

# **HOMER: THE ODYSSEY**

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Homer: The Odyssey by Homer & W. Lucas Collins

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**HOMER & W. LUCAS COLLINS**

# **HOMER: THE ODYSSEY**



*Ancient Classics for English Readers*

EDITED BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

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HOMER

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# CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
INTRODUCTION, . . . . .	1
CHAP. I. PENELOPE AND HER SUITORS, . . . .	9
" II. TELEMACHUS GOES IN QUEST OF HIS FATHER, . . . .	26
" III. ULYSSES WITH CALYPSO AND THE PHÆACIANS, . . . .	43
" IV. ULYSSES TELLS HIS STORY TO ALKINOUS, . . . .	65
" V. THE TALE CONTINUED — THE VISIT TO THE SHADES, . . . . .	78
" VI. ULYSSES' RETURN TO ITHACA, . . . .	89
" VII. THE RETURN OF TELEMACHUS FROM SPARTA, . . . .	96
" VIII. ULYSSES REVISITS HIS PALACE, . . . .	100
" IX. THE DAY OF RETRIBUTION, . . . .	109
" X. THE RECOGNITION BY PENELOPE, . . . .	116
" XI. CONCLUDING REMARKS, . . . .	125



It has been thought desirable in these pages to use the Latin names of the Homeric deities and heroes, as more familiar to English ears. As, however, most modern translators have followed Homer's Greek nomenclature, it may be convenient here to give both.

Zeus	=	Jupiter.
Herè	=	Juno.
Arès	=	Mars.
Poseidôn	=	Neptune.
Pallas Athenè	=	Minerva.
Aphroditè	=	Venus.
Hephsistos	=	Vulcan.
Hermes	=	Mercury.
Artemis	=	Diana.
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Odysseus	=	Ulysses.
Aias	=	Ajax.

The passages quoted, unless otherwise specified, are from the admirable translation of Mr Worsley.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE poem of the *Odyssey* is treated in these pages as the work of a single author, and that author the same as the composer of the *Iliad*. It would be manifestly out of place, in a volume which does not profess to be written for critical scholars, to discuss a question on which they are so far from being agreed. But it may be satisfactory to assure the reader who has neither leisure nor inclination to enter into the controversy, that in accepting, as we do, the *Odyssey* as from the same "Homer" to whom we owe the *Tale of Troy*, he may fortify himself by the authority of many accomplished scholars who have carefully examined the question. Though none of the incidents related in the *Iliad* are distinctly referred to in the *Odyssey*—a point strongly urged by those who would assign the poems to different authors—and therefore the one cannot fairly be regarded as a sequel to the other, yet there is no important discrepancy, either in the facts previously assumed, or in the treatment of such characters as appear upon the scene in both.

The character of the two poems is, indeed, essentially different. The *Iliad* is a tale of the camp and the battle-field: the *Odyssey* combines the romance of travel with that of domestic life. The key-note of the *Iliad* is glory: that of the *Odyssey* is rest. This was amongst the reasons which led one of the earliest of Homer's critics to the conclusion that the *Odyssey* was the work of his old age. In both poems the interest lies in the situations and the descriptions, rather than in what we moderns call the "plot." This latter is not a main consideration with the poet, and he has no hesitation in disclosing his catastrophe beforehand. The interest, so far as this point is concerned, is also weakened for the modern reader by the intervention throughout of supernatural agents, who, at the most critical turns of the story, throw their irresistible weight into the scale. Yet, in spite of this, the interest of the *Odyssey* is intensely human. Greek mythology and Oriental romance are large ingredients in the poem, but its men and women are drawn by a master's hand from the actual life; and, since in the two thousand years between our own and Homer's day nothing has changed so little as human nature, therefore very much of it is still a story of to-day.

The poem before us is the tale of the wanderings and adventures of Odysseus—or Ulysses, as the softer tongue of the Latins preferred to call him—on his way home from the siege of Troy to his island-kingdom of Ithaca. The name Odysseus has been variously interpreted. Homer himself, who should be the best authority, tells us that it was given to him by his grandfather Autoly-