all my days ; for, maiden, it was you who gave me life.”

He spoke, and took his seat by king Alcinoüs. Men were already serving food and mixing wine. The page drew near, leading the honored bard, Demodocus, beloved of all, and seated him among the feasters, backed by a lofty pillar. Then to the page said wise Odysseus, cutting a slice of chine, whereof still more was left, from out a white-toothed boar, the rich fat on its sides :

“Page, set before Demodocus this piece of meat, that he may eat and I may do him homage, sad though I be myself ; for at the hands of all on earth bards meet respect and honor, because the muse has taught them song and loves the race of bards.”

He spoke, and the page bore the food and put it in the hands of lord Demodocus. He took it and was glad, and on the food spread out before them they laid hands. But after they had stayed desire for drink and food, then to Demodocus said wise Odysseus :

“Demodocus, I praise you beyond all mortal men, whether your teacher was the muse, the child of Zeus, or was Apollo. With perfect truth you sing the lot of the Achaeans, all that they did and bore, the whole Achaeans struggle, as if yourself were there, or you had heard the tale from one who was. Pass on then now, and sing the building of the wooden horse, made by Epeius with Athene’s aid, which royal Odysseus once conveyed into the citadel, — a thing of craft, filled full of men, who by its means sacked Ilios. And if you now relate the tale in its due order, forthwith I will declare to all mankind how bounteously God gave to you a wondrous power of song.”

So he spoke. Thereat the other, stirred by the god, began and showed his skill in song : starting the story where some Argives boarding the well-benched ships were setting sail and spreading fire through the camp ; while others still, under renowned Odysseus, lay in the assembly of the Trojans all hidden in the horse ; for the Trojans themselves had dragged it to their citadel. So there it stood, while long and uncertainly the people argued, seated around it. Three plans were finding favor : either to split the hollow trunk with ruthless axe ; or else to drag it to the height and hurl it down the rocks ; or still to spare the monstrous image, as a propitiation of the gods. And thus at last it was to end ; for it was fated they should perish so soon as their city should inclose the enormous wooden horse, where all the Ar-

give chiefs were lying, bearing to the Trojans death and doom. He sang how they o'erthrew the town, these sons of the Achaeans, issuing from the horse, leaving their hollow ambush. Each for himself, he sang, pillaged the stately city; but Odysseus went like Ares to the palace of Deiphobus with godlike Menelaus; and there, he said, braving the fiercest fight, at last he won the day through resolute Athene.

So sang the famous bard. Odysseus melted into tears, and all below his eyes his cheeks were wet. And as a woman wails and clings to her dear husband, who falls for town and people, seeking to shield his home and children from the ruthless day; seeing him dying, gasping, she flings herself on him with a piercing cry; while men behind, smiting her with their spears on back and shoulder, force her along to bondage to suffer toil and trouble; with pain most pitiful her cheeks are thin; so pitifully fell the tears beneath Odysseus' brows. And yet he hid from all the rest the tears he shed; only Alcinoüs marked him and took heed, for he sat near and heard his deep-drawn sighs; and to the Phaeacians, who delight in oars, he straightway said:

“Hearken, Phaeacian captains and councilors, and let Demodocus hush now the tuneful lyre, because not to the pleasure of us all he sings to-day; for since we supped and since the sacred bard began, this stranger has not ceased from bitter sighs. Surely some grief hovers about his heart. Let then the bard cease singing, that all alike be merry, stranger and entertainers, for that is better far; since for the worthy stranger's sake all things are ready now, escort and friendly gifts, which we grant heartily. Even as a brother is the stranger and the suppliant treated by any man who feels a touch of wisdom.

“ And do not you, then, longer cautiously conceal what I will ask ; plain speech is better. Tell me the name by which at home your father and mother called you,—they and the other folk, your townsmen and your neighbors ; for none of all mankind can lack a name, be he of low degree or high, when once he has been born ; since in the very hour of birth parents give names to all. And tell me of your land, your home, and city, that thither our ships may bear you with a discerning aim ; for on Phaeacian ships there are no pilots, nor are there rudders such as other vessels carry, but the ships understand the will and mind of man. They know the cities and rich lands of every nation, and swiftly they cross the sea-gulf, shrouded in mist and cloud. On them there is no fear of being harmed or lost. Still, this is what I heard Nausithoüs, my father, tell : he said Poseidon was displeased because we were safe guides for all mankind ; and he averred the god one day would wreck a stanch ship of the Phaeacians, returning home from pilotage upon the misty sea, and so would throw a lofty mound about our city. That was the old man’s tale, and this God may fulfill, or else it may go unfulfilled, as pleases him. But now declare me this and plainly tell where you have wandered and what countries you have seen. About the men and stately towns, too, let me hear, — what ones were fierce and savage, with no regard for right, what ones were kind to strangers and reverent toward the gods. And tell me why you weep and grieve within your breast on hearing of the lot of Argive Danaäns and of Ilios. This the gods wrought ; they spun the thread of death for some, that others in the time to come might have a song. Had you some relative who fell at Ilios ? One who was dear ?

some daughter's husband or wife's father? — they who stand closest to us after our flesh and blood. Or was it perhaps some friend who pleased you well, a gallant comrade? For a friend with an understanding heart is worth no less than a brother."