

**THE FIRST SIX
BOOKS OF HOMER'S
ILIAD, PP. 1-247**

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The First Six Books of Homer's Iliad, pp. 1-247 by Homerus

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HOMERUS

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LATELY PUBLISHED, SECOND EDITION,

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OF

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WITH AN

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LINE FOR LINE, AND NUMEROUS NOTES.

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND WALTON,
UPPER GOWER STREET, LONDON:
TO BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE FIRST SIX BOOKS OF VIRGIL'S
ÆNEID" ON THE SAME PLAN.

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1841.

341.

LIFE OF HOMER.

HOMER, a celebrated Greek poet, was the most ancient of all the profane writers. The age in which he lived is not known, though some suppose it to be about 168 years after the Trojan war, or, according to others, 160 years before the foundation of Rome. According to Paterculus, he flourished 968 years before the Christian era, or 884, according to Herodotus, who supposes him to be cotemporary with Hesiod. The Arundelian Marbles fix his era 907 years before Christ, and make him also cotemporary with Hesiod. This diversity of opinion proves the antiquity of Homer. Uncertainty prevails also concerning the place of his nativity: no less than seven illustrious cities disputed the right of having given birth to the greatest of poets, as it is well expressed in these lines:

*Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos,
Argos, Athenæ,
Orbis de patria certat, Homere, tud.*

He was called *Melesigenes*, because supposed to be born on the borders of the river Meles. There prevailed a report that he had established a school at Chios in the latter part of his life, and, indeed, this opinion is favoured by the present inhabitants of the island, who still glory in showing to travellers the seats where the venerable master and his pupils sat in the hollow of a rock, at the distance of about four miles from the mo-

dern capital of the island. These difficulties and doubts have not been removed, though Aristotle, Herodotus, Plutarch, and others, have employed their pen in writing his life.

In his two celebrated Poems called the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Homer has displayed the most consummate knowledge of human nature, and rendered himself immortal by the sublimity, the fire, sweetness, and elegance of his poetry. He deserves a greater share of admiration when we consider that he wrote without a model, and that none of his poetical imitators have been able to surpass, or, perhaps, to equal their great master. If there are any faults found in his poetry, they are to be attributed to the age in which he lived, and not to him; and we must observe that the world is indebted to Homer for his happy successor Virgil. In his *Iliad*, Homer has described the resentment of Achilles, and its fatal consequences in the Grecian army, before the walls of Troy. In the *Odyssey*, the poet has chosen for his subject the return of Ulysses into his country, with the many misfortunes which attended his voyage after the fall of Troy. These two poems are each divided into 24 books, the same number as the letters of the Greek alphabet, and though the *Iliad* claims an uncontested superiority over the *Odyssey*, yet the same force, the same sublimity and elegance, prevail, though divested of its most powerful fire; and Longinus, the most refined of critics, beautifully compares the *Iliad* to the mid-day, and the *Odyssey* to the setting sun, and observes, that the latter still preserves its original splendour and majesty, though deprived of its meridian heat. The poetry of Homer was so universally admired, that, in ancient times, every man of learning could repeat with facility any passage in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*; and,

indeed, it was a sufficient authority to settle disputed boundaries, or to support any argument. The poems of Homer are the compositions of a man who travelled and examined, with the most critical accuracy, whatever deserved notice and claimed attention. Modern travellers are astonished to see the different scenes which the pen of Homer described about three thousand years ago, still existing in the same unvaried form, and the sailor who steers his course along the *Ægean*, sees all the promontories and rocks which appeared to Nestor and Menelaus, when they returned victorious from the Trojan war. The ancients had such veneration for Homer, that they not only raised temples and altars to him, but offered sacrifices, and worshipped him as a god. The inhabitants of Chios celebrated festivals every fifth year in his honour, and medals were struck, which represented him sitting on a throne, holding his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In Egypt his memory was consecrated by Ptolemy Philopator, who erected a magnificent temple, within which was placed a statue of the poet beautifully surrounded with a representation of the seven cities which contended for the honor of his birth. The inhabitants of Cos, one of the Sporades, boasted that Homer was buried in their island; and the Cyprians claimed the same honour, and said that he was born of Themisto, a female native of Cyprus. Alexander was so fond of Homer, that he generally placed his compositions under his pillow, with his sword; and he carefully deposited the *Iliad* in one of the richest and most valuable caskets of Darius, observing, that the most perfect work of human genius ought to be preserved in a box the most valuable and precious in the world. It is said that Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens, was the first who collected and arranged the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the

manner in which they now appear to us: and that it is to the well-directed pursuits of Lycurgus that we are indebted for their preservation. Many of the ancients have written the life of Homer, yet their enquiries and labours have not much contributed to prove the native place, the patronage and connections, of a man whom some have represented as deprived of sight. Besides the Iliad and Odyssey, Homer wrote, according to the opinion of some authors, a poem upon Amphiaraus's expedition against Thebes, besides the Phocæis, the Cercopes, the small Iliad, the Epicichlides, and the Batrachomyomachia, and many hymns to some of the gods. The merit of originality is taken very improperly, perhaps, from Homer, by those who suppose, with Clemens Alex., 6 *Strom.* that he borrowed from Orpheus, or that, according to Suidas, (*voce Corinnus*) he took his plan of the Iliad from Corinnus, an epic poet, who wrote on the Trojan war, at the very time that the Greeks besieged that famed city. Agathon, an ancient painter, according to Ælian, represented the merit of the poet in a manner as bold as it was indelicate. Homer was represented as vomiting, and all other poets as swallowing what he ejected.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Contention of Achilles and Agamemnon.

IN the War of Troy, the Greeks having sacked some of the neighbouring towns, and taken from thence two beautiful captives, Chryseis and Bryseis, allotted the first to Agamemnon, and the last to Achilles. Chryses, the father of Chryseis and priest of Apollo, comes to the Grecian camp to ransom her; with which the action of the poem opens, in the tenth year of the siege. The priest being refused and insolently dismissed by Agamemnon, entreats for vengeance from his god, who inflicts a pestilence on the Greeks. Achilles calls a council, and encourages Chalcas to declare the cause of it, who attributes it to the refusal of Chryseis. The king being obliged to send back his captive, enters into a furious contest with Achilles, which Nestor pacifies: however, as he had the absolute command of the army, he seizes on Bryseis in revenge. Achilles in discontent withdraws himself and his forces from the rest of the Greeks; and complaining to Thetis, she supplicates Jupiter to render them sensible of the wrong done to her son, by giving victory to the Trojans. Jupiter granting her suit incenses Juno, between whom the debate runs high, till they are reconciled by the address of Vulcan.

The time of two-and-twenty days is taken up in this book: nine during the plague, one in the council and quarrel of the princes, and twelve for Jupiter's stay with the Æthiopiens, at whose return Thetis prefers her petition. The scene lies in the Grecian camp, then changes to Chysea, and lastly to the gods on Olympus.