

In Book II. Æneas recounts the stratagem of the wooden horse and the taking of Troy. At the start he expresses his opinion that the cruellest of the conquerors could not refrain from tears at the recital; but possibly the tender demi-god overrated his own eloquence or the sympathetic nature of his foes. The tale by which the deceitful Sinon lures the Trojans to harbour the fatal horse is irrigated with an average amount of tears and groans. But the traitor's tears attained their object and saved his life; while the hero's tears, if they did not actually cause his own death (*vide ad finem*), must surely have shortened the days of some condoling friends and admirers.

Hector, who, in a dream, warned Æneas not to resist, himself seemed to shed copious tears (v. 271), and, a few lines further on, heaved deep sighs. Assuredly the fiery Hector of the glistening helm had grown less Homeric and more Virgilian since his decease. His apparition furnished an excellent occasion for weeping, which, it is needless to observe, Æneas promptly embraced, besides throwing in a dolorous exclamation every now and then.

Roused from his sleep, Æneas was seized with a fine spasm of valour: he burned, as he informs us in verse 315, to get into the citadel with his adherents. Frenzy made him rash, he tells us (316), and, in verse 337, he rushed into fire and arms! Soon after he called upon his followers to make up their minds to die, for, as he urges in an often-quoted line, "the only safety for the conquered is to hope for none." Still warmed by the flame of valour, he and his partisans, disguise themselves in the armour of some Greeks they had surprised. He gets into the beleaguered palace by a secret door and launches a tower upon the beseigers.

This seems to have ended his spurt, and he looked on very philosophical-

ly at the slaughter of the venerable Priam. Dread horror bewildered him, he explains; he thought of his own old father and his wife, and—longed to be with them. This affectionate anxiety, however, did not prevent his stopping on the way and yielding to a fierce, but perfectly safe, impulse of patriotic indignation. He saw Helen hiding herself (v. 567) and resolved to slay her. "Fires flamed in my soul," he nobly says; "wrath prompts me to avenge my falling country and exact the penalty of sin. Shall she, unscathed, see Sparta and her native Mycenæ, and walk a queen in the triumph she has won? Shall she see her husband and her home, her parents and her children, attended by a retinue of Trojan ladies and Phrygian slaves? Shall Priam have fallen by the sword, Troy have been consumed by fire, the Dardan shore have sweated so many times with blood—and unavenged? It shall not be; for, although to conquer and chastize a woman is not thought particularly glorious, yet I shall be credited with killing a monster of iniquity and inflicting a well-earned punishment, and it will be sweet to wreak my vengeance and satisfy the ashes of my countrymen." And he was rushing at her, undauntedly, when his mother suddenly appeared and persuaded him to go home.

Arrived there he finds Father Anchises quite determined never to leave the old homestead. At this fatal resolution, Æneas, refusing to escape without the old man, indulges in some generous declamation, and calls for weapons, and begs to be let loose at the Greeks again (v. 669). But his timorous spouse, Creusa, held his legs (v. 673) and put the little Julus into his arms, and filled the whole house (v. 679) with her screaming. The family entanglement was ended by a lucky omen, at which Father Anchises braced up and agreed to fly.