

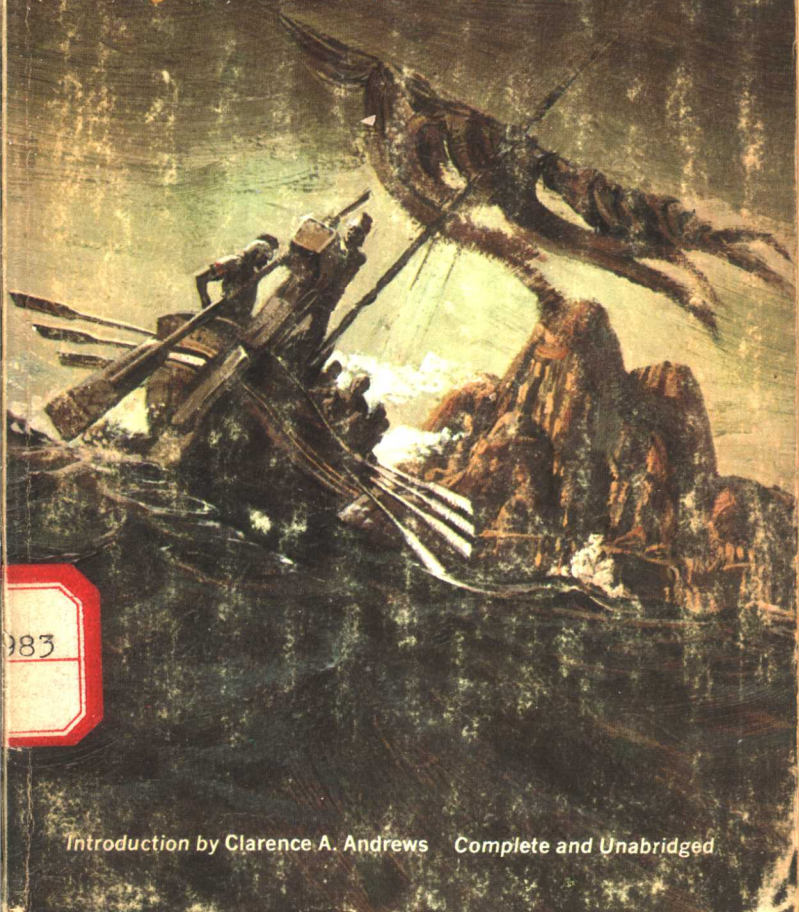


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CLASSICS SERIES CL177

# VIRGIL'S AENEID

*Translation by*  
**JOHN DRYDEN**



983

*Introduction by Clarence A. Andrews*    *Complete and Unabridged*

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AIRMONT PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.  
22 EAST 60TH STREET • NEW YORK 10022

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**PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA**  
**BY THE RYERSON PRESS, TORONTO**

**PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**BY THE COLONIAL PRESS, INC., CHINTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

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## *Introduction*

PUBLIUS VERGILIUS MARO (Virgil, sometimes Vergil), the son of a fairly well-to-do farmer, was born near Mantua, in what is now Italy, in 70 B.C. He studied at nearby Cremona, then at seventeen went south to Rome to study rhetoric and the physical sciences. But he apparently was too sensitive a plant for the rigors of Rome and in a year or so retired to his father's farm to study poetry and Greek philosophy.

When Virgil was twenty-five (44 B.C.), the assassination of Julius Caesar plunged the Roman world into political chaos. Soon (41 B.C.) veterans of Anthony's army were given the right to resettle on the lands around Mantua through what the Romans called "proscriptions." Under this program some people lost their property, some their lives. Virgil, however, had become friendly with one Asinius Pollio, and this man took some of Virgil's poetry to Rome to show to one of Anthony's ministers, Gaius Cilnius Maecenas. Maecenas encouraged Virgil to add to these poems, and the complete collection was published under the title *Bucolica* (*The Bucolics*). The publication made Virgil famous, and soon he went to live at Naples under the patronage of Maecenas. From 37 to 30 B.C. he worked on a long didactic poem, the *Georgica* or "poems of farm life." Virgil's glorification of the rural

life was underway at the same time that Octavius Caesar was making a great urban center of Rome. *The Georgics* have a strong sense of the historical past and of the Roman present; they also reflect the hope that Rome, under Octavius, will now have a more peaceful existence. Virgil's next poetic effort, the *Aeneid*, was his greatest. For the form of this long poem, Virgil chose an ancient model, the epic, the form in which the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* of the Greek poet Homer had been written.

An epic is a long narrative poem based upon events in the actual or mythological past. The hero is faced with some major enterprise which he must undertake and achieve. Usually his success or failure has been fore-ordained by a god; therefore the obstacles placed in his way must be overcome, no matter how much superhuman effort they require. In both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in addition to the human heroes, the Greek hierarchy of gods and mythological figures had played a major part. They meddled in the affairs of men as often as not; indeed the hero was usually the offspring of a union of gods and goddesses, or of a union of a god and a mortal. The hero, therefore, found himself both opposed and helped by gods, goddesses, and men. The forces of nature also opposed him; these forces were often quite closely identified with particular gods.

Of the use of the gods by Virgil in the *Aeneid*, Dryden says: "He has imitated those of Homer, but not copied them . . . He invents the occasions for which he uses them . . . Virgil, generally speaking, employ'd his machines (gods) in performing those things which might possibly have been done without them . . . Might not Palinurus, without a miracle, fall asleep, and drop into the sea, having been overwearied with watching. . . ? It sooth'd the vanity of the Romans, to find the gods so visibly concern'd in all of the actions of their predecessors . . ."

War and battles are also an integral part of the epic poem, since one way the hero may prove himself is in battle. Homer's *Iliad* had been primarily about the ten-year struggle between Greeks and Trojans "far on the ringing plains of windy Troy." Homer's *Odyssey* is about

the ten-year voyage home of Odysseus, one of the Greek heroes, but there are many backward glances at the Trojan War, and Odysseus, like Aeneas, faced opposition from men, gods, and the forces of nature.

Virgil used incidents from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in his poem, changing many of them to suit his purposes. In fact, the *Aeneid* can be seen structurally as a combination of the Greek poems—the first six books, focusing on the wanderings of Aeneas, is Virgil's *Odyssey*; the second six books, focusing on the wars between Aeneas and the Latinians, is Virgil's *Iliad*. (Virgil has reversed the time order of the two sets of events.)

For his hero, Virgil chose Aeneas, a quite minor figure in the *Iliad*. The *Iliad* had championed the cause of the Greeks; Aeneas was a Trojan prince and therefore one of the enemies of the heroes of the Greek epic. Traditionally, the descendants of Aeneas were supposed to have founded Rome; one of the chief families of Rome claimed to be direct descendants of Aeneas. The *Aeneid*, therefore, became a symbolic version of Roman history, and a record of their best and highest dreams for the future.

Virgil died in 19 B.C., leaving his great work unfinished. He left behind instructions that the manuscript was to be destroyed. But his wishes were not carried out and two friends edited and published the work. Its Latin phrases ring out even today in a world which has largely put aside matters Latin for matters Greek (or English!):

*Arma virumque cano* (Arms and the man I sing)

*Furor arma ministrat* (Fury ministers arms)

*Sunt lacrimae rerum* (There are tears for misfortune)

*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes* (I fear the Greeks, even  
when bringing gifts)

*Varium et mutabile semper femina* (A woman is ever a  
fickle and change-  
ful thing)

In the Middle Ages, Dante, the greatest of Italian poets, gave Virgil an important role as guide through the *Inferno* and *Purgatory* in his epic poem, the *Divine Comedy*. The Roman poet's fame spread throughout

Europe, and in England one English translation after another of all or part of the *Aeneid* came into being.

In late 1693, near the end of a long and prolific life, the English poet John Dryden (1693-1700) was encouraged by friends, his publisher and others to undertake this translation. Dryden, who had once thought of writing an epic poem of his own, and who had already translated small parts of Virgil, had no trouble in adopting the idea.

For his translation, Dryden chose to avoid the English hexameter line and to use instead the heroic rhymed couplet with its ten-foot iambic lines. (Dryden helped to perfect this couplet; Alexander Pope after him was to bring the couplet to its supreme form.) In a long dedication (to the Most Honorable John, Lord Marquis of Normandy, Earl of Mulgrave, &C. and Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter), Dryden discussed some of the reasons for choosing the couplet, and some of the problems he faced in translating the poem.

A translator is faced with the necessity of getting as much of the qualities of the original as he can into his translation. Usually he finds he has one of three choices:

- 1) To maintain the sense of the original on a line-for-line basis.
- 2) To maintain the metrical pattern and rhyme scheme on a line-for-line basis.
- 3) To maintain the other values of the poem (sounds, word-plays, onomatopoeia, etc.), on a line-for-line basis—or indeed on any basis.

For reasons not necessary to detail here, Dryden has great difficulty in bringing about any one of these minimum accomplishments. For that reason, many modern translators turn to prose renderings.

The question, then, is, just how well does Dryden's translation succeed? As you read, you will undoubtedly find more satisfaction with some parts of the poem than with others: you will probably agree with others that the opening lines are magnificent; you will find that lines such as those beginning:

Now, when the rage of hunger was appeas'd . . .  
(Book 1, 1011 ff.)

'Twas Bitias whom she call'd, a thirsty soul . . .  
(1034 ff.)

dazzle with their brilliance.

But there are bad portions; Dryden's attempts to depict the heroic stance often result in mere rant and, as a poet of love and passion, he often does not come off very well. The death of Dido has some lines which do not ring true at all:

Then kiss'd the couch; and, "Must I die," she said,  
"And unreveng'd? Tis doubly to be dead! . . ." (IV,  
944-5)

She said, and struck; deep enter'd in her side  
The piercing steel, with reeking purple dyed;  
Clogg'd in the wound the cruel weapon stands;  
The spouting blood came streaming on her hands.

The modern reader will wonder about some of Dryden's rhyme. It is necessary to point out that for Dryden "join" rhymed with "line" and that "tea," "sea" as often as not rhymed with "way." Some of his rhymes are consonantal; one he uses often is "abode—god." The reader will also notice a great many lines ending in "fate" or "state—"; the English language is sadly lacking in the number of rhyming words needed if a 13,000 line epic poem is to be rendered in rhyming couplets.

Some other characteristics of Dryden's translation must be mentioned. One of them is his use of what came to be called "poetic diction." It begins with the necessity to fill in an extra beat to maintain the rhythm of the line:

Admit the deluge of the *briny streams*  
Three *beamy* stage command a lordly train (the last  
word another overused Dryden rhyme-word)  
His bow and quiver, and his plummy pride

These soon lead to lines such as:

His *woolly care* (for *sheep*) their pensive lord at-  
tends . . .  
And shook the *sacred honors (hairs)* of his head. . . .  
Skill'd in the *wing'd inhabitants* (birds) of air . . . ,

The result is sometimes very bad.



The poem before you represents the combination of efforts of two western civilization's great poetic geniuses. It is not quite the perfect work it might have been; we have seen that Virgil wanted his work destroyed, and Dryden said: "Virgil employ'd eleven years upon his *Aeneis*; yet he left it, as he thought himself, imperfect. Which when I seriously consider, I wish that, instead of three years, which I have spent in the translation of his works, I had four years more allow'd me to correct my errors, that I might make my version more tolerable than it is." But age, illness, and the clamors of the subscribers who had paid for their copies were pressures with which he could not cope. He left his part of the work unfinished as well.

Let us leave Dryden then as one of his less friendly critics has pictured him:

You who would know him better, go to the Coffee-house (where he may be said almost to inhabit) and you shall find him holding forth to half a score young fellows (who clap him on the back, spit in his mouth, and loo him upon the *Whiggs*, as they call 'em) puffed up, and swelling with their praise: and the great Subject of his Discourse shall be of himself, and his *Poetry*: What Diet he uses for *Epick* what for *Comick*; what course he is in for *Libel*, and what for *Tragedy*.

As for Virgil, the epitaph reputed to have been placed upon his grave will do:

*Mantua me genuit, Calabri repuere, tenet nunc Parthenope: cecini pascua, rura, duces.* (Mantua gave me life, and from life Calabria stole me; but to Parthenope I now belong; my songs were of pastures, and farms, chieftains at their wars.)

CLARENCE A. ANDREWS,  
Associate Professor of English  
The University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

# THE FIRST BOOK OF THE AENEIS

**THE ARGUMENT.**—The Trojans, after a seven years' voyage, set sail for Italy, but are overtaken by a dreadful storm, which Aeolus raises at Juno's request. The tempest sinks one, and scatters the rest. Neptune drives off the Winds, and calms the sea. Aeneas, with his own ship, and six more, arrives safe at an African port. Venus complains to Jupiter of her son's misfortunes. Jupiter comforts her, and sends Mercury to procure him a kind reception among the Carthaginians. Aeneas, going out to discover the country, meets his mother in the shape of an huntress, who conveys him in a cloud to Carthage, where he sees his friends whom he thought lost, and receives a kind entertainment from the queen. Dido, by a device of Venus, begins to have a passion for him, and, after some discourse with him, desires the history of his adventures since the siege of Troy, which is the subject of the two following books.

Arms, and the man I sing, who, forc'd by fate,  
And haughty Juno's unrelenting hate,  
Expell'd and exil'd, left the Trojan shore.  
Long labors, both by sea and land, he bore,  
And in the doubtful war, before he won  
The Latian realm, and built the destin'd town;  
His banish'd gods restor'd to rites divine,  
And settled sure succession in his line,  
From whence the race of Alban fathers come,  
And the long glories of majestic Rome.

O Muse! the causes and the crimes relate;  
What goddess was provok'd, and whence her hate;  
For what offense the Queen of Heav'n began  
To persecute so brave, so just a man;  
Involv'd his anxious life in endless cares,  
Expos'd to wants, and hurried into wars!  
Can heav'nly minds such high resentment show,  
Or exercise their spite in human woe?

Against the Tiber's mouth, but far away,  
An ancient town was seated on the sea;  
A Tyrian colony; the people made  
Stout for the war, and studious of their trade:  
Carthage the name; belov'd by Juno more

Than her own Argos, or the Samian shore.  
Here stood her chariot; here, if Heav'n were kind  
The seat of awful empire she design'd.  
Yet she had heard an ancient rumor fly,  
(Long cited by the people of the sky,)  
That times to come should see the Trojan race  
Her Carthage ruin, and her tow'rs deface;  
Nor thus confin'd, the yoke of sov'reign sway  
Should on the necks of all the nations lay.  
She ponder'd this, and fear'd it was in fate;  
Nor could forget the war she wag'd of late  
For conqu'ring Greece against the Trojan state.  
Besides, long causes working in her mind,  
And secret seeds of envy, lay behind;  
Deep graven in her heart the doom remain'd  
Of partial Paris, and her form disdain'd;  
The grace bestow'd on ravish'd Ganymed,  
Electra's glories, and her injur'd bed  
Each was a cause alone; and all combin'd  
To kindle vengeance in her haughty mind.  
For this, far distant from the Latian coast  
She drove the remnants of the Trojan host;  
And sev'n long years th' unhappy wand'ring train  
Were toss'd by storms, and scatter'd thro' the main.  
Such time, such toil, requir'd the Roman name,  
Such length of labor for so vast a frame.

Now scarce the Trojan fleet, with sails and oars,  
Had left behind the fair Sicilian shores,  
Ent'ring with cheerful shouts the wat'ry reign,  
And plowing frothy furrows in the main;  
When, lab'ring still with endless discontent,  
The Queen of Heav'n did thus her fury vent:

"Then am I vanquish'd? must I yield?" said she,  
"And must the Trojans reign in Italy?

So Fate will have it, and Jove adds his force;  
Nor can my pow'r divert their happy course.  
Could angry Pallas, with revengeful spleen,  
The Grecian navy burn, and drown the men?  
She, for the fault of one offending foe,  
The bolts of Jove himself presum'd to throw:  
With whirlwinds from beneath she toss'd the ship,

And bare expos'd the bosom of the deep;  
Then, as an eagle gripes the trembling game,  
The wretch, yet hissing with her father's flame,  
She strongly seiz'd, and with a burning wound  
Transfix'd, and naked, on a rock she bound.  
But I, who walk in awful state above,  
The majesty of heav'n, the sister wife of Jove,  
For length of years my fruitless force employ  
Against the thin remains of ruin'd Troy!  
What nations now to Juno's pow'r will pray,  
Or off'rings on my slighted altars lay?"

Thus rag'd the goddess; and, with fury fraught,  
The restless regions of the storms she sought,  
Where, in a spacious cave of living stone,  
The tyrant Aeolus, from his airy throne,  
With pow'r imperial curbs the struggling winds,  
And sounding tempests in dark prisons binds.  
This way and that th' impatient captives tend,  
And, pressing for release, the mountains rend.  
High in his hall th' undaunted monarch stands,  
And shakes his scepter, and their rage commands;  
Which did he not, their unresisted sway  
Would sweep the world before them in their way;  
Earth, air, and seas thro' empty space would roll,  
And heav'n would fly before the driving soul.  
In fear of this, the Father of the Gods  
Confin'd their fury to those dark abodes,  
And lock'd 'em safe within, oppress'd with mountain  
loads;  
Impos'd a king, with arbitrary sway,  
To loose their fetters, or their force allay.  
To whom the suppliant queen her pray'rs address'd,  
And thus the tenor of her suit express'd:  
"O Aeolus! for to thee the King of Heav'n  
The pow'r of tempests and of winds has giv'n;  
Thy force alone their fury can restrain,  
And smooth the waves, or swell the troubled main—  
A race of wand'ring slaves, abhorr'd by me,  
With prosp'rous passage cut the Tuscan sea;  
To fruitful Italy their course they steer,  
And for their vanquish'd gods design new temples there

Raise all thy winds; with night involve the skies;  
Sink or disperse my fatal enemies.

Twice sev'n, the charming daughters of the main,  
Around my person wait, and bear my train:  
Succeed my wish, and second my design;  
The fairest, Deiopeia, shall be thine,  
And make thee father of a happy line."

To this the god: "'T is yours, O queen, to will  
The work which duty binds me to fulfil.  
These airy kingdoms, and this wide command,  
Are all the presents of your bounteous hand:  
Yours is my sov'reign's grace; and, as your guest,  
I sit with gods at their celestial feast;  
Raise tempests at your pleasure, or subdue;  
Dispose of empire, which I hold from you."

He said, and hurl'd against the mountain side  
His quiv'ring spear, and all the god applied.  
The raging winds rush thro' the hollow wound,  
And dance aloft in air, and skim along the ground;  
Then, settling on the sea, the surges sweep,  
Raise liquid mountains, and disclose the deep.  
South, East, and West with mix'd confusion roar,  
And roll the foaming billows to the shore.  
The cables crack; the sailors' fearful cries  
Ascend; and sable night involves the skies;  
And heav'n itself is ravish'd from their eyes.  
Loud peals of thunder from the poles ensue;  
Then flashing fires the transient light renew;  
The face of things a frightful image bears,  
And present death in various forms appears.  
Struck with unusual fright, the Trojan chief,  
With lifted hands and eyes, invokes relief;  
And, "Thrice and four times happy those," he cried,  
"That under Ilian walls before their parents died!  
Tydides, bravest of the Grecian train!  
Why could not I by that strong arm be slain,  
And lie by noble Hector on the plain,  
Or great Sarpedon, in those bloody fields  
Where Simois rolls the bodies and the shields  
Of heroes, whose dismember'd hands yet bear  
The dart aloft, and clench the pointed spear!"

Thus while the pious prince his fate bewails,  
Fierce Boreas drove against his flying sails,  
And rent the sheets; the raging billows rise,  
And mount the tossing vessel to the skies:  
Nor can the shiv'ring oars sustain the blow;  
The galley gives her side, and turns her prow;  
While those astern, descending down the steep,  
Thro' gaping waves behold the boiling deep.  
Three ships were hurried by the southern blast,  
And on the secret shelves with fury cast.  
Those hidden rocks th' Ausonian sailors knew:  
They call'd them Altars, when they rose in view,  
And show'd their spacious backs above the flood.  
Three more fierce Eurys, in his angry mood,  
Dash'd on the shallows of the moving sand,  
And in mid ocean left them moor'd aland.  
Orontes' bark, that bore the Lycian crew,  
(A horrid sight!) ev'n in the hero's view,  
From stem to stern by waves was overborne:  
The trembling pilot, from his rudder torn,  
Was headlong hurl'd; thrice round the ship was toss'd,  
Then bulg'd at once, and in the deep was lost;  
And here and there above the waves were seen  
Arms, pictures, precious goods, and floating men.  
The stoutest vessel to the storm gave way,  
And suck'd thro' loosen'd planks the rushing sea.  
Ilioneus was her chief: Alethes old,  
Achates faithful, Abas young and bold,  
Endur'd not less; their ships, with gaping seams,  
Admit the deluge of the briny streams.

Meantime imperial Neptune heard the sound  
Of raging billows breaking on the ground.  
Displeas'd, and fearing for his wat'ry reign,  
He rear'd his awful head above the main,  
Serene in majesty; then roll'd his eyes  
Around the space of earth, and seas, and skies.  
He saw the Trojan fleet dispers'd, distress'd,  
By stormy winds and wintry heav'n oppress'd.  
Full well the god his sister's envy knew,  
And what her aims and what her arts pursue.  
He summon'd Eurys and the western blast,

And first an angry glance on both he cast;  
Then thus rebuk'd: "Audacious winds! from whence  
This bold attempt, this rebel insolence?  
Is it for you to ravage seas and land,  
Unauthoriz'd by my supreme command?  
To raise such mountains on the troubled main?  
Whom I—but first 't is fit the billows to restrain;  
And then you shall be taught obedience to my reign.  
Hence! to your lord my royal mandate bear—  
The realms of ocean and the fields of air  
Are mine, not his. By fatal lot to me  
The liquid empire fell, and trident of the sea.  
His pow'r to hollow caverns is confin'd:  
There let him reign, the jailer of the wind,  
With hoarse commands his breathing subjects call,  
And boast and bluster in his empty hall."  
He spoke; and, while he spoke, he smooth'd the sea,  
Dispell'd the darkness, and restor'd the day.  
Cymothoe, Triton, and the sea-green train  
Of beauteous nymphs, the daughters of the main,  
Clear from the rocks the vessels with their hands:  
The god himself with ready trident stands,  
And opes the deep, and spreads the moving sands;  
Then heaves them off the shoals. Where'er he guides  
His finny coursers and in triumph rides,  
The waves unruffle and the sea subsides.  
As, when in tumults rise th' ignoble crowd,  
Mad are their motions, and their tongues are loud;  
And stones and brands in rattling volleys fly,  
And all the rustic arms that fury can supply:  
If then some grave and pious man appear,  
They hush their noise, and lend a list'ning ear;  
He soothes with sober words their angry mood,  
And quenches their innate desire of blood:  
So, when the Father of the Flood appears,  
And o'er the seas his sov'reign trident rears,  
Their fury falls: he skims the liquid plains,  
High on his chariot, and, with loosen'd reins,  
Majestic moves along, and awful peace maintains.  
The weary Trojans ply their shatter'd oars  
To nearest land, and make the Libyan shores.

Within a long recess there lies a bay:  
An island shades it from the rolling sea,  
And forms a port secure for ships to ride;  
Broke by the jutting land, on either side,  
In double streams the briny waters glide.  
Betwixt two rows of rocks a sylvan scene  
Appears above, and groves for ever green:  
A grot is form'd beneath, with mossy seats,  
To rest the Nereids, and exclude the heats.  
Down thro' the crannies of the living walls  
The crystal streams descend in murm'ring falls:  
No haulsers need to bind the vessels here,  
Nor bearded anchors; for no storms they fear.  
Sev'n ships within this happy harbor meet,  
The thin remainders of the scatter'd fleet.  
The Trojans, worn with toils, and spent with woes,  
Leap on the welcome land, and seek their wish'd repose.

First, good Achates, with repeated strokes  
Of clashing flints, their hidden fire provokes:  
Short flame succeeds; a bed of wither'd leaves  
The dying sparkles in their fall receives:  
Caught into life, in fiery fumes they rise,  
And, fed with stronger food, invade the skies.  
The Trojans, dropping wet, or stand around  
The cheerful blaze, or lie along the ground:  
Some dry their corn, infected with the brine,  
Then grind with marbles, and prepare to dine.  
Aeneas climbs the mountain's airy brow,  
And takes a prospect of the seas below,  
If Capys thence, or Antheus he could spy,  
Or see the streamers of Caicus fly.  
No vessels were in view; but, on the plain,  
Three beamy stags command a lordly train  
Of branching heads: the more ignoble throng  
Attend their stately steps, and slowly graze along.  
He stood; and, while secure they fed below,  
He took the quiver and the trusty bow  
Achates us'd to bear: the leaders first  
He laid along, and then the vulgar pierc'd;  
Nor ceas'd his arrows, till the shady plain  
Sev'n mighty bodies with their blood distain.



For the sev'n ships he made an equal share,  
And to the port return'd, triumphant from the war.  
The jars of gen'rous wine (Acestes' gift,  
When his Trinacrian shores the navy left)  
He set abroach, and for the feast prepar'd,  
In equal portions with the ven'son shar'd.  
Thus while he dealt it round, the pious chief  
With cheerful words allay'd the common grief:  
"Endure, and conquer! Jove will soon dispose  
To future good our past and present woes.  
With me, the rocks of Scylla you have tried;  
Th' inhuman Cyclops and his den defied.  
What greater ills hereafter can you bear?  
Resume your courage and dismiss your care,  
An hour will come, with pleasure to relate  
Your sorrows past, as benefits of Fate.  
Thro' various hazards and events, we move  
To Latium and the realms foredoom'd by Jove.  
Call'd to the seat (the promise of the skies)  
Where Trojan kingdoms once again may rise,  
Endure the hardships of your present state;  
Live, and reserve yourselves for better fate."

These words he spoke, but spoke not from his heart;  
His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart.  
The jolly crew, unmindful of the past,  
The quarry share, their plenteous dinner haste.  
Some strip the skin; some portion out the spoil;  
The limbs, yet trembling, in the caldrons boil;  
Some on the fire the reeking entrails broil.  
Stretch'd on the grassy turf, at ease they dine,  
Restore their strength with meat, and cheer their souls  
with wine.

Their hunger thus appeas'd, their care attends  
The doubtful fortune of their absent friends:  
Alternate hopes and fears their minds possess,  
Whether to deem 'em dead, or in distress.  
Above the rest, Aeneas mourns the fate  
Of brave Orontes, and th' uncertain state  
Of Gyas, Lycus, and of Amycus.  
The day, but not their sorrows, ended thus.

When, from aloft, almighty Jove surveys