

mentum fabulæ necessitate quadam ita produci, ut et continuæ omnes partes sint, invicemque sese excipiant, et in superiore aliqua quam in extremis partibus subsistere nequeamus. Neque enim ipsam iram omissis iis, quæ inde consequuta essent, celebrare idonea materia, immo ne fas quidem poetæ esse videbatur, neque Patroclo cæso finem carmini facere poterat, quippe in quâ re nihil inesset, quod ad relaxandam animorum contentionem pertineret. Nam Achillem quidem ad novam iram novosque animos eo casu excitari necesse erat, neque, priusquam satisfacisset quodammodo iræ atque luctui, animo in amore, odio, ira, mœrore nimio conveniebat ad justum modum componi. Ineptum quoque erat, *viri fortissimi desidiâ enarrare, fortitudinem, interrupto fabulæ filo, tacere.*" We deem it a sufficient answer to the charge of incoherency to remind objectors that Aristotle, the first and greatest of critics, has drawn the very laws of epic poetry from the principles carried out in the composition of the Iliad.* Some passages have been adduced by Wolf as spurious and superinduced additions, with more justice than consistency in one who denied the original unity of the poems, as it is inconceivable how a man can discover and reject that which does not belong to a poetical whole, without assuming the existence of an original poetical whole. The unbroken tenor of antiquity speaks for the single authorship of the Iliad and Odyssey, and even, though the internal difficulties, which seem to repudiate this verdict, were such as we could not solve, yet we cannot allow them to nullify the force of such cumulative evidence; we are content to think what Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, and Herodotus thought on this

* See Müller's Greek Literature, page 48, sect. 5.