

1 Ulysses
2 By Alfred Lord Tennyson (1842)
3
4 It little profits that an idle king,
5 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
6 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
7 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
8 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
9 I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
10 Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
11 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
12 That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
13 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
14 Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
15 For always roaming with a hungry heart
16 Much have I seen and known; cities of men
17 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
18 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
19 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
20 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
21 I am a part of all that I have met;
22 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
23 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
24 For ever and for ever when I move.
25 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
26 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
27 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
28 Were all too little, and of one to me
29 Little remains: but every hour is saved
30 From that eternal silence, something more,
31 A bringer of new things; and vile it were
32 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
33 And this gray spirit yearning in desire
34 To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
35 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
36
37 This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
38 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle--
39 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
40 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
41 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
42 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
43 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
44 Of common duties, decent not to fail
45 In offices of tenderness, and pay
46 Meet adoration to my household gods,
47 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
48 There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:
49 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
50 Souls that have toil'd and wrought, and thought with me--
51 That ever with a frolic welcome took
52 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
53 Free hearts, free foreheads--you and I are old;
54 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
55 Death closes all; but something ere the end,
56 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,

57 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
58 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
59 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
60 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
61 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
62 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
63 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
64 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
65 Of all the western stars, until I die.
66 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
67 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
68 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
69 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
70 We are not now that strength which in old days
71 Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
72 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
73 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
74 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.