

**'THE PASSION OF DIDO;' OR THE  
FOURTH BOOK OF THE AENEID  
OF VIRGIL, FREELY RENDERED  
INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE**

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'The passion of Dido;' or The fourth book of the Aeneid of Virgil, freely rendered into English blank verse by William Johnson Thornhill

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**WILLIAM JOHNSON THORNHILL**

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FOURTH BOOK OF THE AENEID  
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"THE PASSION OF DIDO."

The Version, and Fifty Notes taken from  
a much larger number on the Book—a portion  
of the First Six Books of the Aeneid which  
have been similarly Rendered and Annotated.

# "THE PASSION OF DIDO;"

OR

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE AENEID OF VIRGIL, FREELY  
RENDERED IN ENGLISH BLANK VERSE;

WITH NOTES

BY

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"I am not so much enamour'd of the name Translator, as not to wish further to be  
something better, tho' it yet want a name."—Cowley: *Preface to Pindaric Odes*.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION FOR THE ENGLISH  
READER.



THE voyages and wars of the Trojan prince Aeneas, son of Anchises and Venus, consequent upon the destruction of Troy by the Greeks, and caused or prolonged by the jealous enmity of Juno, and destined, according to the legend, to result in the remote origination of the Roman power in Italy, are the subject matter of the Aeneid. The causes of Juno's enmity were, among others,—(1) her attachment to the city of Carthage, or New Tyre, which had been founded on the coast of Libya (or Africa), by Dido, herself a refugee from Tyre after the murder of her husband Sychaeus by her unnatural brother Pygmalion, the king; and (2) a report which was rife in heaven that the new city was fated to be overthrown by a Trojan race.

The action of the poem begins, Book I, seven years after the fall of Troy, when Aeneas is sailing in pursuance of his destiny from Sicily for the Italian coast. Aeolus, the king of the winds, at Juno's request raises a storm which scatters the Trojan fleet, sinks one of the ships, and drives the rest on the coast of Libya. Aeneas, with seven out of his twenty vessels, lands in a bay near Carthage, and him-



self and his shipwrecked followers are hospitably received and entertained by Dido, the queen. Venus, however, distrusting the court and people, and uneasy at her son's prolonged stay in the favourite city of Juno, employs Cupid in the disguise of Ascanius (or Iulus), Aeneas' youthful son, to inspire the queen with love for the prince. At a royal banquet on the night which concludes the First Book, Dido requests Aeneas to relate at large to the company the capture of Troy and his own subsequent adventures. The prince complies with the request, and the narrative, to which Dido—who in the mean time has fallen in love with him—has listened with the most rapt attention, forms the continuous subject of the Second and Third Books; and this Fourth Book details the sequel of the queen's passion, and its tragic termination. (See *Mr. John Miller's* and *Mr. Charles R. Kennedy's Versions of the Aeneid. Arguments. B. I.*)





NOTICES OF THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE  
AENEID OF VIRGIL. DIDO.

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"IN the Third Book Virgil seems to have displayed his skill in descriptive poetry, but this Fourth Book is entirely devoted to the pathetic. And indeed he hath exhausted the subject; no other author ever moved the passions of pity and terror in so great a degree. The origin and progress of the passion of love, its various effects on the mind, its doubts, and hopes, and fears, and jealousies, its pleasures and pains, till it ends in the deepest despair, were never so forcibly, so elegantly, or so naturally described."—*Mr. Christopher Pitt. Translation of the Aeneid. Introduction to B. IV.*

"Virgil has here struck the chord of modern passion, and powerfully has it responded; more powerfully, perhaps, than the minstrel himself expected. Had Homer written of Dido, we should probably have been called upon to sympathize with her but little; our feelings would have been with the hero whom she strove to keep from the home whither

he was bound. There were reasons which might have induced Virgil to give a similar colour to his narrative. All his sympathies are Roman; and the breach between Dido and Aeneas is the symbol and the prophecy of the quarrel of Carthage and Rome. It is hard, too, to suppose that in sketching the Carthaginian queen who endeavours to keep Aeneas from his kingdom, he did not think again and again of the Egyptian enchantress to whom Antony would have transferred the sceptre of the western world, whose blandishments had prevailed over the great Julius, and had been successfully resisted by Octavianus alone. Circe might have supplied the legendary framework, Cleopatra the animating historical spirit; and even though the Trojan Ulysses had yielded to the allurements of the charmer, we might have hailed the flash of his drawn sword, and sent our hearts along with him in his journey from the enchanted shore. But Virgil has not chosen to draw a picture like this. Following in the track of Apollonius, he has lavished all his art on the production of a vivid portrait of female passion. Dido's flame has been kindled, not from within, but from without, by a supernatural power; the generosity of her nature has already shown itself in the princely hospitality which she extends to Aeneas and his shipwrecked comrades; but, after all, we sympathize with her simply as a woman; it is the mere exhibition of the depths of a woman's heart which stirs our own so powerfully. Other heroes have loved and left as Aeneas does; few have had as strong a justification as he can