

J. S. Hodson

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UNIOMACHIA,

OR

THE BATTLE AT THE UNION,

AN HOMERIC FRAGMENT,

Lately given to the World by

HABBAKUKIUS DUNDERHEADIUS,

And now rendered into the English Tongue

BY JEDEDIAH PUZZLEPATE.

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MCCCXXXIII.



DEDICATORY EPISTLE

TO HABBAKUKIUS DUNDERHEADIOUS,

Sometime Fellow, etc., of the renowned University of Leyden.

REVERED SIR,

The inestimable Homeric Fragment, which your singular patience of research hath given to the world, will hand down your name sacred and immortal to posterity.

The sagacity of your Annotations, appendent to this divine relic, hath left no room to the learned but for admiration. To the unlearned perchance my feeble translation may afford a dim glimpse of its beauties.

However infelicitous, O thrice sapient Sir! my effort to render adequately into the English tongue so precious a morsel, I am consoled by the hope of stimulating others to so worthy a toil, and by beholding the unheard-of success of the original, in the appearance of a third edition.

Suffer me, illustrious Sir, to subscribe myself, with all fitting veneration,

Your devoted Worshipper,

JEDEDIAH PUZZLEPATE.

UNIOMACHIA,
OR
THE BATTLE AT THE UNION.

As, when some antiquated virgin's hand
With baleful broom hath chased her feline band,
Around the topmost garrets of the house
Each caterwauling Tom consoles his spouse ;
No less a clamour in thy room, O Star! 5
To Ramblers pale portended woes and war :
Ranged on the left the foe prepared the fight,
The Rambler phalanx marshall'd on the right ;
In high command above their host are seen,
W——d Tory chief, and C——ll's graceful mien, 10
Supreme in eloquence they lead the way,
The first in counsel, and the first in sway :
B——r conducts the bold M——cian throng,
Skill'd to protract debate, and voluble of tongue ;
Thron'd above all, and carpeted in state, 15
The mighty M——e, wordy warrior sate ;
(Where erst, with antics, fooleries, and puns,
Matthe ws the comic tickled Oxford's sons.)

In many a sable fold of honour * drest,
 The great L—wides tow'ed above the rest; 20
 Before the faithful lines advancing far,
 With winged words the chief provoked the war.

“ O friends, be men! be ours the noble boast
 “ From Union rooms to drive a traitor host ;
 “ Against our sov'reign will they dare combine, 25
 “ Form a new club, a *diff*’rent club from mine.
 “ The godlike M——e feels their jealous hate
 “ In empty benches, and in burk'd debate.
 “ Accursed crew! whose ruthless hands have gored
 “ Their mother’s breast with parricidal sword. 30
 “ Vote, then, my friends! and be the turncoat race
 “ Expell’d, kick’d out, in merited disgrace.”

The hero spake, the glad M——ian throng,
 With clam’rous joy exulting shouts prolong,
 But, ’mid their uproar and discordant sound, 35
 Skimmerian S——r ardent sprang to ground,
 And, fixing on the chief a gloomy look,
 With brandish’d papers dreadful, thus he spoke :

“ Whence, men of M——e! this unjust decree?
 “ Command your vassals, but command not me, 40
 “ Your vaunted chief, with proud, imperious soul,
 “ Would all command, and all alike controul,

* The learned Paunchius renders *μελάγρονος* by “wearing his bachelor’s.”

- " With wit licentious practised to revile,
 " Jeers on his tongue, and satire in his smile ;
 " Grant that the Gods his eloquence have giv'n, 45
 " Hath foul reproach a privilege from heav'n ?
 " His factious crew would banish in disgrace
 " The best and noblest of the Union race,
 " Strife and debate their restless souls employ,
 " And war and horrors are their only joy. 50
 " Nor think, O chief! thy purpose to perform,
 " Though high thy class, and like a God thy form."
 He said and sat, when instant to oppose,
 Magnanimous, the mighty M——e rose,
 Redoubled clamours rang from either host, 55
 The high roof shook, and half a speech was lost,
 As when some bull, by dogs be baited round
 Glares on them fierce, nor funk'g quits his ground,
 So, grimly smiling, godlike M——e spoke, 59
 (When ceased the Rambler din) and wrathful silence broke.
 " Joy'st thou, bold leader of the rebel train ?
 " Yet hear our sentence, impudent and vain !
 " From this our Union we reject with scorn
 " Thy recreant crew, dishonoured and forlorn :
 " Thus shall ye prove our might, and curse the hour 65
 " Ye stood the rivals of superior power,
 " There want not chiefs to fight for M——e's state,
 " Our 'hests obey, and shine in our debate."

He said, and P——r heard with grief oppress,
 His heart swell'd high, divided in his breast: 70
 Now words disdainful burst their angry way,
 Now calmer judgement bids his fury stay.
 Sudden, Minerva, gliding down the sky,
 Soft counsel whisper'd from a gas-light high,
 In gentle M——w's form—the warrior heard, 75
 Knit his dark brows, and loath obey'd the word,
 And, while his breast disdain and choler fill'd,
 Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled.

“ With equal zeal my friendly soul approves
 “ The trusty Ramblers, and the Union loves, 80
 “ Ardent my wish in both alike to share,
 “ Both clubs my pride, and both debates my care.”

The gen'rous hero ceased—with thund'ring sound
 T——t shook his tassell'd cap, and sprang to ground,
 (The tassell'd cap by Juggins' hands was made, 85
 Or some keen brother of the London trade,
 Unconscious of the stern decrees of fate,
 What ruthless thumps the batter'd trencher wait,
 Dire was the clang, and dreadful from afar
 Of T——t indignant, rushing to the war, 90
 In vain the chair's dread mandate interfer'd,
 Nor chair, nor fine, the angry warrior fear'd,
 A forfeit pound th' unequal contest ends,
 Loud rose the clamour of condoling friends,

Loud from the foe triumphant thunders broke, 95
 And, swoln with boiling rage, the fearless champion spoke :

“ Not I, O friends ! provok'd th' unholy strife,
 “ Ye, men of M——e ! gave the conflict life,
 “ Your own Committee urg'd the dire debate,
 “ *Your* tongues contentious threat the tott'ring state.” 100
 M——t the good with grief beheld from far

His mulcted friend amid the ranks of war ;
 Stung to the soul, he rose above the rest,
 Of Oriel's sons the dearest and the best,
 Both hosts alike rever'd the peaceful man, 105
 On both he kindly smil'd, and thus began.

“ Alas ! my friends ! the day decreed by fates,
 “ (How my heart trembles while my tongue relates,)
 “ The day must come, when this proud house shall bend,
 “ And the high glories of our Union end, 110
 “ Then shall ye mourn the blow your madness gave,
 “ Forc'd to deplore when impotent to save.
 “ Cease then the war, your dire division cease,
 “ And join in league of amity and peace.”

He said, and many a list'ning chief approv'd 115
 The prudent counsel of the man belov'd,
 Still the fierce M——ites for vengeance call,
 The Ramblers to confound, and banish all :
 Rising in royal majesty and pride,
 “ Great Agamemnon” bade the house divide. 120

The joyous Ramblers triumph'd in the fray,
Theirs was the palm on that eventful day.

As when a hundred mails and coaches meet,
And cabs and buggies cram the crowded street,
Down the wide Cornmarket they thunder in, 125
And far-off Broadstreet hears the mighty din;
So long, so loud the shouts of conquest sound,
In Castle's dome, and many a dwelling round,
The pipe was dropp'd, and wagg'd the sapient head,
As some grave townsman to his neighbour said, 130
"Sure through the doors th' affrighted house will fly,
"With such fierce shouts the gownsmen rend the sky."

Rising at length, when hush'd the hideous roar,
And their joy settled, and their throats were sore,
Gath'ring their gowns and caps they left the fight, 135
And in snug parties pass'd the waning night,
On oysters feasted through their classic tow'rs,
With grog recruited their exhausted pow'rs,
And brandy quaff'd, and smok'd segars for hours.

END.