

Troilus and Cressida

Act I, sc. 3 (line 341)

NESTOR

Yes, 'tis most meet: whom may you else oppose,
That can from Hector bring his honour off,
If not Achilles? Though't be a sportful combat,
Yet in the trial much opinion dwells;
For here the Trojans taste our dear'st repute
With their finest palate: and trust to me, Ulysses,
Our imputation shall be oddly poised
In this wild action; for the success,
Although particular, shall give a scantling
Of good or bad unto the general;
And in such indexes, although small pricks
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen
The baby figure of the giant mass
Of things to come at large. It is supposed
He that meets Hector issues from our choice
And choice, being mutual act of all our souls,
Makes merit her election, and doth boil,
As 'twere from us all, a man distill'd
Out of our virtues; who miscarrying,
What heart receives from hence the conquering part,
To steel a strong opinion to themselves?

Which entertain'd, limbs are his instruments,
In no less working than are swords and bows
Directive by the limbs.