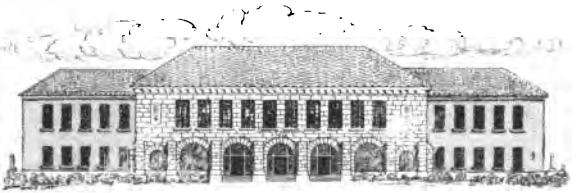

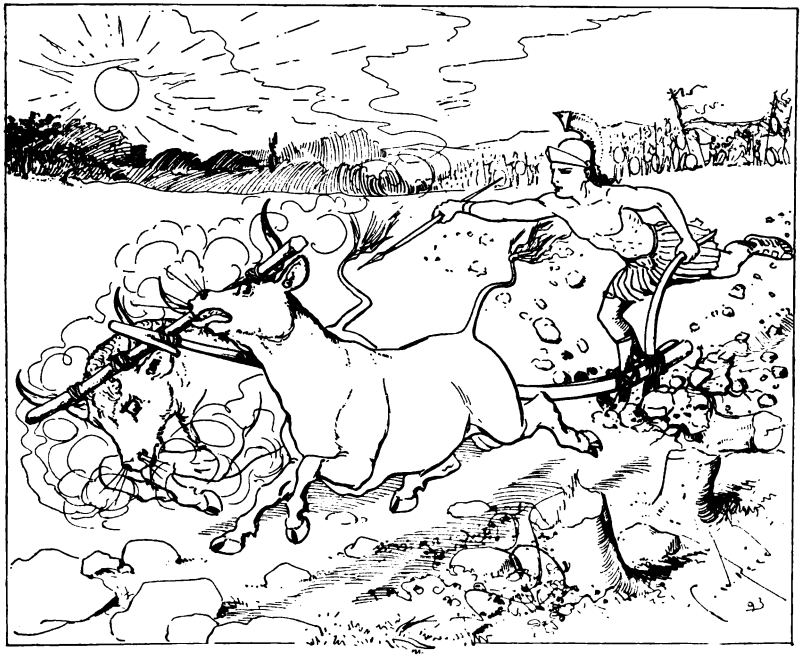

JASON PLOUGHING.

JASON'S QUEST.

BY

P. O. S. TOWELL, A.M., M.D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL.

ILLUSTRATED BY C. W. REED.

THIRD EDITION.

LEACH, SHEWELL & COMPANY,

NEW YORK. BOSTON. CHICAGO.

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TYPOGRAPHY AND ELECTROTYPING BY
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TO

MY FRIEND AND FORMER TEACHER,

John Green Wight, A.M., Ph.D.,

UNDER WHOSE

INSPIRING GUIDANCE

I FIRST LEARNED THE BEAUTY OF THE

OLD GREEK MYTHS,

I GRATEFULLY INSCRIBE

This Volume.

Τὸ πάγχρυσον νάκος κριοῦ, μετὰ γὰρ

Κεῖνο πλευσάντων Μινυᾶν, θεόπομποί σφισιν τιμαὶ φύτευθεν.

PINDAR.

PREFACE.

THE inimitable Goldsmith, in his "History of Animated Nature," relates a somewhat remarkable anecdote, and says that he found it in a work which bore some very good marks of veracity, inasmuch as it was very learned and very dull.

Now, as this little book does not lay claim to the former distinction, the evidence of its veracity must rest solely upon its dulness. But in case even that should prove insufficient, I may be pardoned for saying that, though the events herein described are somewhat startling in themselves, there is excellent classical authority for most of them.

This volume owes its existence to the writer's recollections of his own needs and wishes when a schoolboy. That students need an early induction into the mysteries of mythology, few will have the rashness to dispute. The poet constantly alludes to the Grecian myths; the essayist cites them in his most telling paragraphs; the preacher postulates a knowledge of them on the part of his audience. There lies at

my elbow one of the most popular manuals published upon the Sunday-school lessons of the current year. I look over its pages, and I find that the author seeks to inculcate religious truth through the aid of the myths of Cadmus and the dragon's teeth, the gardens of the Hesperides, the ring of Gyges, the punishment of Prometheus, and the songs of the Sirens. In a word, a familiar acquaintance with these old-time traditions is necessary to a liberal education.

In JASON'S QUEST the story of one of the oldest and most interesting myths — the Argonautic Expedition in search of the Golden Fleece — is told with a fulness of detail which, I think, has never been attempted for young readers. Many allied myths are outlined in passing, and the constant endeavor is made to arouse the interest of the reader in others of importance, so that he may investigate them for himself.

An Appendix at the end of the volume shows where one may find, in his maturer years, the originals of the story which he must now take through the medium of a translator, and a carefully prepared Index makes the whole available as a book of reference.

In the preparation of this work, I have found it a delightful, and well-nigh necessary, task to consult and carefully compare the ancient narratives of the

Argonautic Expedition as given by Apollodorus, Apollonius Rhodius, Diodorus Siculus, Hyginus, the pseudo-Orpheus, Pindar, and Valerius Flaccus. While so doing I have come to agree heartily with what Dr. Wm. Smith says in his great, but sometimes erroneous,[1] three-volume "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology:" —

"There is scarcely any other adventure in the ancient stories of Greece, the detail of which has been so differently related by poets of all kinds."

The learned mythologist, Jacob Bryant, also says ("Analysis of Antient Mythology," v. 2, p. 491), "Some references to the Argonautic Expedition are interspersed in most of the writings of the antients, but there is scarce a circumstance concerning it in which they are agreed."

In this story of JASON'S QUEST, no attempt is made to harmonize, or even mention, all the varying accounts, though some of the most striking differences are recorded in the notes. The chief object has been to produce a story that shall be both attractive and helpful to children and youth, and possibly to some of larger growth who have not quite outgrown their youthfulness, or love of folk-lore and fairy tales.

In order to do this, and to give an air of reality

[1] E. g. In the duel between Amycus and Polydeuces (Art. *Argonautae*) he says it is the *latter* who is slain!

and continuity to the whole, I have not scrupled to combine the statements of various classic writers. But I have omitted many points of discord, and in a few cases, where even then the chain of events seemed irreparably broken, I have imitated the tragic poets and forged a connecting link.

Beyond this confession I have no apology except a quotation from Diodorus Siculus.

After stating that when the Argonauts approached Salmydessus, Phineus went out to fight them and was slain by Heracles, — an account widely different from that which I have recorded on pp. 107–113, — the last-named writer adds (B. iv. 44, 5.): —

"I am not ignorant that some mythographers pretend that Phineus had put out his children's eyes, and that he received a similar treatment at the hands of Boreas. Certain others also say that Heracles, having landed in search of water, had been left behind on the coast of Asia by the Argonauts; in a word, the ancient myths are far from being in accord with each other. This is why one should not be astonished if some of the facts which I relate are not consistent with the accounts of all the poets and historians."

My thanks are especially due to the well-known artist Mr. C. W. Reed, who has thrown his soul into the work of illustrating the text. With his graphic

pencil he has lent a spirit and a color to the narrative which any words of mine would be powerless to impart. His work has been ably presented herein, through the genius of Messrs. J. P. Simonds & Co., of Boston, photo-engravers. Their fidelity of reproduction and carefulness of detail have been a delight to both artist and author.

I am also deeply grateful to Mr. William C. Collar, Headmaster of the Roxbury Latin School, for valuable suggestions and helpful criticisms.

D. O. S. LOWELL.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1893.

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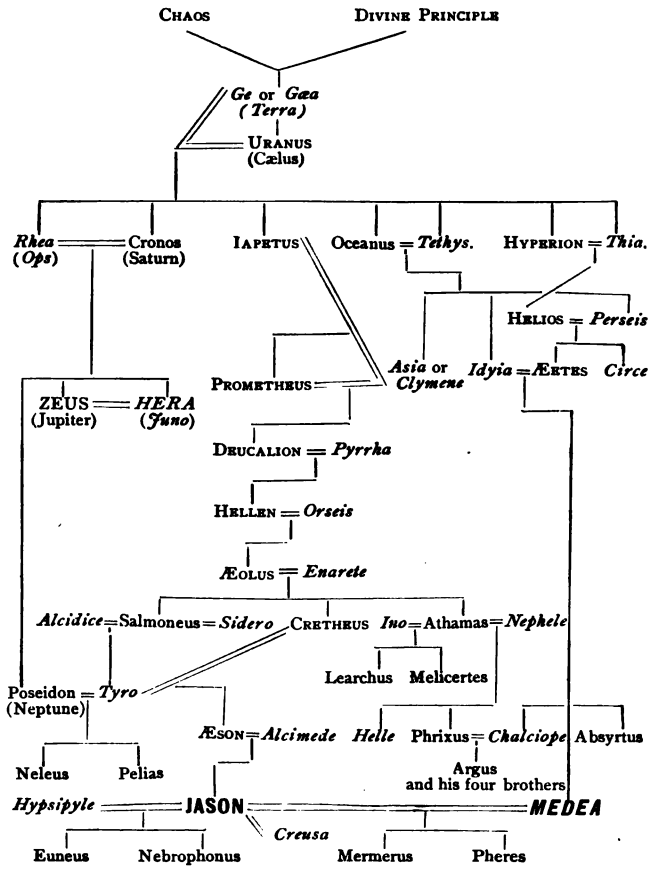
(Italics denote females; single lines, parentage; double, marriage.)

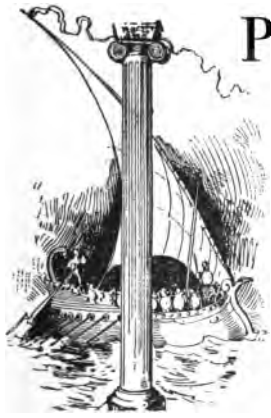


JASON'S QUEST.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUEEN'S VICTIMS.

If God will be avenged for the deed,
O, know you, that he doth it publicly.
SHAKESPEARE. — *King Richard III.*



PROPOSE to tell you a curious story of the first ship that ever crossed the seas. No, it was not Noah's Ark, as perhaps you may imagine, for that was not really a ship at all, but only a kind of monster raft, without keel or rudder, sails or oars. Noah didn't wish to go anywhere, so far as we can learn. This may have been for the sufficient reason that there was no-

where to go. So long as he could float he was satisfied.

But the ship of which I am to speak was made (or we will think of it as made) about half as far back as the Flood, and was called the Ar'go.[1]

Some writers will have it that, previous to this, Dan'aus, a prince of Lib'ya, built a fifty-oared ship and carried his fine family of fifty daughters over to the island of Rhodes. But that is not quite certain, for the dates of prehistoric times are confused at best; and at any rate we may say that the Ar'go was the first ship with a name and a history.

The story that I am going to tell is just as true as — as Santa Claus. I don't know but I might call it truer, in those old days of which I write. For while some of my readers may not have faith enough in Santa Claus to hang up their stockings on Christmas eve, not only all the little Greek boys and girls used to believe the wonderful tale of the Ar'go, a ship that could

[1] Jacob Bryant, however, seems to think the story of the Argo was a tradition of the Ark.

talk; and of Chrysomal'lus, a sheep that could both talk and fly; and of Ja'son, whom at one time fire could not burn, and on whose flesh the sharpest sword would turn its edge; but all their biggest brothers and sisters, their fathers and mothers, and their greatest grandparents, believed these stories also.

Now, while I will not ask you to suppose that everything took place exactly as will be stated, I will ask you to think that if you had lived in Greece two thousand years ago you would have had no doubt of it whatever.

It is very important that you should know some of these tales as the Greeks used to tell them, for you will rarely read a long poem or a great romance, or even listen to an eloquent speech, that does not refer somehow to the old Grecian gods and heroes; and if you know nothing of the myths or fables concerning them, you cannot fully understand the author's meaning.

Sometimes, however, writers and speakers make mistakes in their allusions, all because they have not learned the stories as carefully as

some of you will do. Thus, Patrick Henry once said, in his most famous speech:

"It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of Hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that *Siren*, till she transforms us into beasts."

Now, before you complete the story of Ja'son's Quest you will learn something about the Si'rens, and you will find that though they were very sweet singers, they never did as Patrick Henry supposed. He had confounded them with the story of Cir'ce, of whom you will also read. In fact, although Mr. Henry was a great orator — some even think the greatest that ever lived — he was so neglectful of his studies when a boy, that he sometimes made mistakes in his speeches after he became a man.

Many who are now reading this will some day be called upon to speak in public, and I hope they will then remember some of the myths contained in this little book, and not confuse Cir'ce with the Si'rens.

But it is quite time to begin our story.

Ath'amas, who ruled over the Min'yans, in Bœo'tia of ancient Greece, was the son of Æ'olus,

who was a direct descendant from the oldest gods, U'ranus and Ge[1] (Heaven and Earth), who sprang from Cha'os. Ath'amas at first married I'no, a mortal, but divorced her at Ju'no's command and married Neph'ele, a cloud-nymph.

Ath'amas and Neph'ele had two children, a girl and a boy, whom they named Hel'le and Phrix'us. But King Ath'amas at last grew tired of poor Neph'ele, and pretended that she had crazy fits, so he put her away and took back I'no. The last wife — who was also his first — had never forgiven the cloud-nymph for marrying her husband, and now, by way of revenge, she determined to kill Neph'ele's two children.

She took a very curious and roundabout way to do this. First, she called in the women of the kingdom and made them promise to parch all the grain their husbands were going to sow. How she induced them to do this nobody knows; one might think the Min'yan dames would have told her she was far crazier than Neph'ele. But it is said that they went home and secretly parched all the seed corn.

[1] *Cælus* and *Terra* in Roman Mythology. Ge, pronounced *gay*.

Now, corn (or grain of any sort, for our Indian corn was unknown to the Greeks) does not need to be parched brown in order to destroy it for seed. The Min'yan women did not do that, or their husbands would have suspected them. They heated it as hot as they could without changing its color, and then put it away carefully for the planting-time.

How curiously guilty they must have felt when they saw their husbands ploughing and sowing, and all the while knew nothing could ever grow, any more than if they had planted wooden nutmegs. Anybody can see that this part of the story is a fable, for some one in the kingdom would certainly have let the secret out if it had been a real occurrence.

But we read that everything went on as usual till it was time for the "corn" to grow, and nothing came. Throughout the whole land there was not a single blade. Then all the people declared that the gods were angry for some cause and that a sacrifice must be made to please them. So Ath'amas, the King, sent to a priest to learn what victim must be offered up.

Now, this was just what wicked I'no expected, and she had been to the priest and bribed him to tell a story to suit herself. So when the messenger of Ath'amas came with the king's demand, the old priest pretended to go into a kind of fit, or trance, just as some people do nowadays, and after taking a suitable time to impress the messenger with his antics, he answered somewhat as follows:

"O thou, who comest to seek the oracles of fate in behalf of King Ath'amas and his perishing subjects, bear back this answer. The virgin goddess Ar'temis[1] nurses sad wrath against the Min'yans and the Min'yan king: because, forsooth, the cloud-nymph, Neph'ele, contrary to her oath, has married and borne children. Therefore Ar'temis has prayed Deme'ter[2] to restrain the produce of the earth till Neph'ele's two children moisten with their blood the barren soil."

And now, before going further, if you will

[1] *Artemis* was the Greek name, and *Diana* the Roman name, of the goddess. As this is a Greek story the Grecian names will generally be preferred. [2] Ceres.

get your Bibles and read the account of Abraham's offering up Isaac, I think you will see a strange resemblance to what I shall relate. It is as though the grand old story of man's faith in God's wisdom had spread even then beyond the Jewish nation, but with its facts so twisted or destroyed, and with so many traditions and incidents of human passion interwoven, as to lose all its simplicity and to seem like a marvellous fable.

The words of the priest were repeated to King Ath'amas, and he was foolish enough to believe that he must offer up his innocent children to appease the wrath of Ar'temis, the goddess who loved hunting and hated husbands. But Neph'ele resolved to move heaven and earth, if possible, to save the children. So she sought an interview with Her'mes,[1] the sly and crafty god, and asked him to help her.

Meanwhile everything had been prepared for the sacrifice, and a great crowd of famine-stricken people had assembled to see the children offered up, whose death, as they religiously

[1] Mercury.

believed, would bring them life. King Ath'amas was present, sad but stern, never once shrinking from what he thought his duty to his people, and on his arm leaned the false and beautiful I'no, pretending to weep in sympathy, while their two boys, Lear'chus and Melicer'tes, ran gayly on before. In an open space, before the multitude, stood the altar, with a fire already kindled, while a few feet above it hovered a curious cloud.

All were wondering at the meaning of this omen, for the Greeks never saw anything strange without thinking that some god was thus revealing his will if they could only read the sign aright. And now there were many who thought they could explain the secret of the cloud. Some said that when the fire grew hotter it would be dissolved, and thus show how the common sacrifice would dispel the wrath of Ar'temis. Some gave another explanation, that they might seem equally wise with the first. But all agreed that the omen was a good one, and so it was, yet not in the sense they had expected.

For the strange cloud was no other than

Neph'ele herself, the mother of Phrix'us and Hel'le, who, being a cloud-nymph, could assume this form at will; and in her arms, unknown to the multitude, she bore the magic gift of the kind god Her'mes, with which she hoped to save her darling children.

At length the priest approached, leading Phrix'us and Hel'le by the hands. He was the same whom cruel I'no had bribed, and he knew that when the children had been offered up he would receive still greater favors at her hand. So he strode eagerly toward the altar on which lay the sacrificial knife. But just as he put forth his hand, the cloud above him parted, and like a vivid lightning flash sprang down therefrom the wonderful creature named Chrysomal'lus, or Golden Fleece.

THE WINGED RAM.

CHAPTER II.

A RIDE THROUGH THE AIR.

What fatal causes could so far incense
The queen of heaven, and what the dire offence,
When Athamas, by wrath divine pursued,
His trembling hands in filial blood imbrued,
And his pale spouse, to shun his angry bow,
Sprung from the beach, and sought the depths below?

STATIUS. —*Translated by Lewis.*[1]

CHRYSOMAL'LUS was a ram of marvellous beauty, with thick, heavy, yellow wool, that glowed and sparkled in the sunlight like the pure gold which it was. And stranger yet, from his shoulders grew a pair of broad, strong wings, such as no eagle ever knew; while, strangest of all strange things, as he came rushing from the

[1] Appendix, note 1.

cloud and stood between the altar and the terrified priest, he cried out with a human voice, so loud that all could hear : —

" Back ! false-hearted one, who dost prepare to execute a jealous queen's decree, and carest only for the wanton will of I'no ! Gold has brought these children to the altar, Golden Fleece shall save them from it. Come, Phrix'us ! Come, Hel'le ! Climb upon my back, and let us fly to safety in a pleasant land."

With a glad bound the two sprang forward, for they had recognized their mother in the cloud smiling upon them, and knew she had brought this deliverance ; so they climbed hastily upon the back of the beautiful ram, and before the priest had recovered from his alarm Golden Fleece spread his powerful wings and rose high above the people into the air.

Then false I'no turned to the people ; her pretended sadness had all departed, and a look of cruel hatred came into her angry face. In a loud voice she cried : " And shall our offering escape, and must we perish miserably of hunger ? A golden quiver and a silver bow to the

quick archer who shall send a feathered shaft into yon flying monster."

But no one moved a limb. Then King Ath'amas, blind in his rage, — for all the cruelty and treachery of I'no was now revealed to him, — seized the innocent Lear'chus, his own and I'no's son, whirled him aloft in the air, and dashed his life out on the ground, saying: —

"No, by great Zeus,[1] and by yon sacrificial fire, kindled for an unholy purpose, our offering has not escaped and shall not: nor will I stay my hand till thy fell brood has rid the earth of its accursed presence."

The other of their children, Melicer'tes, was standing at I'no's side. On seeing the fury of Ath'amas she caught the boy from the ground and dashed toward the sea. The king pursued with sword in hand; but so great a crowd rushed in between him and his fleeing wife that he could not overtake her till she reached a lofty rock upon the shore, when, clasping Melicer'tes in her arms, she plunged beneath the waves.

Then first the maddened king returned to

[1] Jupiter.

reason, and knew what he had done; and fearing for his life he left his home and kingdom, and came to Iol'cos in Thes'saly, where his brother Cre'theus reigned.

As for I'no, this cold bath must have washed all the wickedness out of her, or else the Grecian gods had a strange idea of justice; for the poet Pin'dar writes: —

> "They say to I'no an immortal life
> With Ne'reus' sea-born daughters in the sea,
> For aye has been assigned." [1]

With regard to Melicer'tes, we are less surprised to learn that he was made a god and called Palæ'mon; his mother was thenceforth known as Leucothe'a; [2] and sailors used to pray to them, thinking they were able to save them from shipwreck. Ovid says Aphrodi'te [3] prayed to Posei'don [4] that they might be thus transformed, since I'no was her grand-daughter. Thereupon

> "Pleased Nep'tune nodded his assent, and free
> Both soon became from frail mortality.

[1] Appendix, Note 2.
[2] Or Leucothöe. Appendix, Note 3.
[3] Venus.
[4] Neptune.

He gave them form, and majesty divine,
And bade them glide along the foamy brine.
For Melicer'tes is Palæ'mon known,
And I'no once, Leucoth'öe is grown." [1]

While king Ath'amas had been pursuing his treacherous wife, the winged ram with wool of gold shot up into the clear sky till he seemed only a shining speck. The children at length got over the fright they had felt on rising so high into the air, and as their strange deliverer carried them swiftly and steadily along they began to talk over their marvellous escape. They cared not whither they were going, for their lives had been very unhappy in their father's palace, and there was nothing more to dread than they had already experienced.

At first both of them felt somewhat dizzy, and Hel'le hid her face in her brother's robe; but Phrix'us soon began to feel at home, and, looking down, beheld his father pursuing I'no with a drawn sword, and saw her leap with Melicer'tes into the surging sea.

When he told Hel'le, she exclaimed: "Oh, why

[1] Appendix, Note 4.

did the gods permit her to do this? Since she has gone willingly to the embrace of Oce'anus she will be made a sea-nymph — she who was so cruel, and deserved a bitter death!" But Phrix'us said: "Nay, sister, they have punished her indeed, for look below and see the green and angry waves. Or stay! do not look lest your brain should swim and you should fall. Ah! it must be a dreadful death when one is drowned."

"Not so, my brother," Hel'le cried. "The waves indeed are green, and sometimes blue; but that is only the reflected light of palace columns underneath the sea. For often as I sat upon the shore, when I'no chid me from the house, I fell asleep, and in my dreams good father Posei'don, and Ne'reus the wise old man, and Pro'teus, and the silver-footed The'tis, came and whispered of their home strange secrets that I dare not tell.

"And I have prayed them oft that they would take me there, but never would they answer; only when I awoke I ever heard the waters murmur to the shining sands, 'Tell her,

"*Not yet!*" tell her "*Not yet!*"' And I have waited; but the time will come, and they will take me, brother."

"Oh, nonsense, Hel'le!" Phrix'us cried. "You must not think of leaving me alone. What should I do without you? Just clasp me tight, and look carefully around to see how much more beautiful is the world above the waters than any you have witnessed in your misty dreams."

Hel'le obeyed. Golden Fleece flew with such long and even strokes that the children felt no motion any more than if they had been riding on the moon. It was indeed a beautiful sight that met their gaze. They had long since left the mainland of Greece, and were now nearly across the sea which we call Archipel'ago, but which then was waiting for a name until the day when King Æ'geus, in grief at the supposed loss of his son, should cast himself into its island-dotted depths. But that is too long a tale for more than mention here.

As they approached the eastern shore they saw below, and at their right, the plain of Troy

and its well-walled city, thereafter to be the theme of many a poet's song; while the rich pastures, gentle slopes, and rivers looking like silver ribbons on green velvet, spread out a living map such as no mortals ever saw till the Montgolfiers, two Frenchmen, taught men how to make balloons.

They now had reached the narrow passage which is called on modern maps the strait of Dardanelles', but which then, like the nameless sea behind them, waited for a name.

Just at that moment a terrific squall came out of a black cloud under which they were passing, turning Chrysomal'lus from his course and throwing Hel'le from her seat. Phrix'us caught her bravely by the belt and strove to lift her up, while Chrysomal'lus lashed the furious air with mighty wings in vain endeavor to proceed. But Hel'le, instead of taking fright as one would have supposed, clapped her hands joyously and cried: "I see them, brother — the Ocean'ides! There is a face in every wave crest, and they beckon me to go and be a sea-nymph now. So good-by, Phrix'us. Loose your hold, and let me go."

THE FALL OF HELLE.

The poor boy, indeed, could do no better, for he had no more strength, and if he held her girdle longer both of them must fall. So he released his sister, and with a swift and sudden plunge she fell beneath the waters, and they closed above her. Then the black cloud parted for a moment and he beheld the face of Neph'ele, his mother, and knew that she had taken Hel'le from him to be a nymph and dwell amid the ocean caves.

The dwellers on the shore having found Hel'le's body, gave it funeral rites, and thenceforth the nameless strait was known as *Hellespon'tus*, which is Greek for *Hel'le's Sea*.

What became of Neph'ele I never knew. But if you look attentively you will sometimes see dim and shadowy outlines far above you clad in flowing drapery, — white, gray, purple, crimson, green, or gold. Even as I write I look out at the window, and up, far up in the clear blue sky, I see the certain outlines of a human face — which straightway vanishes as if afraid of being seen. Is it not another of Neph'ele's children?

CHAPTER III.

THE SON OF THE SUN.

Soon will your eyes Æe'ta's towers survey
And Mars's grove, where, wondrous to behold!
Hangs on a spreading oak the fleecy gold.
A hideous dragon of enormous size
Turns all around his circumspective eyes:
O'er the bright spoil the strictest watch he keeps;
He never slumbers, and he never sleeps.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]

AWAY in the regions of the distant East the ancients said the sun-god He'lios had his throne, and that every morning he set out in his shining car and drove his fiery horses through the sky, descending in the West at night. How he got back to the East again by morning, there are various tales that you shall some time

[1] Appendix, Note 5.

hear, as also of Pha'ethon, his reckless son, who one day nearly set the world afire.

But 'tis of another son, Æe'tes, that I wish to tell you now, who was king of Col'chis, sometimes called Æ'a, on the river Pha'sis. If you can get an ancient atlas you will find this river flows into the Pon'tus Euxi'nus — The Hospitable Sea — which you notice in your school geography lying south of Russia, and called the — What is its name?

Æe'tes was an unusually bright fellow, as we might imagine one would be who had the Sun for a father; he kept fierce bulls and dragons for his pets, and had among his treasures some of the teeth of the famous dragon that Cad'mus, I'no's father, slew. These were a gift from Athe'na,[1] and we shall hear more about them farther on.

One day when Æe'tes was out walking in the public square, he noticed that the people were all staring upward in astonishment, and naturally he looked himself. It was a little after sundown; and he saw what at first he took to be

[1] Minerva.

the evening star in the West, though it seemed larger than usual. But in some wonderful way it increased still more in size until it looked like a comet broken loose; and at last, as it came nearer yet, all saw it was a living, glowing creature, flying through the air. Indeed, it was no other than our old friend Chrysomal'lus, who, with Phrix'us on his back, had come the whole way from Hellespon'tus to the river Pha'sis to fulfil the purpose of the Fates. Having now reached the end of his journey he alighted in the square and waited for his rider to dismount. Never since he left the altar in Bœo'tia had he spoken a single word; and now he stood as silent as any other ram would have done, while the astonished people wondered at his shining wings and wool of gold.

Æe'tes drew near and looked with greedy eye upon the splendid creature, and wished with all his heart that he could reckon him among his treasures. Now, this was a sort of riches which could fly away as an eagle toward heaven on ready-made wings: nevertheless, Æe'tes went craftily at work to get Golden Fleece for his

own. He accosted Phrix'us kindly and asked him whence he came. When the lad told him he stood amazed, and bade his followers conduct him to the palace.

Chrysomal'lus meekly walked behind with folded wings; and when they reached the court-yard, King Æe'tes ordered him to be taken to the royal stables and fed upon the fragrant herbs that his father He'lios had brought him from the Islands of the Blessed in the West. Then he and Phrix'us went within the palace, where they soon reclined on jewelled couches round the table and partook of a princely feast.

Though outwardly the king was very kind, he was secretly planning how he should get possession of the beautiful ram. He would have murdered Phrix'us had he dared, but every one believed the gods would bring a dreadful sorrow on the man who killed his guest. And so if one obtained food and shelter of another, even though he were an enemy, his life was generally safe.

After all had eaten, and the wine was brought,

Chalci'ope, the king's daughter, a beautiful young girl of about Hel'le's age, approached her father, and said: —

"I was in the great square when this fair-haired youth descended, having come, as he declares, from far beyond the nameless sea. I wonder much why he should take this journey, and long to hear him tell what wonders he has seen, and what the manners and the customs are in that strange, foreign land."

Then King Æe'tes smiled upon his daughter, for he loved her much, and said: "Our unexpected guest will tell us, sweet Chalci'ope, I little doubt, what will delight your heart and satisfy your curiosity and mine." Then turning to the son of Ath'amas he continued: —

"Come, my brave youth, if food and wine have cheered your heart and chased away fatigue, tell us what curious chance has brought you hither, and whence came your strange companion that lies now, with folded wings, within an ivory stall, feeding upon those fragrant herbs never before bestowed on any beast except the sun-god's steeds."

And Phrix'us answered: "Willingly, O King!"

And then, beginning back as far as his memory could go, he told Æe'tes and his pretty daughter and Idy'ia the Oce'anid,[1] Æe'tes' wife, and all the wondering crowd of courtiers, the strange tale that you have read.

Of the origin of Chrysomal'lus he said nothing, — which was all he knew; but this is the substance of what Hygi'nus, the Latin fabulist, relates: —

Years before, the sea-god Posei'don had loved and wedded a fair young nymph, Theoph'ane. On their bridal tour they visited the island of Crumis'sa. But the nymph had many lovers who followed the party and seemed likely to give them trouble.

To avoid pursuit, the sea-god changed himself, his wife, and all the people of the island, into sheep, and there they all lived a peaceful, pastoral, Nebuchadnez'zar-like life for no one knows how long.

When at last Nep'tune wearied of a vegetable

[1] Oce'anid, i.e., daughter of Oce'anus, the Ocean-god.

diet and longed for ambrosia, and so changed himself from a sheep to a god again, he found he could not do as well by his son, Chrysomal'lus, the lamb with the Golden Fleece; he could only bestow on him the faculty of speech and wings, as a proof of his divine parentage; so he consigned him to Her'mes, who had a professional oversight of flocks and pastures. Under the care of Her'mes, therefore, Chrysomal'lus remained till the god sent him to the aid of Neph'ele as we have seen.

All the time that Phrix'us was speaking, the covetous king was thinking of the beauteous Golden Fleece. He pondered and he pondered, but what could he do with a winged ram with human speech sent by the subtle Her'mes to outwit the daughter of great Cad'mus the dragon-slayer? At last a sudden thought occurred to him, as he noticed how eagerly the bright eyed Chalci'ope was listening to the story Phrix'us told, while the youth himself seemed to have forgotten all but her, as with a glowing cheek he spoke of I'no's wrath, or Hel'le's fall.

"She loved [him] for the dangers [he] had passed,
And [he] loved her that she did pity them." [1]

So after the tale was ended, and the king and Phrix'us had been left alone, Æe'tes told the lad that he would give him fair Chalci'ope to be his wife. Phrix'us was glad, and warmly kissed Æe'tes' hand. And then the crafty king advised that he should sacrifice the ram that had delivered him from I'no's plot, to Zeus the king of gods.

At first the youth was horror-struck, but He'lios' son was gifted with persuasive speech and magic arts. He gave his guest a vial filled with tasteless fluid, and told him the next morning to mingle it with Chrysomal'lus's drink. He did so, and the ram sank straightway into a quiet slumber. Then a servant quickly plunged a knife into his throat and caught the red blood in a golden bowl. Phrix'us himself stripped off the shining pelt, and, weeping, laid the body on the altar.

Then King Æe'tes asked that he might have the Golden Fleece, but Phrix'us quietly refused.

[1] See *Othello*, Act I., Sc. iii.

That he would ever keep, he said, in memory of his preserver.

So the king waited.

. . . . . .

Time passed on, and Phrix'us and Chalci'ope were married; and in the king's palace, but not in his possession, lay the wool of gold. "Patience!" he often said. "The clouds dissolve before the sun. The cloud-nymph's offspring shall pass away before the sun-god's child, and the precious fell shall yet be mine."

But Phrix'us seemed to live forever young. Five children were born to him and to his loving wife, and he was hale and hearty, while Æe'tes felt that he was growing old.

At length, one morning, a report went through the palace that the son of Ath'amas and Neph'ele was dead. He had retired to rest as usual the night before, but never waked. Some of Æe'tes' slaves whispered among themselves that Phrix'us slept the sleep of Chrysomal'lus, and they looked with secret frowns upon the king, and said that he could solve the riddle of his death. However that might be,

Æe'tes straightway took the Fleece and nailed it to an oak (some say a beech) in the grove of A'res, the War-god; and to prevent its being stolen he stationed at the foot of the tree a sleepless dragon of horrid form and monstrous size to act as sentinel.

CHAPTER IV.

JASON APPEARS AND DISAPPEARS.

Half ridden off with by the thing he rode.
TENNYSON.

N the eastern coast of Thes'saly, a little south of Mount Olym'pus, where great Zeus and his attendant gods were thought to dwell, there stood the city of Iol'cos, whither, you may recollect, the frightened Ath'amas had fled. Cre'theus, his brother, built the town above the Pagase'an Gulf,[1] seven furlongs from the sea. They had at least three other brothers, kings of different states in Greece. Of Sis'yphus, who reigned at Cor'inth,

[1] Now the Gulf of Volo.

there is a strange and terrible tradition that we must defer, but Salmo'neus needs especial mention here.

At first he lived in Thes'saly; but when he grew to manhood he removed to E'lis on the western shore of Greece, and by the banks of the Alphe'us he built a town and named it for himself — Salmo'ne. He had a wife, Alcid'ice, and by her had a daughter Ty'ro. This daughter loved the river-god Eni'peus; but Posei'don, ruler of the seas, wished her for himself.

When Ty'ro's mother died, her father took another wife, Side'ro, who, like many second wives, treated her step-daughter harshly, so that the girl often wandered by the riverside lonely and sorrowful. Then the wily Posei'don took the form of young Eni'peus, and being a god, he easily deceived the maiden, and with his loving words he won her to a secret marriage.

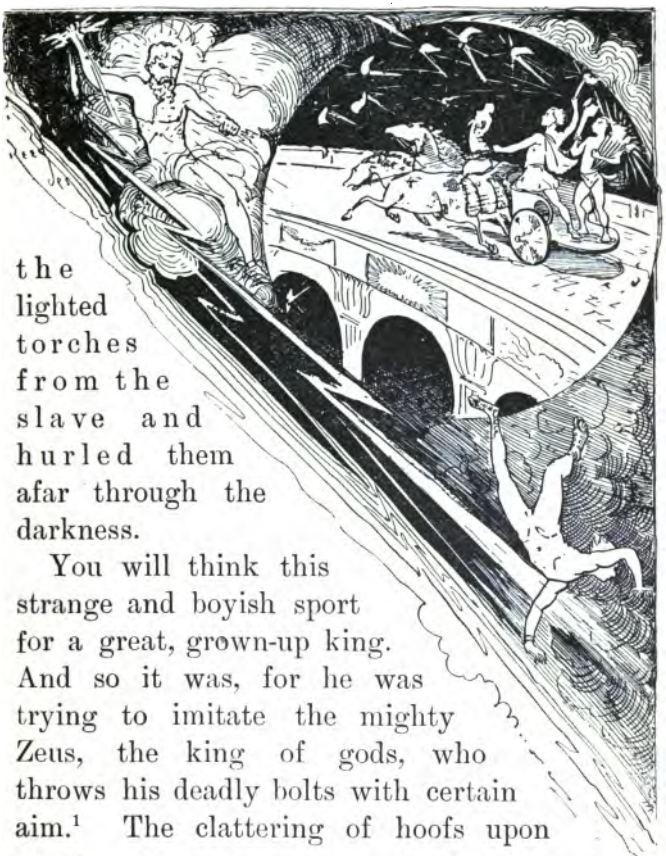
When twin sons, Ne'leus and Pe'lias, were born to Ty'ro, the step-mother Side'ro was terribly enraged. She almost starved Ty'ro, kept her clothed in wretched rags, and told such wicked tales about her to the haughty king

that he almost hated her himself. Meanwhile Posei'don neglected her, and so she wandered sadly by the river-bank and lived for her two sons alone. But the fleet years passed away, and they grew up to be great, strong lads.

One day, when they heard Side'ro call their mother mean and vile, and tell her, with a blow, to leave her father's house and never more return, they laid a cruel plot. When the step-mother went at night to sacrifice in He'ra's[1] grove, the boys lay hidden there, and Pe'lias seized a sacrificial knife and plunged it to her heart.

The same night Salmo'neus had arranged to celebrate the completion of a brazen bridge across the river Alphe'us; and now, in his haughty pride, all ignorant of Side'ro's fate, he entered a golden four-horse chariot. A slave stood by his side holding a sheaf of flaming brands. The king whipped up his horses and drove, with loud reverberations, along the echo ing bridge, while ever, as he went, he caught

[1] He'ra, the sister and wife of Zeus, was called Juno by the Romans.



the lighted torches from the slave and hurled them afar through the darkness.

You will think this strange and boyish sport for a great, grown-up king. And so it was, for he was trying to imitate the mighty Zeus, the king of gods, who throws his deadly bolts with certain aim.[1] The clattering of hoofs upon

[1] The ancients represented Zeus as grasping a sheaf of thunderbolts in his hand, in token of his power over the regions of the air and sky, where he chiefly exercised his dominion.

the bridge of brass, and the bright torches gleaming through the night, seemed, to his childish fancy, a fine counterfeit of thunder and lightning.

But for his impiety he met a swift reward. When you learn Latin and read Ver'gil, if you remember what I have just told you, it will be easy for you to understand the words of the Sib'yl when, in describing the place of torment underneath the earth, she said: —

"I saw Salmo'neus suffering cruel punishment while he imitates the flames of Jove[1] and thunders of Olym'pus. He, drawn by four horses, and shaking firebrands, went exulting through a crowd of Greeks, and through a city in the midst of E'lis, and demanded for himself the honor of a god. The insane one! who had tried to represent a tempest and the inimitable thunder with brass and with the tramping of his horn-hoofed steeds. But the All-powerful Father amid the dense clouds threw *his* thunderbolt (*he* did not scatter torches or the smoky flame of brands), and hurled him headlong with cyclonic might."[2]

[1] Zeus, or Jupiter. [2] Appendix, Note 6.

And tradition further tells us that the lightning-stroke that sent Salmo'neus like Sa'tan

> "With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire," [1]

also set on fire and utterly destroyed the city Salmo'ne.

Then Ty'ro and her sons wandered for many a weary day, until at last, like Ath'amas, they came to Thes'saly and to her Uncle Cre'theus's court.

In those olden days the customs of the people were far different from ours. So no one thought it strange when Cre'theus, first pitying and then loving his fair niece, took her to be his bride and queen.[2] They had three sons, Æ'son, Amytha'on, and Phe'res, and lived happily for many years. When wretched Ath'amas fled to them for refuge (for although you read of his flight first, it happened last), they received him kindly, and consoled him in his grief until he died. At length Cre'theus and Ty'ro passed

[1] Milton's "Paradise Lost," B. i., 46.
[2] Appendix, Note 6, a.

away, and so the kingdom fell to Æ'son, their eldest son.

This young prince had married Alcim'ede, a granddaughter of Min'yas, founder of the Min'yan race. But hardly was he seated on the throne of Iol'cos, when Pe'lias and Ne'leus laid plans to rob him of the kingdom. These two pretenders, as you know, were his half-brothers and Ty'ro's sons; but they had no right whatever to the crown, which came from Cre'theus, who was not their father. Still, they were two to one, and right gave way to might. They drove their brother from his seat and seized it for themselves.

Æ'son was a good man, who hated bloodshed and loved peace. So he did not attempt to regain the kingdom, as perhaps he could have done, but quietly withdrew and left the usurpers to enjoy the government as best they could. But there is not always honor among thieves any more than among honest men, though some would have us think so. Pe'lias had half a kingdom, but he wanted all. So he contrived to banish Ne'leus and became sole ruler of the

realm. On seeing this, good Æ'son feared for his own son Ja'son,[1] then a pretty, prattling boy some four or five years old. Next to Æ'son, he was true heir to the crown, and if he should grow up he might insist upon his rights. Would not the crafty Pe'lias fear this and lay plans to destroy him? The father and the mother meditated much what they should do.

One day, as they were trying to devise some means by which their son should be kept from the notice of the king, they saw a slave of Pe'lias coming to the house.

"There is no time to lose," the father cried; and, catching Ja'son in his arms, he ran out of a back-door and disappeared in the forest.

The false king's servant entered, and, after a few moments' talk on various matters, asked if Æ'son were at home. Alcim'ede replied that he was not. He had gone out a little while before. The slave then asked where little Ja'son was. His mother answered that she did not know. And this was true, for even then her boy was speeding far away toward the mountains of the north. But how?

[1] Appendix, Note 7.

Just as the slave arose to leave, Æ'son returned. His wife concealed her surprise, for she supposed that he had fled, and said: —

"How fortunate, my husband, that you come so soon! The king, I think, has sent a message to you."

"And is our royal master well?" said Æ'son.

"Quite well," the slave replied; "and he has sent me here to say that if you will only send your boy to him, he will adopt him as his own, and when he comes of age he will resign the kingdom to his rule."

Æ'son was not deceived by this fair speech. He knew his brother's craft, and that it was only a wicked plot to get their son within his power. But he pretended to be greatly pleased, and said: —

"Your master, our most gracious king, is very kind. We are unworthy subjects to deserve so great a favor at his hands, and I have grave doubts if our son will ever merit such a father as the noble Pe'lias. But his wish is law. Alcim'ede, call Ja'son, and tell him to go with this good man to the king's palace."

But Alcim'ede replied: —

"I do not know, my husband, where our boy has gone, but I will search and see if he can be found. Shall I call him?"

"Yes, go," said Æ'son.

Then the trembling mother knew that in some strange way Ja'son had been so carefully concealed that he would not reply; and, with full confidence in her husband's sagacity, she went throughout the fields and shouted, "Ja'son! Ja'son!" But nothing answered save the mocking echo, that rejoined, "A son! a son!"

Alcim'ede returned in seeming sorrow, and exclaimed: —

"My husband, he is lost! lost! lost! My boy! my boy! Where can he be? Is it possible that he has wandered in the wood, and that some beast has carried him off?"

"It must be," Æ'son cried, "and just as his good fortune was at hand. O miserable day!"

This was half true, so far as the carrying away was concerned; for on the back of a *half-beast* no less wonderful than Chrysomal'lus, Ja'son, like his father's cousin, Phrix'us, had ridden away from death.

CHAPTER V.

"SIR ORACLE."

To his quick thought returning still
The oracle of Delphi spoke,
In sounds of woe that loud and shrill
From earth's well-wooded centre broke,
And bade his jealous mind beware
The man with foot of sandal bare.

PINDAR. — *Translated by Wheelwright.*[1]

THE slave reported to Pe'lias that his half-nephew had disappeared. The usurper at first almost guessed the truth; but when he learned that Æ'son and Alcim'ede were both willing to send their boy to him, and that their hearts seemed breaking at their loss, his suspicions were quieted, and he was only glad that a convenient accident had saved him the trouble of putting any one to death.

[1] Appendix, Note 8.

About this time something occurred that drove all thoughts of Ja'son from his mind. The people of Iol'cos began to be troubled with curious dreams. There was an ever-changing strangeness in them all, but always there rose the form of Phrix'us, who appeared to ask for help. At one time he lay crushed beneath a mighty load, and begged and prayed the dreamer to remove it; again he seemed to flee in terror from some pursuing foe; and anon he wandered restlessly in lonely desert places, while he strove in vain to speak and tell the trouble that oppressed him.

As the days passed by, the visions took more certain shapes, and finally the shade began to say to all that dreamed of it: "Come to Æ'a! Come to Col'chis! Come and bear back the Golden Fleece!"

The people of Iol'cos had heard from Ath'amas the tale of Phrix'us's flight, but that was all. After the winged ram had left the wondering crowd around the altar in Bœo'tia, no rumor had come back across the seas to tell the children's fate. But now all the city was be-

coming like a huge haunted house, and priest and prophet sought alike to learn how they might lay the ghost; so King Pe'lias sent a messenger to consult the most famous oracle of Greece, asking to know the meaning of these strange, persistent dreams. Moreover, as the courier was setting out, the king slipped some broad gold pieces into his hand, and with a foolish superstition, that has descended to some like foolish people of to-day, he said: —

"Ask the prophetess to tell my fortune also."

And she did. But after he had heard it he never passed a day in peace.

The place to which the courier came was Del'phi, on the southern slope of Mount Parnas'sus, where Apol'lo, son of Zeus and god of prophecy, was wont to dwell. This spot was then thought to be the exact centre of the earth. It was a foolish idea, but there were some traditions which seemed to confirm their belief. One authority says: —

"Two eagles, sent forth by Ju'piter, one from the east and another from the west, met at Del'phi at the same time." [1]

[1] Appendix, Note 9

Now, if they met at all, I suspect it must have been "at the same time," for which one could possibly have met the other first? Perhaps the writer meant to say they were *sent forth* at the same time.

Of course you would like to know something about this famous oracle before I tell you what response it sent to Pe'lias.

One day some goats wandered to the mouth of a cave near the foot of the mountain above mentioned, and soon the shepherd noticed that they were acting very curiously. They capered about, butted each other, stood on their hind-legs, turned somersaults, and finally tumbled over as if they had fits. In fact, they were drunk, much as if they had taken ether or laughing-gas. Those who saw them approached the cave, and soon they began to feel giddy also. They were superstitious, and they mistook their feelings for divine influence. So a temple was speedily built upon the spot in honor of Apol'lo, and a number of priests were chosen to take care of it. They found an opening in the ground whence arose a strange gas which had

caused their happy feelings, and this was considered the most sacred spot of all. Over this hole they placed a tripod, which is Greek for a three-footed (we should say three-legged) stool, and enclosed it within an *adyton*, or secret chamber; and, when any person wished to know the future, the Pyth'ia, or priestess, sat upon the tripod until she grew intoxicated with the rising vapor, and began to talk and act strangely. The Greeks thought her words were messages from the gods, and a body of priests stood near the prophetess and did their best to find something intelligible in her jargon. At first these priests seem to have been devoted men who really believed in the oracle and sought the good of Greece and the general welfare of its people; but in later times, when they discovered what a mighty power was in their hands, they became unscrupulous, and predicted the best fortune for, and gave the most agreeable advice to, those from whom they received the richest gifts. Then, besides, they made their verses so they could mean anything or nothing. And often they would not explain

the oracles which they delivered until the future had become the past, when they tried hard to make the prophecy and history agree. How they succeeded an incident will show.

Crœ'sus, King of Lyd'ia, was one of the richest men in the world. The fame of his wealth has even come down to us, so that you sometimes hear people say, "As rich as Crœ'sus," though perhaps they never heard of him in history, and couldn't tell which was really richer, he or Job.

Well, Crœ'sus sent to this same oracle at Del'phi to ask if he should march against the Per'sians. After the mutterings of the priestess had been written down in verse, he received this important information: —

> "If once across the Ha'lys thou shalt go,
> A mighty empire thou shalt straight bring low."

Crœ'sus paid the priests handsomely, collected a great army, and, having crossed the Ha'lys, marched against Cy'rus. In the history of Per'sia you will find that he was finally defeated and his kingdom was overthrown. Feeling a slight lack of confidence in Apol'lo's

foresight, he sent back a complaint to Del'phi. But the priests consoled him by saying that the oracle was correct, but that he had misunderstood it; that it was his own empire to which the Pyth'ia referred, and that he had destroyed.[1]

Now, as the Ha'lys river was the boundary between the Lyd'ian and the Me'do-Per'sian kingdoms, the wily priests knew that, if either king crossed this, the war thus declared would not cease till one or the other lost his crown. They probably thought Crœ'sus would defeat Cy'rus, still they were careful to give the response so it would be perfectly true either way. And even now, when a man makes great pretensions of wisdom, and accordingly nods, and winks, and shrugs, and slowly shakes his head, and utters dark sayings, when you ask his opinion about to-morrow's weather, or the next week's election, he is said to be "oracular." But when to-morrow comes, with rain or shine, or when the polls have been closed and the votes counted, he exclaims triumphantly: "I told you so!"

[1] Rollin's Ancient History, B. IV., chap. i. art. i., sec. vi.

And who will venture to dispute him?

Shakespeare had seen such people. Hear him describe them: —

> "There are a sort of men whose visages
> Do cream and mantle, like a standing pool;
> And do a wilful stillness entertain,
> With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
> Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
> As who should say, *I am Sir Oracle,*
> *And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!*"[1]

Sometimes the ancient oracle was shrewd enough to hit the truth squarely, and in such a case everybody was sure to remember it, and the fame thereof spread far and wide. Sometimes, moreover, tradition has handed down a so-called prophecy, that was really uttered after the event foretold had taken place. In such cases all details are found surprisingly exact. And I have some reason to suspect that was how Pe'lias's fortune was told.

To Del'phi, I have said, the king's courier came; for though there were many other oracles in Greece, this was by far the most renowned. He asked first, what could soothe the

[1] Merchant of Venice, Act i., Sc. 1.

spirit that troubled their dreams. The Pyth'ia replied: —

"In foreign lands a wicked king
Hath hung a fleece of gold:
When the Æol'idæ [1] shall bring
The precious fell, the wandering
And restless spirit, bold,
Of murdered Phrix'us shall return to Greece,
And in his native land shall rest in peace."

That was unusually clear. The oracle had outdone itself that time. Next he asked for the 'fortune" of Pe'lias and received this answer:—

"Let the king rest secure of his throne and his crown,
Till the man with one sandal shall enter his town."

The courier hastened back with these responses. Then the people of Iol'cos said: "The curse of the gods must rest upon our race, and Phrix'us' spirit must still wander restlessly throughout the earth; for who is bold enough to seek, or wise enough to find, the Golden Fleece?"

As for King Pe'lias he walked ever with bowed head and downcast eyes. Not, as some supposed, because he was saddened at the

[1] Descendants of Æo'lus.

thought of Phrix'us' sorrow; nor, as others imagined, because he was meditating wise laws for the good of his subjects; nor, as you may think, because his conscience troubled him for killing Side'ro, robbing Æ'son, banishing Ne'leus, and plotting to murder Ja'son.

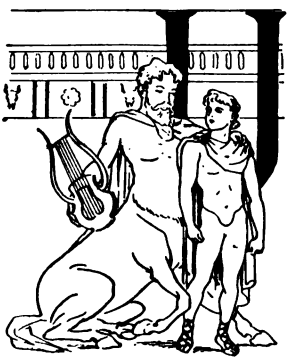
These little things did not disturb the great Pe'lias. He was just looking at the feet of every man he met, to see whether he wore two sandals or one.

CHAPTER VI.

"ONE SHOE OFF AND ONE SHOE ON."

Hard by Anau'ros I beheld the man,
Wide o'er its banks whose rapid currents ran;
(From snow-clad hills, in torrents loud and strong,
Roared the swoln streams the rugged rocks among.)
He on his back, though like a crone I stood,
Securely brought me o'er the foaming flood:
This won my love.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]



UP among the woods and mountains of Thes'saly there dwelt a strange race, half-man, half-horse, called Cen'taurs. At least there were believed to be such creatures, and this belief was so general in the times of which I write, that more accepted them as real than now have faith in ghosts.

[1] Appendix, Note 10.

Some think the fable of their existence first arose because some Greek had seen a troop of mounted savages, long, long before the better civilized had thought of riding horseback.

And this seems not unlikely, for at a distance the view of the horses' heads might be lost, at least to one frightened at the strange sight, and such a person might imagine he had seen a herd of monsters, with horses' legs and bodies, but with human heads and arms and waists.

Their origin is wrapped in mist and mystery. Their maternal ancestor, according to some writers, was another Neph'ele; but this one, unlike the mother of Phrix'us, — a woman that pretended to be a cloud, — was a cloud that pretended to be a woman. She wedded poor Ixi'on, and a stormy life he had, as might have been expected.

The Cen'taurs, as a rule, were wild and savage, and little to be desired as friends, although they were well skilled in hunting, medicine, and music. But CHI'RON was a great and grand exception. He not only was the wisest of them all, but he was kind and gentle, and many of

the noble youths were brought to him by parents, who were glad to employ the celebrated Cen'taur as a teacher for their boys. Æne'as, Ver'gil's hero, and Achil'les, mightiest warrior of the Greeks in after-years,[1] and wise Askle'pios, or Æscula'pius, Apol'lo's son and the first physician of renown, all these owed their teaching to the famous sage.

One day Chi'ron had wandered from his cave in Mount Pe'lion, and, from some impulse that he himself could not understand, had turned his steps toward Iol'cos. But He'ra could have told the reason why, for she, the queen of gods, had influenced his course, that she might bring disaster upon Pe'lias; for she hated him, and he now ruled over the city of which she was the patron goddess. Whom the gods would destroy, or spare, cannot always be told from the real character of the person; for in Greek mythology we find even the wicked living in the especial favor of those deities to whom they sacrificed abundantly.

But Pe'lias killed Side'ro, as you have read,

[1] Appendix, Note 11.

at He'ra's altar, and had polluted the sacrificial knife and sacred fire with the blood of a murdered victim. For this impiety toward the goddess, and not for the trifling fact of having killed somebody, the luckless Pe'lias shall henceforth be pursued by a relentless foe.

Just as the Cen'taur reached the edge of a wood without the city, a man dashed toward him carrying a little child.

"Hallo, my friend," quoth Chi'ron, "what fine boy hast thou there?"

"Oh, help! good Cen'taur!" cried the man eagerly. "Thou art skilled in prophecy. Tell me how I may save my child from cruel Pe'lias, who has usurped my throne and now would slay my son."

"There are several lads of noble birth who dwell with me upon Mount Pe'lion," the Cen'taur answered, "and learn to play the harp, bend the unerring bow, and gather healing herbs. If thou wilt trust thy offspring to my care, I will instruct him in the same pursuits, and furthermore protect him from the danger that thou fearest."

This was more than Æ'son had hoped, and he could hardly speak for tears. He placed the boy, who laughed in childish glee, on Chiron's back, and saw him gallop away into the forest. Then Æ'son returned to his house to meet the messenger of Pe'lias, and, though he and Alcim'ede privately rejoiced at the good fortune of their son, they wept for him in public as though he were dead.

Meanwhile the young Ja'son was carefully reared upon Mount Pe'lion, and learned many useful arts. He was swift of foot, strong of arm, and none of Chi'ron's pupils could send an arrow straighter to the mark. At length he reached the age of twenty years, and that day came to Chi'ron's side and spoke as follows: —

"Good master, you have taught me faithfully and well. I love and honor you, and have passed many happy hours here. But I feel that I am a boy no longer, and I greatly desire to go forth into the world of which you have so often sung, and dare its dangers."

Chi'ron lay upon a bed of fragrant boughs, holding his harp, on which he had been playing

as Ja'son entered the cave. Throwing by his harp, he cast his arm about the youth and exclaimed: —

"Thine are the promptings of a brave and daring heart, nor will I seek to keep thee with me longer! But first I must tell thee of the past, and warn thee of the future."

So Ja'son bent an eager ear while Chi'ron told him of his early life, and of Æ'son and Alcim'ede, whom he had forgotten.

"I will go back at once," the brave youth cried, "and demand the kingdom for my father. Either false Pe'lias shall yield, or I will show him that my hate is bitter and my arm is strong."

"Well, go, my son," said the wise Cen'taur; "the throne belongs to thy father, and the gods love justice. But remember, wherever thou mayest wander, to observe these three things: —

"Relieve the distressed.

"Respect the aged.

"Be true to thy word."

Ja'son readily promised and, bidding his friend

and teacher farewell, set out to seek his fortune and assert his rights.

He descended the slopes of Pe'lion, and made his way without difficulty through the wood until he came to the Anau'ros River, which he was obliged to cross. This stream, although at times but a small brook, had been so swollen by recent rains as to present a current, swift and dangerous. But Ja'son cut him a stout staff and boldly approached the bank.

As he was about to set foot in the waters he observed an old woman, sitting on a stone, and wringing her hands as if in agony of spirit.

"Here," thought he, "is a good opportunity to obey at least two of Chi'ron's commands."

So he approached the woman — who was bent, and wrinkled, and gray, and ugly — and kindly said: —

"You seem in distress, good mother. Can I do anything to aid you?"

The person addressed looked up and replied: —

"Yes; I must cross this river at whatever cost, yet my old limbs totter, and my strength is almost gone. But you are young and strong.

JASON CROSSING THE ANAUROS.

Take me upon your broad shoulders and set me safely over, and you shall have an old woman's blessing."

Ja'son knelt before her without hesitation and said: —

"If you can only climb upon my back I will do my best."

The old lady at once sprang upon his shoulders with an agility that surprised him, and he plunged into the foaming torrent.

But for some strange reason, at every step that he advanced his burden seemed to grow heavier, until even his sturdy frame bent and trembled underneath its weight. In the middle of the stream he stepped upon a rolling stone and lost his footing. For some brief seconds it appeared as if he must be swept beneath the whirling water. But with a mighty effort he succeeded in reaching the opposite bank, although he left one sandal behind him in the river-bed.

No sooner had our hero placed his burden on the ground than he started back in wonder at the sight that met his gaze.

HERA

In place of a dry and withered crone, clothed in scanty rags, there stood a being beautiful and bright, with flowing robes and golden hair.

"Go forward, noble youth, and claim the crown," she said, in tones that struck his ear like the music of a golden bell: "and when you are in trouble call on me. He'ra never forgets those who render her a kindness or an injury."

Saying this she dashed into the rushing stream, crossed it in the twinkling of an eye, and vanished in the far-off forest ere Ja'son could recover from his speechless amazement.

He now well saw the wisdom of Chi'ron's parting words: "Relieve the distressed. Respect the aged;" for had he given no heed to seeming age and sorrow, he would never have gained the friendship and protection of the most powerful of all the goddesses.

So with a light and happy heart he hastened onward to Iol'cos, where the troubled Pe'lias so long had watched the coming of — he knew not WHOM, only the words of the oracle were branded on his brain.

The king was sitting on the judgment seat surrounded by a multitude. Ja'son pressed through the crowd, and, standing before Pe'lias with covered head he cried aloud: —

"Justice, O King!"

The monarch looked upon the youth and grimly smiled.

"Whence comest thou, my good fellow, that thou art ignorant of the reverence due to kings?

Bare thy head, and state thy cause, and, if thou hast suffered aught unjustly, thou shalt be avenged."

But for all answer Ja'son turned to those around, saying: —

"Ye hear the words of him whom ye have called your king. From his own mouth let him be judged. For Æ'son is your rightful ruler, whom the treacherous Pe'lias has driven from his throne. But I am Ja'son, Æ'son's son, whom yon usurper and yourselves have long thought dead, and I have come to claim my father's rights."

The people looked to see what answer Pe'lias would make, but he was white with terror; for in the youth before him he saw at last his worst fears realized. He was *the man with one sandal.*

CHAPTER VII.

A CHAPTER OF HEROES.

He in whose cause the Grecian chiefs conspire
Is valiant Ja'son, Æ'son is his sire.
. . . . . .
The rest that visit your august abodes,
Are all the sons or grandsons of the gods.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]

THOUSAND thoughts flashed through the mind of Pe'lias in one short breath, but he quickly regained his composure and muttered: "What I have gained by force, I'll hold by fraud!"

So the people only saw a smile o'erspread his face, as, rising from his seat, he grasped his new-found nephew by the hand and cried: —

[1] Appendix, Note 12.

"And art thou really flesh and blood? *Ma Dia!* But I and all thy kinsfolk thought thee dead, and mourned for thee as such, lo, many years agone. What wonder, then, thy unexpected coming drove the red blood back upon our hearts, as if a corpse had risen from its grave? For though we all, and I, the king, most frequently of all, have seen the restless ghost of Phrix'us in our dreams — a living, walking, talking ghost, at noon, inspires a graver fear.

"But yonder, there is one whose heart will throb with wilder joy than mine to see his son. And he will tell thee thou hast heard amiss, that of his own free will he gave the cares of government to me, that he might end his days in restful quiet. Æ'son! Brother! Come, see if thou dost recognize thy boy."

The crowd parted, and a gray-haired man came forward with a kingly tread. Although the words of Pe'lias were false, Æ'son did not then dispute him, but waited for a fitting time. But he caught Ja'son in his arms and wept for joy.

Then the king led them to his palace, ordered

a great banquet to be prepared, and feasted them right royally.

And there the timid Æ'son, fearing lest the rashness of his son would bring him harm, confirmed the lie of Pe'lias, that he had given up the throne from choice.

"But," Pe'lias said, "I, too, am growing tired of care, and of the haunting shade of Phrix'us, which ceaselessly pursues me in my sleep, and cries, 'Recover the Golden Fleece, and give my spirit rest. Thou art the king. Send forth a band of heroes and remove the curse that rests upon thee and thy race.' Remain with me in the palace but half a year, and learn the ways of this peculiar people, and I will then give everything to thee. But, till the six months have elapsed, swear to me that thou wilt be a good and faithful subject."

To this proposal Ja'son readily agreed; and the king continued, "I wish to show that I have confidence in thee and in thy wisdom. I have told thee one source of my trouble, but there is another, greater far. Let us see if thou canst free me from it by thy good advice.

"An oracle has told me that my life is in danger from one of my subjects. Now, this man has never done me any harm: how shall I get rid of him without murder?"

While Ja'son pondered on the question, He'ra, although she was invisible to all, whispered the following reply into his ear; and he said to Pe'lias, quite ignorant that his words were an inspiration from the goddess, "I would make one trouble kill the other. Send him to fetch the Golden Fleece."

Pe'lias started from his seat with an oath, while in his eyes there gleamed a savage light.

"Ja'son, thou art too wise to live!" he almost shrieked. "Thou art the man! and thou thyself must fetch the Golden Fleece!"

When Ja'son knew the falsity of Pe'lias' heart, he muttered, "So the wise Cen'taur told me truly after all;" and for a moment he was tempted to strike the treacherous king to earth, and so fulfil the oracle upon the spot. But the last command of Chi'ron occurred to him,— "*Be true to thy word;*" and, as he had sworn to

be a true and faithful subject for six months to come, he stayed his hand and said : —

" I thank thee for the honor, uncle. It may take more than half a year, but I shall win the fleece and come again to claim the crown." [1]

Our hero began at once to make preparations for his departure. It was a mighty undertaking, before which many a stout heart had quailed ; for between them and the distant Col'chis lay strange seas and unknown lands, inhabited by savage men and beasts.

Then first in the world's history occurred the building of a ship. Up to this time the only boats used by the Greeks were rude and simple, generally nothing more than huge logs with a place scooped out of one side, so that two or three men, or perhaps a dozen, could sit in one ; and when Ja'son said he must have a ship that would hold fifty men, the people called him mad.

Now, I suppose the trees of Thes'saly could not have been as large as some of those that grow in America, for in the National Museum at Washington there is an Indian boat, made

[1] Appendix, Note 13.

many years ago, that is sixty feet in length and eight feet in its greatest width, and yet made from a single log. That would have held fifty heroes I am sure.

But Ja'son went throughout Iol'cos crying, "Who can build me a great ship with fifty oars?"

At length he found a man named Ar'gus, who consented to attempt the work. This was not the Ar'gus whom Her'mes slew, and whose hundred eyes He'ra placed in the peacock's tail, where they remain to-day; nor was it Ar'gus, Phrix'us' son, as some have said, for though Æe'tes ordered him to go to Greece and claim his father's inheritance, he was cast away upon an island in the Eux'ine Sea, and lost his wretched boat, and there remained until the Ar'go reached the island, and bore him back to Col'chis. The Ar'gus of whom we now speak was only a cunning workman, hitherto unknown to fame.

Meanwhile Ja'son sent loud-voiced heralds through the land to summon all men who possessed brave hearts, and especially those who

had been his fellow pupils under wise Chi'ron in Mt. Pe'lion's cave, to join him in his daring quest.

It is said that fifty of the bravest men of Greece soon gathered at Iol'cos, eager for adventure and desirous of renown. Their names are given variously by different authors; and while some are only known to history or fable by that one exploit, yet many others are heroes of mighty deeds, whom we shall meet in stories no less wonderful than this.

You will sometimes be puzzled to keep track of these brave fellows if you try to follow up the circumstances of their lives as you would read the Life of Washington, or Lincoln, or the men of modern days; for these old tales are full of *anachronisms*, which is a long word for *history out of joint*. Accordingly, we may not be surprised to read of an especially brilliant achievement that some particular hero performed, quite a number of years before he was born, or after he should have been dead, just as if we were to hear that Columbus led the bombardment of Fort Sumter.

But boys and girls are not generally in love with dates of history at any rate, and such delightful carelessness will rather please than trouble them.

From what I have said, you will not be surprised to find in Ja'son's crew, Her'acles the Grecian Samson, the strongest man that lived, who strangled deadly serpents when a child, and afterwards killed lions, men, and monsters, but himself was never overcome; The'seus, who tried hard to be as great as Her'acles, and nearly succeeded — for he killed the giant Procrus'tes, and slew the dreadful Min'otaur; Cly'tius and Iph'itus, who first taught men to use the bow, and who never missed their mark; Lyn'ceus, who could see a pigeon fly a hundred miles away in the darkest night; Id'mon, Apol'lo's son, who had the gift of prophecy; Mop'sus, the seer, who understood the speech of birds; Cæ'neus, formerly a woman whom Posei'don loved, but whom the god had made a man whom other men could neither kill nor wound; Askle'pios, the skilled physician, greater than his master Chi'ron, for he could bring the dead

to life; Pe'leus, beloved of women, and husband of the silver-footed The'tis, a goddess of the sea; Acas'tus, son of Pe'lias, braver and better than his father, who longed to win a glorious name; Ne'leus, the banished brother of the king, and his wise son,

> "Experienced Nestor, in persuasion skilled,
> Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled;"[1]

Bu'tes, fairest of all mankind, and rescued by the love of Aphrodi'te from the Siren's wiles in after days; Ti'phys, the pilot, and his successor, Euphe'mus, Posei'don's son, who could walk upon the water as if it were the solid earth; Ze'tes and Cal'ais, sons of the North Wind, with broad wings upon their backs; and Cas'tor and Polydeu'ces, twins, one the most skilful horseman and the other the best boxer in the world.

All these came at Ja'son's call, and many other heroes[2] whom I cannot stop to name, though I must speak of Atalan'ta, who was the

[1] POPE'S Homer's *Iliad*, I. 331.

[2] See Burmann's catalogue of the Argonauts, on p. 221.

only woman among them, but could run faster than the fleetest youth or swiftest Cen'taur, and was a famous huntress and beloved of Ar'temis; and lastly, I must tell you of the wonderful musician, Or'pheus.

He lived in wild and wooded Thrace, and was a son of Calli'ope, one of the Nine Muses, who taught him the art of song, while the god Apol'lo himself gave him a golden lyre. When he played and sang, the wild beasts stopped in the forest, and turned to follow after the enchanting music; the rocks grew loose within their beds and rolled towards him down the mountain sides; and even sturdy oaks were said to move from their position at the sound of that magic harp.

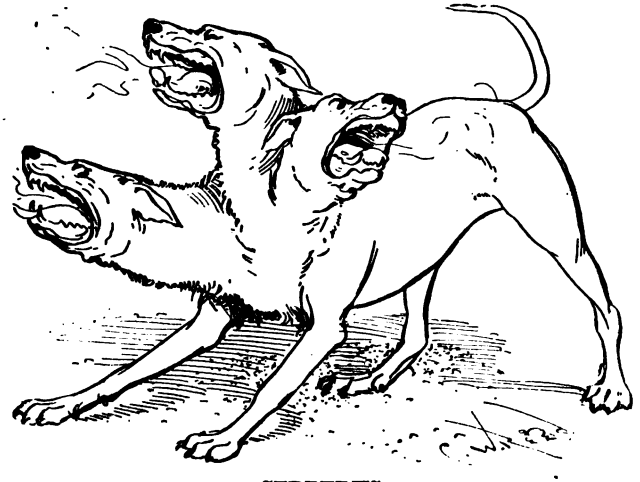
Some years later his great love for Euryd'ice, his wife, induced him to visit the dark underworld, where by his wondrous power he

"Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,"[1]

while "the airy shades, and phantoms of the dead, affected with his song, advanced from the

[1] MILTON'S *Il Penseroso*.

deep mansions of Er'ebus, in such throngs as birds that shelter themselves by thousands in the woods, when evening, or a wintry shower, drives them from the mountains. The very



CERBERUS.

habitations and deepest dungeons of death were astonished, and the Fu'ries, with whose hair blue snakes were interwoven; and yawning Cer'berus repressed his three mouths, and the

whirling of Ixi'on's wheel[1] was suspended by his song."[2]

What could not Ja'son hope to do, with the aid of the Song Wizard and such mighty men of valor?

[1] Ixi'on had incurred the wrath of Ju'piter, and was bound in Ha'des to an ever-revolving wheel. Cer'berus was a dog with three heads that guarded the approach to Ha'des.

[2] Appendix, Note 14.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley.

ROBERT BURNS: *To a Mouse.*

HEN we remember that Ar'gus had nothing to imitate, we must acknowledge that he did well to build any ship whatever; much more to build one that would safely carry such a wondrous crew across the trackless waters.

But he made a grand success, if we may believe the stories of the past. That his ship was seaworthy is proved by her subsequent

career; and we may be sure that she was beautiful to look upon. Indeed, I do not doubt that she was as gay and glorious as the Bucen'taur, which, after the lapse of centuries, carried the doge of Ven'ice, each year, out into the Adriat'ic, in splendid state, that he might drop a jewelled ring into the sparkling waters, and pretend to wed the city and the sea.[1]

In one important respect it far exceeded the Bucen'taur, or the Great Eastern, or any other craft of which you ever heard. You know the mariner's compass was not invented until comparatively modern days; and so, if you have thought at all, you may have thought it strange how Ja'son and his crew should know which way to steer. But in the ship there was a remarkable piece of wood taken from the famous Talking Oak that grew in Dodo'na,

> "In which the swarthy ring-dove sat
> And mystic sentence spoke." [2]

Some say the piece was inserted in the keel;[3] some that it was fastened to the prow, perhaps

[1] Appendix, Note 15.
[2] TENNYSON: *The Talking Oak.*
[3] Appendix, Note 16.

carved as a figure-head; some say that the mast was made of it. One writer calls it only an oaken bough, cut from the tree, and tied to some portion of the ship; while William Morris, with a poet's fancy, says it was the prow itself, wrought from a post that formerly held

"The second rafter in the royal hall."[1]

Amid all these opposing accounts we can do little except remember it was *there*, and that whenever Ti'phys steered them wrong the sacred wood would utter, —

"Port!" or

"Starboard!"

as the case might be.

At last all was ready, and the heroes came together to name their vessel and then launch it. To compliment the builder, Ar'gus (or Ar'gos),[2] all with one accord declared his masterpiece should be called the AR'GO. And besides the fact that *Ar'gos* was the builder's name, the word means *swift* and *shining*, and the ship was both.[3]

[1] MORRIS'S *Life and Death of Jason. Book III.*

[2] *Argus*, commonly; but *Argos* in Greek.

[3] Appendix, Note 17.

Next came

THE LAUNCHING.

"Then the master
With a gesture of command
Waved his hand;
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below,
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs.
And see! she stirs!
She starts, — she moves, — she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms." [1]

Perhaps that is what you think happened in this case, but you are mistaken; for that is excellent poetry, and poetry is quite likely to be too rose-colored, even for a fable.

The facts of the case are more as follows: when the heroes got behind the Ar'go, and, with one united push, endeavored to move her from the spot where she was built, and wed her to the watery waves — instead of "spurning with her foot the ground," and "leaping into the

[1] LONGFELLOW: *The Building of the Ship.*

ocean's arms," she hung back like an over-modest maiden, and at last planted her foot (if we may borrow the poet's figure) squarely in the mud, and wouldn't stir an inch.[1]

Then outspake Pirith'oüs, half-brother to the Cen'taurs and ruler of the Lap'ithæ: —

"We are wasting time to no purpose, for we tread upon each other, or oppose each other's strength. Let but some mighty man apply his shoulder to the stern, while we pull on either side with ropes. Come, The'seus! Thou didst lift a ponderous rock and prove that thou wert Æ'geus' son. Now show thy strength again, and help us force our unwilling craft into the waiting waters."

At these words all turned their eyes toward the hero thus addressed, who stood among them in the prime of manly strength. Nor did he need more urging, but he leaped to his position and awaited orders.

Then they fastened hawsers upon either side, and each man seized a rope. Then Ja'son gave the word, and all put forth their utmost strength

[1] Appendix, Note 18.

with hope to move the stubborn ship. But, though the timbers creaked and groaned, the Ar'go would not stir, and the baffled The'seus and his followers once more paused for breath.

Next Adme'tus, the King of Phe'ræ, exclaimed: —

"My friends and comrades, yonder comes the son of Zeus, whose strength alone was lacking to our purpose. For he slew the unconquerable giant Antæ'us, the son of Earth; for he lifted him high in air, that his mother might not supply him strength, and there he strangled him. Let Her'acles but aid us and our task is light!"

And all the heroes shouted: —

"Heracles, come aid us, and let us draw the Ar'go to the waiting waters."

The brawny giant walked up leisurely, clad in the skin of the Nemæ'an lion, and twirling his prodigious, brass-bound club as if it were a wand. He pretended he had been out into the forest to quench his thirst at a mountain brook; but really he had guessed they would have trouble in the launching, and had kept away on purpose till the crisis came. For he was proud

of his vast strength, and glad of any chance to show it.

He now flung his club upon the ground, tossed off the lion-skin, and with a slight curl of his haughty lip approached the Ar'go and exclaimed, —

"Slacken the rope a bit, that I may see which way she leans!"

Then placing his broad shoulders against the stern he suddenly exerted all his giant strength, like Sam'son when he overturned the Philis'tines' house in Ga'za.[1] But though his face turned crimson, and the muscles of his naked body grew as hard as stone, and on his forehead stood the purple veins like knotted cords, it was in vain. He had hoped to do what The'seus and all the others could not do; but he was foiled. Still he pretended he had only tried to see if he could have a good firm footing, and had not lifted in earnest. So after getting breath he gave the word for a united effort, and lo! the great hulk slowly moved from her position, and, like a sluggard snail, crept seaward.

[1] Judges 16: 30.

On either hand she ploughed a furrow deep and wide, that ever deeper and wider grew; but when she had already dipped her prow within the shallow brine, the heroes paused and said: —

"The way grows harder and our strength is gone."

Then the brow of Her'acles grew black as midnight, for he could not bear to think of having tried a task that he must leave undone. And he shouted fiercely: —

"Where is the idle fool that built this ship? Show him to me, and I will fling him forty fathoms underneath the waves!"

But no one heeded this threat, least of all Ar'gus himself, for he walked mournfully beside the barren sea, and wrung his hands, exclaiming: —

"O great Posei'don, that dost shake the Earth and rule the waters, — grant that my beloved Ar'go, which these hands have built, may float upon the waves, and I will sacrifice a hecatomb upon thy altars, and pour a cask of fragrant wine upon the salt and bitter sea!"

But the sullen Ar'go moved not, neither did

the god regard him; and the Builder wept in agony of spirit.

Then the heroes began to chide each other, and to say that it was this or that one's fault that their misfortune had occurred; for there are some so foolish they can never bear a disappointment, of whatever kind, without thinking some other person must be blamed.

But one who is unjustly blamed needs to have great forbearance in order to restrain himself from chiding back. And the Greek heroes were more famous for their bravery than for their good tempers or gentle manners. So the hard words grew harder, and fierce scowls knit their brows, and speech grew inarticulate with wrath, while Ja'son stood apart with sad misgivings as to the result.

Meanwhile wicked Pe'lias, who had watched afar the preparations with a jealous eye, came nearer, and shouted with a mocking laugh, —

"One thing I had forgotten, Ja'son. Tell me, quick, ere you depart, what day may I expect you back from Col'chis, that I may have a feast prepared, and stand ready to abdicate the throne?"

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARGONAUTS EMBARK.

Hard rocks he softened with persuasive song,
And soothed the rivers as they rolled along.
Yon beeches tall, that bloom near Zona, still
Remain memorials of his vocal skill:
His lays Pieria's listening trees admire,
And move in measures to his melting lyre.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]

BUT suddenly arose a sound that hushed the angry tumult into silence, and allayed the passions of the heroes, — a sound of sweet, mysterious music, that came, no one knew whence, and no one cared to know so long as it endured.

At first, it seemed to imitate the whisper of a coming breeze; then it tinkled like a brook

[1] Appendix, Note 19.

upon a pebbly bed; anon the warble of a thousand singing birds appeared to blend in one melodious song, that next was drowned beneath the roar of surges and the dash of waves.

At length, amid the myriad tones of Nature, there was heard a human voice, that rose and swelled, in majesty and power, until the wondrous music only seemed an undercurrent bearing on its breast a sweetly singing swan.

All things around were hushed in silence, while the cloudy brow of Her'acles grew bright, and Ja'son forgot the quick retort he was about to fling at his malicious uncle.

The words of the invisible singer, though full of melody, were indistinct at first, but finally grew louder and clearer, till they were understood by all that listened.

And they told of the glory of the waters and the beauty of the sea; and of the changing colors of the restless waves; and how delightful it must be to glide, like great Posei'don in his chariot, across the liquid plain; and what a sense of victory must fill the breast of one who meets and triumphs o'er an ocean storm.

A thrill of excitement ran through all the heroes' veins at the sound of those stirring words, and, more than ever, they were anxious to embark.

Indeed, they were about to make a last despairing effort to launch their vessel, when they noticed that it, too, was quivering as if alive, and gently swaying to and fro. Meanwhile the music swelled and died away, then rose again with an increase of power, while high above it all rang forth that spirit-stirring voice.

Suddenly the Ar'go lifted her prow out from the clinging mud, and, like a courser, sped through the shallows. Despair again seized the heart of Ja'son and his men, for they thought surely their beloved craft would take the water, leaving them behind.

But all at once the music ceased, and the advancing ship stood still, while on its stern appeared a well-known figure with a golden harp.

It was Or'pheus, the Muse's son, who, during the tumult that occurred a little while before, had entered the ship unseen, and there played and sung with such magic sweetness that the

heroes forgot their strife, and the senseless Ar'go, even, was attracted to the waters.

As Or'pheus stood upon the stern, he shouted to his wonder-stricken friends:—

"Come! quickly, comrades, while the vessel waits. Take every man his seat and grasp a willing oar. Let Ja'son rule, and Ti'phys seize the helm."

The adventurers needed no second invitation, but quickly climbed the Ar'go's side and took their several places. Then Or'pheus gave one final sweep of his persuasive hand across the harp-strings, evoking such a glorious chord as sent the Ar'go, with a headlong plunge, far out in the surrounding sea, and lingered with a never-dying memory in the breast of all who heard — save the usurper Pe'lias, who had no music in himself, and whose heart was only fit for "treasons, stratagems, and spoils." [1]

"High on the stern the Thracian raised his strain
While Ar'go saw her kindred trees
Descend from Pelion to the main.
Transported demigods stood round,
And men grew heroes at the sound,
Inflamed with glory's charms:

[1] SHAKESPEARE'S *Merchant of Venice*. Act v., Sc. i.

Each chief his sevenfold shield display'd,
And half unsheathed the shining blade:
And seas, and rocks, and skies resound
To arms, to arms, to arms!" [1]

So they rowed across the Pagase'an Gulf until they came to Aph'etæ, where they waited for a favorable breeze, and made great offerings to the Olym'pian gods.

At length the wind, for which they waited, came; and they set sail and bent their oars to cross the blue Æ'gean, then termed the Nameless Sea.

For two bright days they sped along, until they reached the island Lem'nos, where they disembarked.

We may suppose they went on shore to visit the forges of Hephæs'tos,[2] the god of fire, whom Zeus kicked from the summit of Olym'pus with such force that it took him one whole day at least (some say three, and some say nine!) to finish falling.[3]

But when the Ar'gonauts[4] had reached the

[1] POPE'S *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day.*
[2] Vulcan.
[3] Appendix, Note 20.
[4] Sailors in the Argo.

shore they fell into a snare that might have ended my story.

A short time previously, the goddess Aphrodi'te had become angry with the Lem'nian women, because they had neglected her altar. So she took a rather mean revenge. She made them seem so ugly and repulsive to their husbands that the latter would not even speak to them. Then ensued a terrible tragedy.

The jealous wives rose up calmly one night, and, by mutual agreement, each took her husband's life. Nor did they stop there, but continued their cruel work till every male was dead.

Save one.

Hypsip'yle, the queen, was more tender-hearted than the rest, and hid her gray-haired father, Tho'as, from the frenzied mob, and saved his life.

Just after this event, the Ar'gonauts came along;[1] and the women, who were getting tired of cutting wood and bringing water, received them with great kindness, and made them feel decidedly at home.

[1] Appendix, Note 21.

It would be useless, and needless, to describe the thousand wiles and blandishments by which the sailors were induced to put their journey off from week to week. It is enough to know that Ja'son, and all the rest but one, utterly forgot their mission, and for a long time dwelt in Lem'nos in inglorious ease.

At last, however, Her'acles, who had viewed the whole matter with disfavor, met Ja'son in the public square, after two years' time had flown, and gave him such a sound berating that he felt ashamed of himself, and determined to proceed. So he called his followers together, and told them of his purpose.

They, too, had become a little over-rested, and found their swords were growing rusty from disuse. And, though most of them had married women of the island, they began to long for adventure, so they were ready again to embark at their leader's call.

Queen Hypsip'yle was more grieved than any of her subjects at the thought of losing her husband (who was no other than Ja'son himself), for the Lem'nian women had discovered that her

father's life was spared amid the general male massacre, and she was fearful of their wrath, should they be widowed a second time. But our hero tried to console her with a promise of the Golden Fleece on his return.

So they parted, but Hypsip'yle never beheld them more; for the gallant, but recreant, Ja'son forgot all about her ere he was ten leagues at sea.

CHAPTER X.

FRIENDS AND ENEMIES.

Though various perils your attempt oppose,
And toils unnumbered bring unnumbered woes;
Yet shall ye safe return, ye sons of Greece,
Adorned with conquest, and the Golden Fleece.

IDMON'S PROPHECY.[1] — *Translated by Fawkes.*

GRADUALLY the shores of Lem'nos became like a cloud upon the far horizon, to the eyes of the Ar'gonauts, and at length were lost to view. The heroes plied the oars with willing hands, although they soon found their muscles had grown flabby from lack of exercise, and they could not maintain the rate of speed at which they first set out. But at last they reached the island

[1] Appendix, Note 22.

Samothra'ce, and paused to rest and offer sacrifices to the gods. Then they resumed their seats and rowed until they reached the Hel'lespont, whose name has a significance that you will all remember.

Passing through this narrow strait they entered the modern Sea of Mar'mora. The ancients called it the Propon'tis, because it lay *before the sea* that stretched its inhospitable [1] length from Bithyn'ia and Thrace, to distant Col'chis and the unknown North. On the shores of the Propon'tis lay the territory of King Cyz'icus, where the Ar'gonauts tarried for a time, as they were received and entertained with great kindness. But just off the shore, there lay an island on which was situated a small mountain called Bears' [2] Hill; and when our heroes were putting out to sea again, they beheld a great number of canoes starting from this island, while down the side of Bears' Hill came what seemed at first a crowd of animated windmills. Lyn'ceus, who served as telescope for the Ar'go, was called to the lookout, and soon determined that these

[1] Appendix, Note 23. [2] Appendix, Note 24.

curious objects were giants, with six arms apiece.

The canoes put out to intercept the Ar'gonauts, but there was only a brisk little skirmish, for the Ar'go ran over and sunk a number of the puny crafts that came to meet them, and a rapid fire of arrows from Her'acles, Cly'tius, Iph'itus, and other Grecian archers, quickly put the rest to flight. So they rowed and sailed without opposition till night fell, when a frightful wind arose that drove them from their course and drowned the whispers of the Talking Oak.

They wandered for a long time, they knew not whither, till they found themselves near a certain shore and thought it best to land. So they ran the ship aground and disembarked. But scarcely had they done so when the natives fell upon them in the darkness, and a battle ensued that was worthy of the name. They fought, and fought, and it was doubtful how the tide would turn, until at last Ja'son himself came to a hand-to-hand encounter with the chief. Their struggle was brief and bloody, for the Argonau'tic hero with a mighty sweep of his sword

THE SIX-ARMED GIANTS.

cleft his opponent's head in twain, and stretched him lifeless on the sand. Then the attacking party fled, and the sailors waited for the break of day.

But what was their surprise and grief, when next the purple dawn appeared, to find themselves at the very spot whence they had embarked the day previous, and to discover that the heroic chieftain who lay dead before them was no other than Cyz'icus the friendly king. For the Dolio'nians over whom he ruled, supposed the Ar'gonauts were foes who came at midnight to possess their land.

Ja'son and his men did everything that was possible to express their sorrow. They could not give the dead king life, but they wept in common with his subjects, and built a splendid funeral pyre on which they burned his body in the most approved fashion. They also tarried awhile till they could build a temple, on an overhanging mountain, to Cyb'ele, the Mother of the Gods.

Then bidding a sad farewell to the late monarch's subjects, they again embarked, this time

without any opposition from the Bears' Hill brood.

Coasting along the southern shore of the Propon'tis they came to Mys'ia, where they put in for food and water. Several of the Ar'gonauts went on shore, among them Her'acles and his favorite, the beautiful boy Hy'las. The latter bore a Grecian urn; and while his master wandered in the woods in search of a fir-tree to replace an oar which he had broken, the lad visited a spring in the recesses of a mountain glen to quench his thirst and fill his vessel. But as the nymphs of the fountain looked upon the youth, they loved him; and when he dipped his urn beneath the waters of the limpid pool, they seized his arm and drew him underneath the surface.

The fair boy shrieked in terror, for the nymphs remained invisible, and he did not feel their fairy grasp, and supposed he had simply lost his balance and was liable to be drowned. But after he was once fairly in for it, we may suppose that he grew reconciled, for it is not such a terrible thing to contemplate — to be kidnapped by fountain-nymphs.

The piercing shriek sent out by the frightened Hy'las reached the ears of Polyphe'mus, a brother-in-law of Her'acles, who had remained in the ship. He at once caught up his sword and started forth, as he had recognized the voice, and supposed the lad had fallen into the hands of evil men.

But the cry was not repeated, and by the time he reached the fountain not a ripple on the surface hinted of the incident that had occurred. At length Polyphe'mus met Her'acles himself, and told him all he knew; and they both went wandering through the wood, shouting, "Hy'las! Hy'las!" so that all the shore resounded, but in vain.

The place where the Greeks next went ashore was in Bebry'cia, or Bithyn'ia, where Am'ycus, Posei'don's son, held sway. He was a conceited giant, and prided himself on his skill in boxing. It was his custom whenever any strangers landed there, to challenge them to fight, and many a poor fellow had he sent to sudden death. Accordingly, no sooner did he learn that the

Ar'gonauts had presumed to touch upon his coast, than he strode down to meet them and to give the usual challenge.

Now among the Ar'gonauts you may recall the names of Cas'tor and Polydeu'ces.[1] They were twin sons of the beautiful Le'da, and the second was endowed with immortality. He was a liberally educated youth, and amid all his other acquirements had reduced boxing to a perfect art.

There was not a "guard," a "counter," or a "feint," which he could not accomplish with unfailing accuracy; and although he was not cruel like Am'ycus, he had no objection to meeting the boaster on his own ground and teaching him a lesson.

So when the king came striding down toward the Ar'go, Polydeu'ces said to Ja'son: —

"Accept the challenge that you soon will hear, and I will answer for it."

On came Posei'don's son till he had nearly reached the ship, when he bellowed forth like a pretentious bull: —

[1] Pollux.

"Let no coward presume to plant his foot upon my soil! Off with you, unless some warrior dare put on the *cestus* [1] and do battle with a man who always conquers!"

"And who art thou, boaster, that talkest thus with vainglorious words?" Ja'son replied. For though he knew his name full well, it was his purpose to see the fellow rage a little for the amusement of his friends.

"Who am I?" roared back the giant. "And hast not heard of ME? Come on shore, and I will set a mark upon thy craven skull which any of the dwellers on these coasts — if thou live to show it — will readily tell thee was given by Am'ycus, great Posei'don's son."

"Ho! ho! friend Am'ycus," quoth Ja'son, "I am right glad to meet thee, for I have a stripling here who has taken a few lessons with the gloves, and needs to have some of the conceit knocked out of him. If thou wilt just punish him a little first, I shall then be happy to come on shore and break thy head. Come, Polydeu'ces, just jump out here and fight with the man."

[1] A kind of boxing-glove described a little farther on.

The youth thus addressed sprang lightly to the shore. He was of fair size, but, contrasted with Am'ycus, he looked much as one would imagine King Da'vid did when he went out against Goli'ath, with his sling and stone.

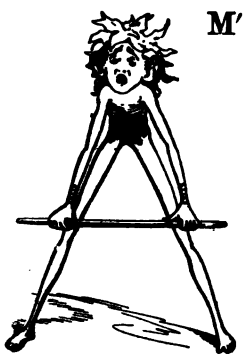
The Bebry'cian seemed to feel insulted, very much like his Philis'tine brother; and while not intending to let down his dignity enough to fight with such a paltry foe, he concluded he would send him back with a headache, and teach him not to meddle with professional gentlemen. He accordingly advanced to where the young man stood, and aimed a wicked cuff at his left ear. Polydeu'ces stood still as a stone till the enormous hand had almost reached him, when he suddenly ducked his head; and before the astonished king could recover, the young boxer dealt him a tremendous counter on the jaw.

CHAPTER XI.

AMYCUS MEETS HIS MATCH.

The giant with the wound
Fell flat, and stretched his bulk unwieldy on the ground.
But soon his vigor and his strength returned,
He rose, and then again the battle burned :
With iron hands their hollow sides they pound,
And deal vindictive many a desperate wound.

THEOCRITUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]



AMYCUS was surprised. Yes, he was doubly surprised. He didn't find the object at which he struck, and something hit him that was hard and unexpected. When he came to himself a little, he saw the fellow whom he had so lately looked upon with contempt, holding his sides and shaking with laughter. The giant rose and made a rush,

[1] Appendix, Note 25.

but found his adversary like the Frenchman's flea — somewhere else.

"Not so fast, my good friend," said the youthful boxer, as he skilfully evaded the furious rushes which Am'ycus still made, "let us put on the gloves first."

The Bebry'cian king paused for breath at last, and the Ar'gonaut repeated: —

"Come, friend; let's put on the gloves and take a turn."

Am'ycus discovered that he had no mean antagonist after all, and so he choked back his rage and growled: —

"If thou wilt rashly rush to sudden death, then meet me in the ring, and I will scatter thy brains upon the sand, and leave thy bones to whiten on the beach."

"Thank you," said Polydeu'ces.

Preparations were at once made for the combat. The Ar'gonauts left the ship, and stood around the combatants in a circle, side by side with the natives who had flocked down to see the bloody sport. Four of Am'ycus' subjects now approached, bearing two huge pairs of box-

ing-gloves, which they laid at the giant's feet. The braggart tossed one pair towards our friend Polydeu'ces, who bowed in acknowledgment, but said: —

"I'll wear my own *cestus*, if you please," and ran back to the Ar'go to procure them.[1]

While waiting for him to return, let me tell you that the boxing-gloves of those times, or the *cestus* as the Greeks called them, were not designed like those of modern days, to make the hard knocks easier to bear.[2] The Latin poet, Ver'gil, says in describing those of E'ryx — "Seven hides of great oxen were stiffened with in-sewed lead and iron." So you see they more nearly resembled brass knuckles than sporting gloves.

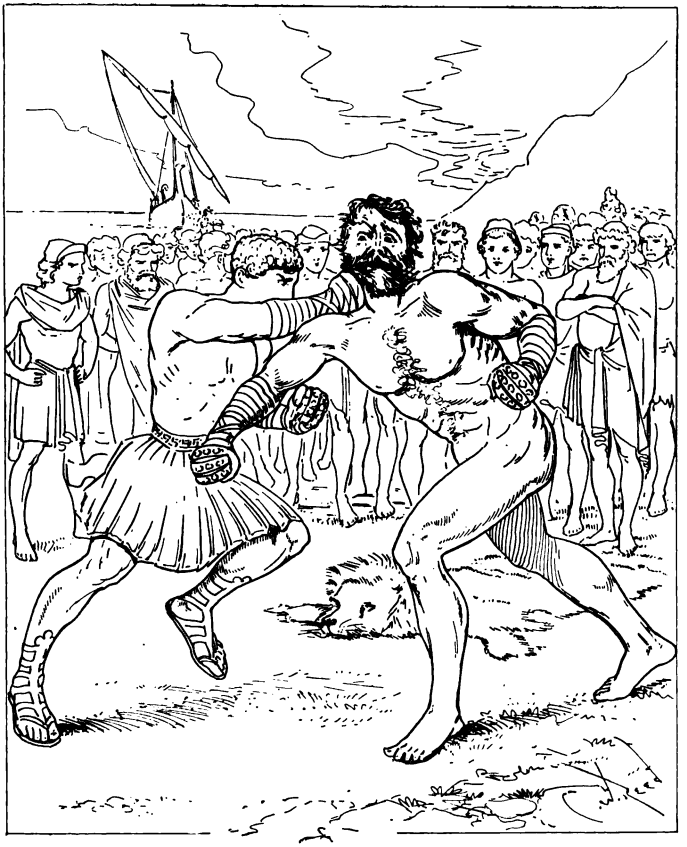
And really, their object was to lend additional force to blows — *inertia*, the philosophers call it — just as a boy can jump farther with a brick in each hand. The *cestus* were made of strips of raw hide, fastened end to end, so as to form one continuous string or thong. This was then wound about the hand and arm, nearly to the

[1] Appendix, Note 26. [2] Appendix, Note 27.

elbow. Over the knuckles, as well as in some other parts, there were usually fastened bits of iron, or some heavy metal, to make the blows more terrible.

Polydeu'ces quickly returned, and each side helped its duelist array himself for the fight. At length all was ready, and the ring enlarged as the two boxers, of such unequal size, stepped forth to meet each other.

Am'ycus had learned wisdom from his first vainglorious attempt, and advanced more warily. His adversary moved forward a few paces, and then stood with both arms hanging by his sides, and a slight smile on his face, gazing with unquailing eye upon the approaching giant, whose features were working with ill-suppressed rage. For a moment the braggart paused, after he came within striking distance, and then — No one could tell what followed, save that the Bebry'cian monarch launched the first blow. Then there ensued such a confused mingling of arms, upward, downward, hither, thither, forward, backward, like flashes of light, that it was impossible to tell who struck or who parried.



POLYDEUCES VANQUISHES
AMYCUS.

Meanwhile, the Ar'gonaut was giving ground. He circled backward once around the ring, while his foe pressed him hotly. Or was it his purpose thus to throw the giant off his guard? But the flying arms never once ceased or slackened upon either side, though a stream of blood appeared on Polydeu'ces' forehead, and trickled down his cheek. Suddenly Le'da's son stooped to the earth, and, while the giant's *cestus* hurtled harmlessly in air, the nimble youth sprang up at his opponent's side and launched a stroke as quick and deadly as Jove's thunderbolt, that took effect upon Am'ycus just below the ear.

Then like to some gigantic mountain pine, whose trunk has just been severed by the woodman's axe, but for an instant still declines to fall, so stood the huge Bebry'cian, erect but tottering, until his trembling knees refused support, and he fell prostrate on the shore. A momentary quiver ran through his mighty frame, then all was still; for with Polydeu'ces' final blow his neck was broken.

A cry of horror and a shout of victory went up to the sky from the mouths of the commin-

gled multitude; and Ja'son stepped forth and proudly grasped the victor's hand, exclaiming: —

"Bravely done! Nobly won! But you are injured, I fear."

"Oh, that is nothing!" the hero answered; "merely a scratch that, I'm ashamed to say, the fellow managed to give me. But he'll never trouble any more innocent men, as he has done so many times in the past."

The Ar'gonauts tarried there a time and celebrated the victory in fine style, and the Bebry'cians were called upon to furnish all the animals sufficient for food and sacrifices.

By and by our friends put off from the Bebry'cian coast, and tended whither the Talking Oak directed. But, as they proceeded, the heavens grew black as night, the lightnings flashed, and the thunder roared until they thought they surely should be lost.

Then Or'pheus caught his harp, and struck a chord in unison with the tempest; and the ship rocked to and fro upon the angry surges with still greater violence, and all the heroes prayed

that he would cease. But the great Song Wizard knew his power, and heeded not their demand. And finally, the harp tones grew less boisterous and more full of melody; and strange to say, the roaring waves abated of their wrath, and the hurricane subsided to a whistling wind that wailed a weird accompaniment to the persuasive music. Then Or'pheus raised his voice in song, for he was the first of men thus to add thrilling harmony to the tones of the golden shell. And he invoked the deities of Samothra'ce, the curious Cabi'ri who were said to wander over the world like newly-hatched partridges, with a half eggshell on their heads, but who controlled the storm winds in their wrath. And while he sung, the boiling waves grew calm, and, sobbing, sank beneath the Ar'go's prow; for the Cabi'ri heard the Wizard's prayer, and they appeared as a ball of fire upon the pointed mast, and as bright stars upon the heads of Le'da's sons, Cas'tor and Polydeu'ces.

Then they sailed through the rough-rolling Bos'porus (which means Ox'ford, or rather Cow'-ford, since across it the beautiful I'o swam when,

under the form of a heifer, she was pursued by a gadfly which the jealous He'ra sent to torture her), and, turning north, they came by dawn of day to Salmydes'sus, on the Eux'ine coast of Thrace.[1]

Phi'neus, the king, had married a daughter of the North Wind, and a sister to Ze'tes and Cal'ais, who, you may remember, were among our heroes. The king had two noble sons; but their mother died, and Phi'neus took another wife, Idæ'a, who told such wicked tales about the boys, that their father put out their eyes and shut them up in prison. But the gods were angry, and wicked Idæ'a was probably killed by a thunderbolt, as she deserved, while Phi'neus himself was blinded, and the Har'pies were sent to pollute his tables.[2]

The Har'pies were female monsters, half human and half bird, filthy and terrible in their appearance; and whenever the tables were set for the king to eat, they at once flew in, and either ate all the food themselves, before the blind old monarch could get

[1] Appendix, Note 28. [2] Appendix, Note 29.

fairly seated, or else they trampled on the viands so that poor Phi'neus would rather starve than taste.

Such was the state of affairs when the Ar'gonauts arrived, and Ze'tes and Cal'ais disembarked to take yet further vengeance on the king for the grievous wrong done to their sister's children. But when they saw the terrible scourge of the sightless old man, and found that he had freed his sons, and was truly sorry for their sufferings, compassion seized the hearts of the winged brothers, and they decided to leave all vengeance with the gods. But Phi'neus was a seer if he couldn't see, and he besought the Ar'gonauts to drive the Har'pies from his house, and, in return, he said he would give them some directions which they must needs know concerning their journey, or they would never reach the Golden Fleece.

So the North Wind's sons told Ja'son and his men the words of Phi'neus, and they went up to talk the matter over.

And Phi'neus told them that their route lay between the *Cya'neæ Sympleg'ades*, or Dark Blue

Dashers, which were floating rocks, just beyond the entrance of the Eux'ine Sea. And when any boat attempted to pass through, they came together with a mighty crash.

"You may not be able to pass through at all," said Phi'neus, "but I can tell you the only possible way of knowing if you can, and if you succeed, the coming ages will call you blessed; for the fates decree that when once a vessel glides in safety through those rocky jaws, the Dark Blue Dashers shall be rooted to the deep."

Just then Plexip'pus and Pandi'on, the king's sons, came bounding in, and flung their arms about their father's neck, exclaiming, —

"We can see! *we can see!!* WE CAN SEE!!!"

And, sure enough, they could, and their bright eyes sparkled as you can imagine; for while the others had been listening to the king, Askle'pios had spied the blinded youths, and induced them to anoint their eyes with a wonderful salve that he had made, and this restored their sight.

Phi'neus wept for joy.

"My innocent, injured boys," he said, "I do not value being blind, since you, at last, can look

upon the light; now if we might only gather round an unpolluted table, ours would be indeed a happy home."

But Ja'son answered: —

"Tell us the secret of our course, O prophet-prince, and I will pledge my word that thou shalt look upon a smiling world again, and feast upon the choicest viands undisturbed."

CHAPTER XII.

EASTWARD HO!

Through the great gulf shot Ar'go like a bird —
And by and by reached Pha'sis, ne'er o'erta'en
By those in-rushing rocks, that have not stirred
Since then, but bask, twin monsters, on the main.
THEOCRITUS. — *Translated by Calverley.*[1]

THE blind king gladly agreed to the proposed bargain, but hinted that a glimpse of the Present might enable him to look farther into the Future. This seemed logical enough, and Ja'son agreed to perform his part of the contract first.

Accordingly, he called for volunteers to drive the terrible Har'pies from Phi'neus's table, and

1 Appendix, Note 30.

Ze'tes and Cal'ais, like generous gentlemen, proffered their services. Indeed, they were the only persons capable of waging a successful war

THE PURSUIT OF THE HARPIES.

against the pests, since they alone had wings, and could pursue the filthy, feathered monsters through the air. Their services were accepted, and when the tables had been spread afresh,

and the foul creatures came with horrid cries to spoil the banquet, the sons of Bo'reas dashed towards them. The Har'pies flew swiftly away, but the brothers soared aloft, and pursued them. Over land and sea the sisters fled, yet their inexorable foes never tired, but followed in their wake until they reached a group of islands to the west of Greece. There the weary half-breeds sank exhausted, and would soon have lost their lives had not the many-colored I'ris, the swift messenger of the gods, appeared, and put a stop to further proceedings. She effected a compromise with the strong-winged brothers, by which they agreed to turn back if the Har'pies would give a solemn oath never to trouble Phi'neus more. This they gladly swore, and Ze'tes and Cal'ais departed; while the islands were thenceforth termed *Stroph'ades*, from the Greek word STREPHO — to turn back.

Meanwhile Askle'pios, the great physician, had anointed Phi'neus's eyes with some strange compound;[1] and the King, having rubbed them briskly and finding that he could see again, winked at Ja'son and observed: —

[1] Appendix, Note 31.

"You'll discover that this has been a big bargain on both sides, for without me the Dark Blue Dashers would have closed upon your bark like monstrous shears, or rather nut-crackers, and there would have been an end of Ar'go and of Ar'gonauts. But I will give you a trusty pilot, who will decide whether you can make the passage, and, if so, with what success."

So saying, he entered an inner room and brought forth a beautiful pigeon, which he gave the Argonau'tic leader. And he told him, when he came near the dreaded rocks, to loose the pigeon from the ship and mark with care its course. And if it flew backward they must return; but, if forward, they must strain their eyeballs to see how it fared; and if it passed uninjured they should bend their oars with might and main to follow in its wake — for as the bird succeeded, so would they.

The Ar'gonauts thanked Phi'neus, and as Ze'tes and Cal'ais had by this time returned, they again resumed their course. Soon the Clashing Islands came in sight, looking like floating icebergs, with their cold blue peaks; and ever and anon

they came together like a pair of ringing cymbals, and then bounded back a space, while the swirling waters tossed their foamy crests above the topmost cliffs. Homer thus describes them: —

"High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thundering roll below;
Through the vast waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence named Erratic by the gods above.
No bird of air, no dove of swiftest wing,
That bears ambrosia to th' ethereal king,
Shuns the dire rocks: in vain she cuts the skies,
The dire rocks meet and crush her as she flies;
Not the fleet bark, when prosperous breezes play,
Ploughs o'er that roaring surge its desperate way;
O'erwhelmed it sinks, while round a smoke expires,
And the waves flashing seem to burn with fires.
Scarce the famed Ar'go passed these raging floods,
The sacred Ar'go filled with demigods!
Even she had sunk, but Jove's imperial bride
Winged her fleet sail and pushed her o'er the tide.

High in the air the rock its summit shrouds
In brooding tempests and in rolling clouds:
Loud storms around, and mists eternal rise,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.
Impervious to the step of man it stands,
Though borne by twenty feet, though armed with twenty hands;
Smooth as the polish of the mirror rise
The slippery sides, and shoot into the skies.
Full in the centre of this rock displayed,
A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade:

Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
Wide to the west the horrid gulf extends,
And the dire passage down to hell descends.
O fly the dreadful sight! expand thy sails,
Ply the strong oar and catch the nimble gales!" [1]

Mop'sus [2] stood upon the prow, holding the fateful pigeon in his hand, for he alone could understand its cooing notes. By his side stood Lyn'ceus, the Living Telescope. Ti'phys held firmly to the rudder, while Ja'son directed the Ar'go as near to the sportive breakers as he dared.

Suddenly the bird cried: —

"Coo! Coo! Coo-oo-oo! Coo-*coo!* *Coo!* Coo-coo-coo-*ah!*"

Which Mop'sus readily interpreted, as it was pigeon-Greek for —

"If this Bœo'tian would only let me go, I could fly through there now! Sure as an arrow!"

The "Bœo'tian" [3] did not stop to resent this freedom of speech. He loosed his grasp, and

[1] Appendix, Note 32.
[2] Appendix, Note 33.
[3] Appendix, Note 34.

away sped the feathered pilot amid the spray, and was soon lost to sight.

That is to say, she passed beyond the vision of all the other Argonauts, but

> "Lynceus, whose searching ken 'bove all mankind
> The clearest, keenest glance supplied,"

stood with flushed face and parted lips gazing beyond those gloomy gates of death; and when at last the white-winged messenger seemed safe, he signalled Jason to advance.

So the commander gave the word, and the brawny sailors bent above the ashen oars, and the quivering Ar'go surged forward on the waves.

"There she goes! Now after her!" Lyn'ceus cried. "Quick! quick! Oh, heavens! Hold! Back, for your lives! The rocks have caught the bird!"

The adventurous crew were now within a cable's length, when the Dashers struck together with a hideous clang that filled the heroes' hearts with horror. But their recoil was swift, and Lyn'ceus, looking with blanched cheek, yet undimmed eye, shrieked, in a voice that rang

BETWEEN THE SYMPLEGADES.

out through the roar, "No! no! *Not* back! *Forward!* FORWARD!!"

In their endeavors to back water, the Argonau'tic oarsmen had just succeeded in overcoming the impetus of their seemingly doomed craft, and it now rocked like an egg-shell on the boiling surge, which threatened to ingulf it. But quickly, at the last command, they, as one man, bent to their blades again, and sent the Ar'go between the now-retreating cliffs.

For as the *Sympleg'ades* separated, Lyn'ceus saw that they had only caught a feather from the pigeon's tail, while the uninjured bird skimmed merrily away. So, with full confidence in Phi'neus's prophecy, he countermanded his last order with the following result.

Obedient to the oars and helm, the Grecian vessel flew between the yawning jaws of earth and rock; but, even as they passed, the cliffs again closed upon each other, and the seer's prediction was fulfilled.

For as the dove had lost a feather from its tail, but flew away unharmed, so the Floating Islands crushed a few gilded ornaments upon

the Ar'go's stern, and that was all; — the panting heroes glided safely on the waters of the mighty Eux'ine Sea.

The Dark Blue Dashers recoiled, as usual, but never met again. The decree of the Fates was inevitable, and when the Ar'go had passed safely through they took a fixed position on the ocean-bed, and there they stand to-day.

The Ar'gonauts next stopped at the court of King Ly'cus, on the southern shore of the Eux'ine (though some say his territory lay on the Propon'tis), and while there, Id'mon, one of their companions, was wounded by a wild boar, and died. Ti'phys, the pilot, also died, and it became necessary to choose a new steersman. Now I have elsewhere [1] told you this was Euphe'mus, Posei'don's son; but some say it was Ergi'nus, his brother, while others declare the station fell to Ancæ'us, yet another brother. At any rate, the pilot was a man whose father ruled the waves, and would naturally be careful of his boys, although he now and then stirred up the deep a little, just to try their mettle.

[1] Page 69.

A story is told of Ancæ'us, in after years, that I must stop to give you.

He was beating a slave in his vineyard, when the injured bondman turned upon him with an evil look and said: —

"Thou shalt never drink a drop of wine from this vintage."

Ancæ'us only laughed and flogged the fellow yet more severely; and as soon as the grapes were gathered he ordered a cup of the juice to be pressed out, and sent for the slave.

"See, thou knave, the falsehood of thy prophecy! I shall drain this liquor and then beat thee again, for lying."

But the slave smiled grimly and replied in Greek: "*Polla metaxu pelei kulikos kai cheileos akrou.*" [1]

The master laughed in scorn, and raised the brimming cup, but before he touched it to his lips a messenger rushed in, saying that a wild boar was destroying the grape-vines. Ancæ'us dashed down the wine and ran out to drive away the brute, but he never returned. The wild

[1] Appendix, Note 35.

boar killed him, and the slave's prophecy became a proverb.

Coasting along the shore, the Ar'gonauts, after many adventures which we cannot pause to chronicle, came to a small island, sacred to A'res, and called Are'tias, where they disembarked. While lying on the ground they suddenly felt a sharp stinging through all their limbs, while, at the same time, the sky grew dark, as if from a coming storm. For, in fact, they had come to the dwelling-place of the fugitive Stympha'lian birds, whom Her'acles had frightened from their native vale, as you shall some time read hereafter. These horrid creatures loved to feed on human flesh; their talons were of iron, and their steel-tipped feathers first taught men to make a winged arrow; and they flew above the sailors, and shook out their strange plumage, which fell upon the unprotected flesh with dangerous force. Perhaps they knew that Her'acles, their conqueror, was absent from the party (for he had never returned after the loss of Hy'las),[1] and thought the others

[1] See preface: quotation from Diodorus Siculus.

would not know his secret of success. But Ja'-son had heard the story from the victorious hero's lips, and so he ordered his men to make a great noise with their spears upon their shields. They had no sooner done this than their winged foes — who threatened to be as troublesome as the Har'pies, and far more fatal — remembered the days of yore in Stympha'los, and flew away in fright, while their falling feathers, sinking into the sea, looked at a distance like so many flakes of snow.

CHAPTER XIII.

A DEADLY PLOT.

And next the wandering heroes trace
To Pha'sis' flowing stream their way,
Mingling with Col'chis' swarthy race
And great Æe'tes in the fray.

PINDAR. — *Translated by Wheelwright.*[1]

WHILE the Ar'gonauts still tarried at the island, two men, in a frail boat, were driven by a wind upon the shore. These wanderers were Ar'gus and his brother, the sons of Phrix'us and Chalci'ope, whom Æe'tes, their grandfather, had ordered to return to Greece and take possession of their father's kingdom. In reality,

[1] Appendix, Note 36.

the wily old king was afraid of the boys, and so tried to get rid of them by this excuse; for, how did he suppose two inexperienced youths would find their way across the Eux'ine, and between the Dark Blue Dashers, to their father's land beyond the Nameless Sea?

As soon as the Greeks discovered who the strangers were, they fell upon their necks with joy. Ja'son explained his purpose, and made a proposal that Phrix'us' sons should lead them back to Col'chis, after which they would all go back to Greece together. But Ar'gus and his brother shook their heads; they said Æe'tes was a gruff old bear, who would never think of giving up the Golden Fleece. And when Ja'son suggested that it didn't concern him very much what Æe'tes might think, his cousins told him that their crafty ancestor had nailed the Fleece to a tree in the grove of A'res, around whose trunk lay coiled a sleepless dragon, terrible to view.

This monster, the king had made the keeper of his treasure; and against its huge and scaly hide the hardest sword would turn its edge,

while a blow from the ever-vibrating tail would sever a dozen men in twain and snap a tree-trunk like a slender twig.

But Ja'son was not frightened by these tales of terror, and he declared that he would fetch the Fleece, though the Three-headed Dog or the Nine-headed Hy'dra stood on guard. So, finding him unwavering in his purpose, the sons of Phrix'us joined his crew and guided him to Col'chis. Then they rowed up the river Pha'sis till they reached the city Æ'a, when Ja'son proceeded to Æe'tes's palace to interview the king.

The son of the Sun was astonished at Ja'son and his errand. Since the days when Chrysomal'lus flew across the waters, with his living burden, no Greek had entered the Oriental city, and Æe'tes hoped and believed that he should never set eyes upon another. For he looked upon his golden treasure with more than a miser's greed, and, as we have seen, had taken great precautions against its being carried off; and, still further, if he had obtained possession of the same by some mysterious crime, as was supposed, the dread of vengeance may have united with his fear of loss.

So, when Ja'son briefly made known his name, and the purpose of his coming, the old monarch was a little frightened and very much vexed. He felt no more at ease when he learned that the new-comer had a force of more than forty Grecian heroes at his back; but, with his usual hypocrisy, he feigned a welcome to them all, and urgently invited them to a great feast at his palace that very evening.

Meanwhile, Ja'son returned to his followers, and Æe'tes sat down to devise means by which he might preserve the Golden Fleece without danger to himself or subjects.

When Ar'gus and his brother learned of the projected feast, they cautioned all the Ar'gonauts against going. They told them the food would be poisoned, or the wine drugged, and they had better invent some excuse for refusing the invitation. But Ja'son had already given his word, and he felt bound to keep it; so at the appointed hour all repaired to the palace.

Now, while the Col'chian king would not have hesitated at poison, had that been needed to accomplish his design, he had devised a plan that

he believed would be equally effective, would afford his subjects a day's amusement, and would give himself a cruel pleasure.

So, after he had dined and wined his heroic guests, in company with many of the noblest of his realm, Æe'tes said to Ja'son: —

"Noble Greek, for the instruction of myself and friends, I pray that thou wilt tell in full the causes of thy journey, the wonders thou hast seen upon thy way, and what adventures have befallen thee."

"I must beg to be excused, your Majesty," said Ja'son; "I never was clever at telling tales, and I will resign my commission to friend Or'pheus."

For Ja'son could plan cleverly, if he couldn't talk. He knew Or'pheus would sing his Captain's praises with an irresistible charm, and he liked to be flattered as well as the men of modern days.

So Or'pheus tuned his lyre and sung of Chrysomal'lus's flight and Phrix'us' troubled ghost; and of the wicked Pe'lias, Ja'son's uncle; and how the leader of the Ar'gonauts was reared;

and how he crossed the rushing river, bearing He'ra on his back; and then he told the art of Pe'lias by which the valiant Ja'son was induced to fetch the Golden Fleece; and how the First Ship was built and manned, and the wonderful manner in which it was launched; and of their stay at the fair isle of Lem'nos; and how they fought the six-armed giants; and how the friendly Cyz'icus was slain; and of the loss of Hy'las, for whose unavailing search his master and his master's friend had remained behind; and how the boastful Am'ycus had fallen before Polydeu'ces' arm; and of the blind king Phi'neus and his prophecy.

Then the Song Wizard struck the twanging strings with furious might, and told them of the Sympleg'ades and the terrific passage between the Dark Blue Rocks; and the music became gay and joyous as he sung of their escape, and sad when he portrayed their comrades' death.

At length the minstrel ceased, and for some moments none presumed to break the silence.

Then Æe'tes spoke: —

"By the Golden Fell that thou hast come to

seek! if that singer's song is true thou dost deserve it! Yet I must require some proof of thy dexterity. If, from the time my father mounts his chariot in the East, to-morrow morn, until he enters his golden boat on the far Western Ocean, thou shalt plough, sow, and harvest four acres of land, allowing me to furnish team and plough and land and seed, thou shalt freely take the Fleece."

Now Ja'son was expecting a far different proposal, and felt disposed, at first, to resent such humiliating conditions; for he was more a fighter than a farmer, and much preferred an encounter with a dozen Col'chians, or a duel with Æe'tes's dragon, to holding the plough-handles half a day. But he consoled himself with the thought that he was still young, and there would be hosts of opportunities for his prowess, if he did meet with a disappointment just when he had counted on gaining everlasting glory. So he struck hands with the king, observing: —

"I'll do my best, only I don't see how I am to reap the field the same day I sow it."

"Oh, the seed that I shall furnish has a rapid growth," Æe'tes answered, with a furtive smile. "If there is no harvest ready for thy sickle thou shalt be excused from reaping."

. . . . . .

While Or'pheus was singing the bravery and prowess of the Argonau'tic Captain, he impressed all hearts — but each in a special manner. Æe'tes felt more than ever that Ja'son must be destroyed, and that, too, quickly and craftily; the Greeks were inspired with confidence in their success; and one fluttering heart beat with a stranger feeling still. This heart dwelt within the breast of Mede'a, the witch-daughter of King Æe'tes.

Now do not imagine that she resembled those toothless crones who are reported to wander wilfully, on broomstick steeds, throughout the regions of the night; for Mede'a was young and beautiful.

Moreover, she was the wisest woman in the world, save one, and "could call spirits from the vasty deep," and pierce the veil that overhangs the future, and make mystic mixtures of strange

herbs possessing unheard-of properties. Hitherto she had been sought in vain by many nobles of her father's court. She cared nothing for them, and would far rather wander in the woods, and cull the herbs by whose aid she wrought her incantations. But when first she looked upon the handsome Greek she was charmed at his appearance, and, by the time the Song Wizard had ended, she had resolved to bewitch Ja'son, if possible; for, said she to herself: —

"Whom would not Ja'son's valor, youth, and blood
Invite? or could these merits be withstood,
At least his charming person must encline
The hardest heart — I'm sure 'tis so with mine;
Yet, if I help him not, the flaming breath
Of bulls, and earth-born foes, must be his death.
Or, should he through these dangers force his way,
At last he must be made the dragon's prey.
If no remorse for such distress I feel,
I am a tigress, and my breast is steel.
Why do I scruple then to see him slain,
And with the tragic scene my eyes profane?
The gods forbid — but prayers are idle breath
When action only can prevent his death.
Mede'a, haste, from danger set him free,
Ja'son shall thy eternal debtor be;
And thou, his Queen, with sovereign state enstalled,
By Grecian dames the Kind Preserver called." [1]

[1] Appendix, Note 37.

So, when the Ar'gonauts departed, Mede'a slipped away from her father's presence unobserved, and contrived to meet our hero before he reached his ship. She told him that the labor he was to attempt the next day would bring him to certain death, and entreated him to flee.

Ja'son was pleased to know that such a beautiful being had an interest in him, and asked what danger could ensue from a little agricultural amusement, such as had been proposed.

Then Mede'a told him of the land the wily king would furnish — no other than the Field of A'res never tilled before; the plough, an implement of ponderous weight, with share of adamant and beam of iron; the team, two untamed bulls, curiously wrought in brass, breathing fŏrth smoke and flame and consuming everything which they approached. And if he succeeded in ploughing the field, the seed that he must sow was no less than the dragon's teeth (Athe'na's gift, of which you have heard), every one of which would forthwith spring up a full-armed man, who would attack him with a two-edged sword.

Ja'son rubbed his hands in positive delight; this was not to be so tame an affair after all. So he thanked the maiden warmly, saying that she had brought him tidings that would insure a good night's rest.

Finding him set in his purpose, Mede'a said, "There is an ice-flower growing on the cliffs of rugged Cau'casus, and nourished by Prome'-theus's blood. If I can bring it here before to-morrow's light, I may compound an ointment that shall cause you to stand uninjured before fire or steel. But if I help you gain the Golden Fleece what will become of me? My father will destroy me in his wrath."

As Ja'son looked upon the winsome maiden, it did not take him long to suggest a plan — the very one Mede'a longed to hear.

"Go back with us to Greece, and be my bride."

How she accepted we will not attempt to say, but they were betrothed; and the little witch did not faint, either, but soon after mounted a chariot, drawn by winged serpents, and set out to see if she might pluck the magical ice-flower, ere it should be too late.

CHAPTER XIV.

SEED-TIME AND HARVEST.

This plant, which rough Cauca'sian mountains bore,
Sprung from the venom of Prome'theus' gore
(While on the wretch the savage eagle stormed).
Its color like Cory'cian crocus formed:
On two tall stems upsprings the flowery shoot,
A cubit high; like red raw flesh its root.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS. — *Translated by Fawkes.*[1]

PROME'THEUS was a remote ancestor of Ja'son. For a peculiar crime Zeus had sentenced him to lie chained to a crag on Mt. Cau'casus for thirty thousand years, while a vulture or an eagle should peck and tear at his liver every day; but every night the organ grew afresh and the open wound was healed. How

[1] Appendix, Note 38.

all this came about I cannot stop to tell you now, but some time you will know.[1]

Where the blood flowed down continually from Prome'theus's unhealed wound, there grew a strange, uncanny plant, that, springing forth to light amid the frost and snow of those eternal hills, possessed strange virtues, and was called the ice-flower.

For this blood-nurtured blossom now the sorceress sought, and guided, with her voice, the flying serpents through the air. Shivering with cold, she sprang at last upon the looked-for cliff and tore the plant up by the roots. Shuddering at the sight of the chained Ti'tan, to whom she yet addressed a kindly word, Mede'a entered the fiery chariot again and sped away to Æ'a, where she dismissed her carriage, with its snaky steeds, to the clouds, whence she invoked them.

The purple fingers of the dawn had already begun to tear away the gloomy veil of night, when the maiden sought again the Gre'cian hero, bearing in her hand a golden box filled

[1] Appendix, Note 39.

with an ointment, redolent with strange perfumes. She told Ja'son to apply this with care to his body, armor, spear, sword, and shield, and it would protect whatsoever it touched,

MEDEA IN HER SERPENT-CHARIOT

until the setting sun, from injury by fire or steel. She also whispered something in his ear that may have been further directions how to act — perhaps.

But we shall see.

The news of the bargain between Æe'tes and Ja'son had spread like wildfire over Col'chis, and, long before the slaves of He'lios had oiled the axles of his shining car, ready for his daily drive, the countrymen had begun to pour into the city and surround the Field of A'res. Æe'tes, too, rose early in the desire to outwit the daring Greek; and when Ja'son and his men arrived they found the old monarch seated, with Medea, under a sort of canopy, which stood upon an eminence overlooking the field in question.

In one corner stood what resembled a modern engine-house, judging by the volumes of smoke and steam that issued from it; but, in reality, it was only the cage containing the fire-breathing bulls which Ja'son must yoke and fasten to the plough.

These monsters were presented to Æe'tes by Hephæs'tos, their creator; for the cunning artisan did not confine his skill to ordinary bric-a-brac, but made Ta'lus, the man of brass, to run around the island Crete, where we shall meet him by and by — the savage gold and silver dogs for Alcin'oŭs, king of the Phæa'cians, and

golden maidens, endowed with speech, who waited on himself — besides the bulls to which Ja'son is soon to be introduced.

These last-named animals had throats and hoofs and horns and hides of brass, while their stomachs were neither more nor less than two great iron furnaces, in which there ever burned an inextinguishable fire.

So you see they were pretty metalsome brutes, and no one yet had cared enough for distinction to endeavor to manage them.

As Ja'son passed the king, he lifted his helmet in salute, and saw Mede'a sitting by her father's side, looking as fresh and innocent as though she had gone to bed at dark and slept till day-break. She returned his grateful glance with an indifferent air, and bowed so formally at his salutation that no one guessed the truth.

When the gilded car of day first showed itself above the eastern hills, Æe'tes signalled to the keepers to open the cage, and the terrible automata rushed forth. As they moved forward, with lowered heads, the grass and herbage disappeared before them with a crackling *whish!*

and in their wake was seen a scorched and smoking trail. With a subdued bellowing, that sounded like the roar of angry breakers in the distance, they tended straight toward the Greek, who had cast aside everything that would impede his action, and was awaiting their approach. As they came near, he pronounced a few words that had a wonderful effect. The creatures stopped so suddenly that their brazen hoofs were buried in the sod, while they held up their heads, and snuffed and puffed in terror. For the words were some which the witch-woman had whispered in his ear.

Regardless of the fiery breath that poured from the metallic nostrils of the brutes, Ja'son advanced and seized each bull by the horns. A shout of admiration rent the air, sent up by Col'chians and Greeks alike, and even Æe'tes was struck with wonder at this act of the daring stranger.

Still muttering cabalistic words, Ja'son patted the necks of the strange creatures, until all signs of fear or rage had disappeared, then placed himself between them and led them to the yoke.

This he slipped adroitly upon their horns, and, in a twinkling, they were fastened to the plough.

Then began such a "breaking up" as never happened before or since, except when an earthquake has broken loose.

The Field of Mars, as we have already learned, was "new ground," and contained a plentiful supply of rocks and stumps; and when the adamantine share struck one of these, something gave way; and, as the bulls were irresistible, and the plough and its attachments were indestructible, and Ja'son was, for the time, invulnerable, the result was inevitable — the air was filled with flying fragments of wood and stone, that well-nigh hid the teamster and his fiery team from view.

Meantime He'lios mounted high in the heavens, and poured down his hottest beams; for he felt a fatherly anxiety in Æe'tes's behalf, and thought he would help matters by a little stroke of his own.

But the animated engines and the tireless engineer never paused in their work until high

twelve, when Ja'son threw the plough out of the last furrow that he had to turn, and drove the puffing but unwearied animals back to the cage.

Then he girded on his armor and approached Æe'tes once again. Standing before the king, he saluted him and said: —

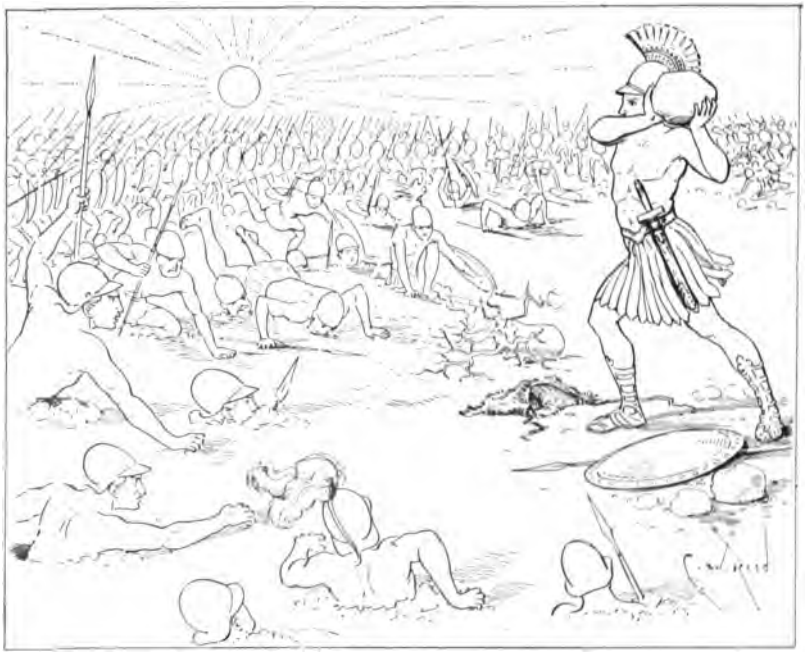
"The field is ready, sir."

Æe'tes clapped his hands, and two slaves appeared.

"Bring forth the seed," he shouted through his clinched teeth.

They retired an instant, then returned, bearing an immense goat-skin bag, stuffed almost to bursting with the teeth of the monstrous Cad'mian dragon, though there were only half of the original number.

Ja'son buckled on his sword, caught up the goat-skin, with apparent ease, in one hand, and carrying his shield and spear in the other, strode to the centre of the newly-ploughed field. There he set down his burden for an instant, to loose the thong that closed the mouth of the sack, and to glance at the chariot of the Sun, who, having given up all hopes of injuring Ja'son by



THE EARTH-BORN WARRIORS.

a direct attack, was now hurrying down the western slopes of heaven, with the greatest speed possible under the circumstances.

The echoes from the shouts of the applauding multitude had long since died away, and all around was breathless silence, as the sower made ready to scatter broadcast the terrible seed.

Dropping his spear and shield upon the ground, and opening the sack to its fullest extent, Ja'son plunged both hands therein, and then, with a mighty throw, sent two handfuls of teeth flying on either side, to the outermost boundaries of the field.

At once appeared a strange and thrilling scene.[1] No sooner did a tooth fall to earth than up it sprung again, like a jumping-jack, a full-armed, savage soldier, who stared a moment, rubbed his eyes, then, with a frightful yell, started for Ja'son. But he could scarcely advance ten steps before another fellow would be born, just in front of him, so unexpectedly that the elder would go sprawling over his younger

[1] Appendix, Note 40.

brother's head, and pick himself up two or three generations later on. This rapid increase of the birth-rate was a great impediment to discipline, and the wisdom of Ja'son was manifest in throwing the seed to the outer edges first, and gradually narrowing the circle; as thus the oncoming foe were kept in check by their own re-enforcements.

But the fast increasing numbers were closing in upon the Greek; and though steel could not harm him, it was not unlikely that, in their frenzy, the mad mob might tear him limb from limb.

At length the last tooth was drawn from the goat-skin and flung, as had been all the recent handfuls, far beyond the heads of the ten thousand howling warriors.

The surging masses were now within twenty yards of the adventurous Ar'gonaut; Æe'tes's eyes flashed with a baneful light; Mede'a paled and trembled, in spite of all her efforts; the Greeks stood horror-struck at sight of the fast-closing columns; and even the Col'chians held their breath as they beheld the fearful odds.

Suddenly Ja'son, stooping, caught up a large stone, and flung it right in the faces of his advancing foe.

He then seized his spear and shield and awaited the attack.

CHAPTER XV.

SERENADING THE DRAGON.

Wonders ensue: among his gazing foes
The massy fragment of a rock he throws;
This charm in civil war engaged them all;
By mutual wounds those earth-born brothers fall.

OVID. — *Translated by Tate.*[1]

CURIOUS result followed the flinging of that stone. The trick was the same which Cad'mus once had tried, and Mede'a had heard of it. So she had told Ja'son to stand his ground, and when he wanted to create a diversion, to fling a great stone amid the earth-born multitude.

"Diversion!" Well, so it was for Ja'son — but it meant death to his foes. For they lost their wits at once, and began to hew and stab each other, until the valiant Greek fairly shook in his sandals for laughter.

[1] Appendix, Note 41.

Now and then one of the crowd would be elbowed toward the place where Ja'son was standing, and then off would go his head with a blow from that harvester's sword-sickle; but, for the most part, our hero was content, having set the ball a-rolling, to see the strange harvest reap itself.

Finally, he began to pick his way across the heaps of slain toward Æe'tes, leaving the field to the somewhat destructive principle of the "survival of the fittest."

Though he often found his way impeded by stragglers, whom he despatched with sword or spear as usual, he noticed that none ever attacked him, but that he walked among them as one invisible. In fact, that stone had done the business, and the upstarts could see no one but themselves. So they fought on; and when Ja'son at last stood before Æe'tes and his trembling daughter, who feared for her lover in spite of his charmed life, the magic multitude lay self-slain upon the furrowed field.

Away in the distant West was He'lios's flaming car, approaching the horizon by degrees, but

Ja'son's work was over. He had won the Golden Fleece.

To describe Æe'tes's feelings would be impossible. He could no longer boast about his brazen bulls, for they had been subjected to the yoke. But he concealed his anger and vexation, and said in a bluff but hearty tone to Ja'son: —

"Surely, the Fleece is thine, but I cannot consent that thou shouldst now depart, for I have many messages concerning thy valor that I would send to Greece, and sad farewells to speak again to Ar'gus and his brother, and countless presents that I must collect to heap on the only man who, I am sure, could have fulfilled my hard conditions and obtained the prize."

And with that he smiled graciously upon Ja'son, and looked so like Mede'a that the foolish fellow was persuaded to wait.

The Ar'gonauts then went back to their ship, and Æe'tes and his companions retired to the palace.

On board the Ar'go there was great rejoicing that night; and the heroes drank so many toasts to their captain that before long there were only

two sober men in the party — Ja'son, whom modesty kept from drinking his own health, and Or'pheus, who was a strict teetotaller, and, indeed, finally lost his life for refusing to associate with the devotees of Bacchus.[1]

At length the boisterous tones grew thick and indistinct, as the enemy which the Ar'gonauts put into their mouths stole away their brains, and, one by one, the revellers rolled beneath the benches and slept in a drunken stupor.

Ja'son stood looking over the rail into the waters of the rippling Pha'sis, above which the full moon hung in midnight splendor, and thought over the glorious achievements of the day, and dreamed of home. Or'pheus tossed from side to side of his uneasy couch, and could not sleep, because his ears yet ached with the discordant sounds of his companions' orgies.

A white robed figure glided from Æe'tes's palace and stole towards the Ar'go. It softly stepped upon the deck, crept up behind Ja'son, and laid a shapely hand upon his arm.

The Greek turned with surprise and saw Mede'a.

[1] Appendix, Note 42.

He was about to clasp her in his arms and thank her for the aid which she had given him, but she held up a warning finger.

"Hist!" she said, "there is no time to lose! Call up your men and hasten back to Greece! We have come to join you."

Then first Ja'son noticed that the witch-girl carried a child in her arms — her brother Absyr'tus, whom she tenderly loved, and whom she had stolen from his bed to carry with her to her foreign home.

But Ja'son laughed at the idea, and said he thought he'd take the Fleece first, since that was what he had been laboring for.

Accordingly, Mede'a told him of her father's wrath, and how he had laid a plan, when the Greeks went up to see their leader take his prize, to set the Ar'go on fire; moreover, that Ja'son would be obliged himself to take the Fleece from the tree on which it hung, despite the guardian dragon which lay coiled around it; finally, that the magic ointment which had served his purpose the day before, was —

1. All gone; and she had used the only ice-

flower in the world, and it would be a year before another would grow.

2. If any were left, there would be no virtue in it the second day.

3. Though it had protected him from fire and steel, it could not, even when fresh, resist the lashings of the beast's terrific tail.

Thus by Æe'tes's plan, Ja'son would be destroyed after all, the Ar'go burned, and then, at a given signal, the Col'chian warriors would fall upon and massacre the Greeks.

Mede'a had drawn the whole story from her unsuspecting father; and, when all were asleep in the palace, she had taken her child-brother in her arms and stolen away to reveal the plot and urge her lover to immediate flight.

But Ja'son was stubborn. He said he was willing to leave then and there, only he must take that Fleece or perish in the attempt.

In vain Mede'a argued. She told him the dragon was invulnerable and terrible, and that only her father and herself could soothe its rage; moreover, she could not impart the spell to Ja'son, as she had done the day before that he

might tame the bulls, for the charm that would repress the dragon's wrath and close its sleepless eyes involved a chain of mysteries that required many years to learn.

Ja'son then proposed that if she could keep the creature quiet, they should go up together at once, and, while she charmed the monster, that he should snatch the Golden Prize.

There was only one objection to this. Whenever any one approached the tree, were it the king himself, the dragon roared so hideously that he shook the earth, and such a sound breaking on the stillness of the night would rouse the slumbering Col'chians to immediate attack.

"I'll help you! Follow me."

Both started.

It was Or'pheus who spoke; and he now stood beside them, holding his harp and pointing to the grove of A'res, where the Fleece was hanging. As we have said, he could not sleep, and so had overheard the dialogue between the warrior and the Col'chian maid.

When Ja'son's eyes fell on the harp they lighted up, and he exclaimed: —

"The very thing, friend Or'pheus; why had I not thought of this before?"

Leaving Absyr'tus to his innocent sleep in a safe corner of the ship, the three wended their silent way toward the grove.

Before they reached the outskirts, Or'pheus began to play. At first the music could not have been told from the breezes that went whispering through the boughs of beech and oak around the War-god's temple. But, as they stole softly onward toward the tree on which their hopes were hung, the strains grew more distinct, until their captivating power pierced even the dull senses of the dreaded dragon.

He did not open his eyes wider, for he couldn't — they were always staring at their full capacity; but he lifted his head, and turned first one ear and then the other toward the place whence came the magic music, and fairly forgot to roar.

Finally the three approached within a dozen yards of the beast, and, while Or'pheus continued to play, suiting the cadences to the fancy of his listener, which was easily determined by

the mechanical and rhythmic beating of the monster's scaly tail, Mede'a took a phial from her bosom, filled with some mysterious fluid, broke a branch from a neighboring tree, and, muttering spells and incantations, moved boldly forward.

The dragon darted forth his tongue at her approach, but made no other motion. Then she poured the contents of the phial upon the branch and waved the latter above the creature's head; and, while Or'pheus played a lullaby, Mede'a sang: —

"Hear, mighty Sleep! the Col'chian virgin's call
Where'er thou lingerest on this earthly ball.
I bid thee haste from all beneath the pole,
And rush collected on the serpent's soul!

Oft have I poured thy horn's oblivious dew
To still the rapid lightning as it flew;
The surging seas; the turbid clouds on high;
The sparkling stars, and meteors of the sky.
I call thee now in all thy mightiest power:
Come like thy brother Death, in this momentous hour.

Guard of the Golden Fleece! let Sleep allay
Thy restless watching: turn thine eyes away!

. . . . . .

Myself will guard the grove, and watch the while;
Then let repose thy long, long toils beguile."

He not relaxed his weary folds; but feared
The rest permitted, and by toil endeared:
Yet shuddering felt the cloud of slumber creep,
And from the branches shook the balm of sleep.

The Col'chian maid her foaming venoms threw,
And waved the bough, immersed in Lethe's dew:
With chanted rhyme she lulls his drooping eyes,
With hand and tongue the Styg'ian charm she plies,
And still persists, till[1] . . . .

even dragon-nature could not longer struggle against such sweet, somniferous spells; for those tired eyelids, that had never drooped before, closed tightly and the creature slept.

"Quick, now, my love!" exclaimed Mede'a, and Ja'son breathlessly stepped over the recumbent form of the sleeping sentinel and touched the Golden Object of his golden dreams.

[1] Appendix, Note 43.

CHAPTER XVI.

BLACK ART MAKES A BLACK HEART.

And at the twilight hour the sacred oak
In Ar'go's keel Fate's will predestined spoke:—
"Far must ye rove o'er the vexed seas, nor rest
Till reached, long sought, the Æ'a of the West
Where Cir'ce dwells; there shall ye lay aside
Your guilt's sore burden, and be purified."

EARL OF CRAWFORD. — *Argo.*, B. IX. 309.

INTOXICATING though Mede'a's spell had been, it possessed but a fleeting virtue; and, though Ja'son tore away the Fleece with feverish fingers, and all sped backward to the ship as fast as possible, they had not reached it when a terrific roaring fell upon their ears.

The watch-dragon had awakened from his slumber, and discovered that his charge was

gone. Instantly the palace was astir. Æe'tes sprang up at the sound, which he knew full well, for he feared lest Ja'son were trying to steal a march on him. He rushed into Mede'a's chamber, but she was gone. Nay, more, Absyr'tus, the child of his old age, was missing too![1] and, like a flash, there dawned upon his mind a premonition of the truth. He, therefore, summoned all his warriors and ordered them to run, some toward the grove of A'res, some whither the Ar'go lay. He, himself, hurried to the latter place — not that he thought of finding Ja'son there, but that he might arrange the swift destruction of the hated ship.

But imagine his chagrin on seeing that the Ar'go had already loosed her moorings and was gliding down the river toward the sea. Nor was this all. Upon the stern stood Ja'son, with one arm about Mede'a's waist, while on the other hung — could he believe his eyes? — the Golden Fleece!

The alarm quickly spread, and Æe'tes was soon seated in his fastest boat, with a hundred

[1] Appendix, Note 44.

others following in its wake, while strong arms plied the oars at his command, in desperate attempts to overtake the escaping Ar'gonauts. And, as you may be surprised to learn, Æe'tes and his followers really gained upon the Ar'go; for the Greeks had taken so much wine the night before that several still lay beneath the benches, while those who, aroused by Ja'son's cries and sobered by their fears, endeavored to urge the vessel forward, were trembling and unfit for a race.

As Mede'a saw her father's boat drawing nearer with every stroke, a fearful purpose entered her soul. She knew if they were overtaken they would find no mercy from the furious king, and she had no magic arts at swift command by which to repulse her own and Ja'son's enemies. A tumult of mad emotions raged within her, and the worst prevailed. Snatching her lover's sword, she ran to the spot where innocent Absyr'tus slept — the little brother whom she had taken in love, but whom a sudden impulse decided her to sacrifice in selfishness — smote him with a cruel blow, and flung him overboard into the sea.

Ja'son and his companions shuddered at the sight; but, as they knew her magic powers, supposed they looked upon a seeming horror only, from which some good result would spring.

But, alas! This was a far too sad reality; for Mede'a's only object was to make her father halt from grief, to recover his child. In this she was successful; and the stricken monarch for a while forgot his greed of gold, forgot his malice toward Ja'son and his crew, forgot his fleeing daughter, and halted his whole multitude of followers to bid them search for his murdered son.

Ah! was this not a terrible vengeance, indeed, that visited the king in return for the murder of Phrix'us? His darling boy slain before his eyes, his daughter a fugitive and a fratricide! What greater punishment could be conceived?

But, though the Greeks escaped immediate pursuit, they soon began to feel the disapproval of the gods at this outrageous crime. The heavens grew pitchy black about them; great Zeus hurled hissing thunderbolts into the waves to

indicate his wrath at the foul murder, and sent the Ar'go's mast by the board.

I have an idea, also, that the Fleece went overboard at the same time, for, though some say Ja'son got back with it to Iol'cos and presented it to his uncle, the reports are very conflicting; and as, if Pe'lias *did* get it, we hear nothing of the treasure afterward, I prefer to think of it as sinking to the bottom of the Eux'ine, where, already double-dyed with blood, it could never be the cause of other crime and sorrow.

But, though our interest in the Fleece is at an end, the Ar'gonauts are still afloat, and we must for a time follow their varying fortunes. They are henceforth to be much like Arctic explorers, who search for the Unseen Pole, a vanity as difficult to find as any myth for which the rude barbarians sought.

Driven by furious winds, the wanderers came to land upon the northern Eux'ine shore near a place called To'mi (cuttings) in after days, in memory of Mede'a's murder. There the hurricane abated, and the Talking Oak proclaimed, in no uncertain voice, their destiny.

And it told them they were, and ever would be, cursed, until they found some being who could purify Ja'son and Mede'a from their awful guilt; for that the gods would never lightly overlook their crime.

Then Mede'a trembled and exclaimed: "Only one being in the wide, wide world can wash the blood-guilt from our hands. That is Cir'ce, my father's sister; for she alone hath more powerful enchantments and more deadly drugs at her command than I."

So it was decided that they must steer for Cir'ce's Isle, which was situated somewhere in the Western Sea.

And now our geography is about to become like the ideas of too many boys and girls when they read of real events in history. They neglect to look up unfamiliar places on the map, and though, perhaps, they do not think of the Rocky Mountains as stretching from west to east, or of the St. Lawrence as emptying into the Gulf of California, they have other notions as false and foolish.

That is why history is uninteresting to many

people, when there is not some exciting event to be described. They do not know the geography of the places about which they read; and such study is like trying to learn the game of chess by reading about the moves, and having neither board nor men to illustrate them.

In the game we are about to play we have our men, but the board we must leave very much to each one's imagination.

However, there will be enough of strange and unexpected incident to keep up our interest, I hope, until — but we will wait "until."

Now that the favor of the gods was taken from the Ar'gonauts, they had a dreary, toilsome journey. The Talking Oak refused to be their guide, and they could not tell which way to go; and it is just as hard for me to tell which way they went. Pin'dar says they went through the Eastern Ocean; Timæ'us says they went through the Northern Ocean; Apollodo'rus says they went through the Western Ocean; and Herod'otus says they went back the same way they came. It is generally believed, however, that they left their former course and rowed up

some river, thinking they could reach the ocean stream at last. This curious course took them away from warmth and sunshine to the land of snow and ice, and a barbarous people. They were sometimes attacked as they rowed sadly, yet patiently, along: but they had no heart to fight, — there was blood enough already on their hands, and now they only dreamed of Cir'ce's Isle and home.

At length they reached a place where there was no longer water sufficient to float their ship, and they were in despair. But the Talking Oak seemed to pity them in their despair, and told them to make wheels and draw the Ar'go up upon them and drag it onward till they found another stream.

So they cut down trees, and made great clumsy roller-wheels of logs; and, as Or'pheus had launched the ship with his music, so he helped them draw it up again to land and mount it on the rude carriage, and cheered them with his strains upon their toilsome march.

By and by they came to the head-waters of a

little brook that flowed in an opposite direction to that which they had left. They dragged the Ar'go with renewed courage along its banks until, after many a weary mile, they found a river broad and deep enough to bear them on its bosom.

Down this river they sailed into an icy sea, and coasted within hail of the Cimme'rian deserts, where the sunlight never comes, and sailed through fog, and cloud, and storm, and cold — and still the Talking Oak refused to guide them, and only Lyn'ceus' eyes and Hera's favor (for she had not forgotten Ja'son, even in disgrace) brought them once more into light, and life, and liberty.

Slowly they toiled back again to warmer climes, where the clear sunlight stirred their sluggish blood and made their hearts leap high with joy. And one day they approached an islet, whence to their ravished senses came the odorous perfume of ten thousand flowers and the melodious songs of birds; and Lyn'ceus, looking forth while yet afar, cried that amid the green and grateful shrubbery upon the shores

he could discover the loveliest beings he had ever looked upon.

It was the magic Ææ'a, where dwelt Cir'ce, daughter of the Sun, Æe'tes' sister, and the queen of sorcery.

CHAPTER XVII.

CIRCE AND THE SIRENS.

I have often heard
My mother Cir'ce and the Si'rens three,
Who as they sung would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium.

MILTON'S *Comus*, l. 252.

IF you look in Webster's "International," under the entry "Woodpecker," you will find that that bird belongs to the genus *Pi'cus*. Now, Pi'cus was originally a handsome young man,

But Cir'ce long had lov'd the youth in vain,
Till love refus'd converted to disdain:
Then, mixing powerful herbs, with magic art,
She chang'd his form, who could not change his heart;
Constrain'd him in a bird, and made him fly,
With party-colored plumes, a chattering pie;[1]

and since then every "pie" or woodpecker, is called *Picus*.

[1] Appendix, Note 44 a.

That will give you some idea of the character and power of Mede'a's aunt, —

> "The daughter of the Sun, whose charmèd cup
> Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
> And downward fell into a grovelling swine."

Her favorite method was to get somebody to taste of her liquor and then turn him into a pig. And Cir'ce is not dead yet. Too often are we saddened by the sight of those who have partaken of her cup and lost their manhood.

But let us return to Ææ'a, the magic isle.

Cir'ce had named it from Æ'a, the city where her brother dwelt, and whence she fled many years before, expelled from Col'chis for the murder of her husband. Here she lived with four attendant nymphs, and since her sojourn she had beautified the island till it seemed a veritable Paradise; but, whenever any luckless mortal ventured thither, she would straightway give him her cup to taste, and then change him to a bird or beast. The heartless creature seemed able to make any brute she wished, if she only had a man to make him from; and so she soon had a zoölogical garden on a grand

scale,— leopards, wolves, boars, bears, wood-peckers, owls, bats, etc., but rather more swine than anything else, for she seemed to have a strange fancy for these wallowing, stubborn creatures.[1]

CIRCE AND HER VICTIMS.

Only one man ever successfully resisted her enchantments, when she set out in earnest to transform him — that was Odys'seus, or Ulys'ses, the crafty king of Ith'aca.

[1] Appendix, Note 44 b.

As the Ar'gonauts drew near the isle, Mede'a told them they must all stay on board except herself and Ja'son; for, if they dared to step ashore, they would never be good for anything afterwards, except to travel in a menagerie. They took her advice, and the two whose hands had been stained with the blood of Absyr'tus went up to where the sorceress' palace peeped from out the trees.

As they advanced, the wild beasts gathered round them, but offered no violence. For only their forms and habits had been changed; their minds were human as of yore, thus rendering their condition still more pitiable. Perchance this old myth may be a pagan version of the Bible tale of Nebuchadnez'zar. For you remember his body was wet with the dew of heaven, and he ate grass like an ox (and went upon his hands and feet perhaps) till his hair grew as eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws — and still I suspect that through it all he knew that he was Nebuchadnez'zar, that had once felt every inch a king.

What Cir'ce did to Ja'son and Mede'a I can-

not say. I suppose she went through some such performance as Shakespeare describes in the fourth act of "Macbeth;" at any rate, if you will read that scene and then can imagine anything worse, that is probably how Cir'ce "purified" the two guilty ones.

There is a sarcastic old conundrum in allusion to the turbid condition of the Rhine river water, which runs as follows: —

> "The river Rhine, as is well known,
> Doth wash the city of Cologne;
> But tell me, O ye nymphs divine!
> What power can wash the river Rhine?"

We might ask a similar question about Cir'ce — a murderess herself, a pitiless sorceress, and yet *purifying* two guilty souls.

Ah, me! Those were dark days indeed, when there was no holier fount of cleansing than a witch's caldron!

At length Ja'son and his companion came back to their waiting friends, and straightway the Talking Oak began its whispering advice to Nep'tune's son, who steered, and the fog that had so frequently dismayed them (for, though

Lyn'ceus could see in the dark, the fog, sent by the angry gods, had proved an impenetrable veil) cleared away, and the waves played musically around the good ship's sides, as her sails filled with the favorable breeze; and once more, with propitious divinities and light hearts, they stood for Iol'cos and their native Greece.

Right merrily the hours flew by, and the rejoicing Greeks believed that all their trials now were over, and that a few more days of pleasant incident must bring them home.

They were talking and laughing, and rowing in unison, all in a merry mood, when suddenly every oarsman stopped as if paralyzed; the wind that had been blowing freshly died away; and only the headway they had gained sent the great Ar'go through the water.

And, breaking upon their ears through the hush of twilight, came a song so heavenly sweet, it seemed that all the world should stop to hear.

For they were approaching the Flowery Isle, on which dwelt Peisin'oē, Aglaophe'me, and Thelxie'peia, or Mind-persuader, Clear-voice, and Magic-speech, the Si'rens.

Now, some of you will recollect that in the very first chapter I spoke about the Si'rens, and said you would one day learn more of them.

I also told you they were sometimes confused with Cir'ce. And, now that you know something of Cir'ce, I will briefly say a word about her equally destructive neighbors.

They were beautiful maidens, who lived upon an island that was covered with the rarest flowers; and all day long they sat upon the verdant, sloping shore, and sung songs that were sweeter than any you ever heard in your most delicious dreams, and that hushed the very winds to wondering calm.[1]

There was no food upon the island, but they needed none, for they lived entirely by singing, and grew more plump and beautiful and rosy from day to day. They were very proud of their accomplishments, and, as pride leads to cruelty, they were very cruel also. Thus, whenever any travellers attempted to pass by their home, they filled their ears with such intoxicating melody that the poor fellows invariably went

[1] Appendix, Note 45.

ashore, and were either drowned while trying to land, or, bewitched by the maidens, remained until they died from lack of food. Only once had they failed thus to destroy their unfortunate listeners, and that was when the sly Ulys'ses, whom Cir'ce tried in vain to turn into a beast, outwitted them, some years before. Indeed, it is Cir'ce, rather than Ulys'ses, who deserves the praise, for she told him — but we are running ashore ourselves, I find. Enough to say, Ulys'ses got by the Flowery Isle in safety, for that is another story, and a long one too.

Well, the Si'rens were thoroughly vexed at the escape of the crafty Greek, since they did not know the real secret of it; and, as a consequence, they practised their songs more carefully than ever, and improved, of course — practice will improve any one in anything — for they said to each other they should die to be so slighted once again.

Thus, as the accents of their silvery tongues fell upon the ears of the home-bound Ar'gonauts, the heroes listened breathlessly the while the Ar'go drifted toward the fatal shore. Even

Or'pheus seemed bewildered for a time by their entrancing tones, and listened, spell-bound, with the rest. But soon the truth flashed upon him, for he had heard of their harmonious wiles; and he sprang to his feet, beseeching his companions to stop their ears and fly.

"It *is* music, O my friends!" he cried, "and that of the divinest sort; but they who listen will be lost! Seize your oars! Think of your forgotten friends! your wives! your fatherland! Shout! sing! anything to drown the witching melody that lures us on to death!"

But his words fell as on ears of stone, for every man was hearkening to the heavenly harmony that came floating through the evening air.

Slowly, but certainly, the Ar'go drifted landward with the tide; and with every wave-length of approach, the even-song of the delusive Si'rens sounded sweeter, and the spell grew more complete.

Splash! went a form over the vessel's side, and a youth, of splendid limb, struck out through the pellucid water for the still distant shore.

It was Bu'tes, the most beautiful of men, who,

like many others, could not even wait till he were carried to destruction, but must rush to meet it.

The heroes looked at him, yet saw him not.
And the Ar'go drifted — drifted.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TOILERS OF THE SEA.

Here Scyl'la bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous pest, abhorred by man and gods!
Twelve feet, deformed and foul, the fiend dispreads;
Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads.
HOMER. — *Translated by Pope.*[1]

SWEET songs are being sung to-day, that drag resistless men and women down to death; where the red wine that "moved itself aright" in the alluring cup is found to have the serpent's bite and adder's sting; where tempters are divested of their loveliness and mock the victims of their lures. How shall we break such spells before it is too late?

As Or'pheus did at last — if possible; not by

[1] Appendix, Note 46.

threats that sound discordant when compared with Si'ren melodies, but by diviner music.

The great Song Wizard stood upon the Ar'go's deck, and, lifting up his supine hands to heaven, spoke this prayer: —

"O my father, god of music, Apol'lo Musag'etes, and thou, chief of the Mu'ses, who didst give me birth, Calli'ope, the goddess of heroic song, inspire my harp and voice!"

Then he caught up his lyre and lightly swept his fingers across the quivering strings.

Softly and plaintively he played at first, with such a far-off sound no one of his companions seemed to hear. Even when he joined his voice in song, they thought it but the echo of the singing maidens on the shore; for he had skilfully caught their refrain, in part, that he might not make a useless and ungrateful discord.

But, by and by, his voice grew bolder, and, by Apol'lo's aid, he took a leading part, to which the Si'ren song became a mere accompaniment.

The tones of Or'pheus soon reached the Flowery Isle, and the cruel sisters knew full well that they had found a dangerous rival.

So they redoubled their efforts, till it seemed as if they would split their handsome throats with singing. But the Greeks, inspirited by Or'pheus's counter-song, caught up their oars again, set the Ar'go once more upon her course, and pulled, with strong strokes, seaward, till the luring call died in the distance.

But how did the enchanted Bu'tes fare?

He swam, in dreamy ecstasy, till he had nearly reached the shore, when Aphrodi'te, pitying his youth and beauty, caught him from the waves and bore him through the air in safety to Lilybæ'um, on the coast of Sic'ily.

Then were the songful sisters filled with rage and grief. Years before they had, at their request, been given wings, that they might search for lost Proser'pina (Deme'ter's daughter, whom Ha'des [1] stole) over land and sea.

During their search they challenged the Nine Mu'ses to a trial of song. But what could they avail against the Daughters of Zeus? The Mu'ses triumphed, and plucked the feathers from the Si'rens' wings to deck themselves withal;

[1] Pluto.

and thenceforth the vanquished maidens dwelt upon the Flowery Isle and kept their useless, naked wings concealed.

They had recognized in Or'pheus's voice a resemblance to that of Calli'ope, of hated memory; and now, when their last victim was spirited away, they could no longer contain themselves, but, running to the boldest crag upon their island, each clasped the others in her arms and leaped into the sea. No sooner did they touch the waves, than a swift change came over them. They were turned to rocks; and those who know the island where they lived, may find them there to-day.

Meantime, the Ar'gonauts passed on, cheered by the song of Or'pheus, who now raised a pæan to the gods — above all, to Apol'lo and Calli'ope — for their deliverance.

But all their perils were not past; for lo! as darkness fell, they heard beyond them the hoarse barking of the dreaded monster Scyl'la, and so waited for the light.

Several stories are told of Scyl'la's birth and history, one of which, alone, I will relate.

In early life she was a beautiful maiden; and, as she went down one day to bathe in the blue waters of the Mediterra'nean, Glau'cus, a sea-god, loved her.

It was not unusual then, according to the ancient myths, for gods to fall in love with mortals; but there was especial reason in this case, for Glau'cus had once been a man himself, who had leaped into the sea just as the Si'rens did, but for a different cause — and had been made a sea-god in consequence. Yet, we may suppose, a little of his human nature still remained; and when he saw the beautiful Scyl'la come down to the shore, he popped his head above the waves and asked her to marry him.

But there was sea-weed in his hair, and he had a fish's tail, and as to his eyes and complexion he was green — all sea-gods are to this day; an invisible green, however — so the maiden never even stopped to answer him, but ran away as fast as possible.

Then Glau'cus went to Cir'ce, and told her of his love, and begged that she would help him.

Cir'ce was abundantly able to do this, and,

perhaps, would have complied with the young merman's request but for one serious obstacle — she herself fell in love with Glau'cus.

But Cir'ce had continual bad luck in her matters of the heart. No one wanted a woman who was so exceedingly wise, even if she were a handsome widow.

So Glau'cus thanked her politely, but said, if it were all the same to her, he believed he'd have Scyl'la. Cir'ce then invited him to take a glass of wine with her, thinking she would make him less divine, or human even, than he then appeared; but he had heard of Pi'cus, and so said he never drank anything but salt water — it was against his principles and didn't agree with his constitution.

Being thwarted in this direction, Cir'ce sought revenge for her slighted love in another quarter.

It was unfortunate to be young and handsome anywhere in Cir'ce's vicinity, she was so very susceptible, yet took such speedy vengeance on disobedient husbands or unresponsive youths.

Glau'cus plunged into the waves and swam meditatively away, fully convinced he could de-

rive no aid from the sorceress, but little dreaming of the revenge she had already planned.

The cruel creature hastened home, and made a magic mixture of poisonous herbs. Then she went speedily to Scyl'la's favorite bathing-place, and poured the compound into the waters, muttering charms and incantations all the while.

Soon Scyl'la came, as was her wont, disrobed herself, and dashed into the cool blue depths.

But, to her horror, she found herself surrounded by barking monsters, from which she tried in vain to flee. She did not know the dreadful truth until she stepped upon the shore. Then she found herself walking on twelve feet, and discovered that she was human only to the waist. All the rest of her beautiful body and limbs had been changed into six frightful creatures, with long necks, and wolfish heads, with hungry jaws.

Ignorant of the cause of her sad plight, but knowing herself unfitted for human society, the transformed maiden cast herself again into the surging brine.

Then, as the wretched seek companions in

their wretchedness, she swam to what are now the Straits of Messi'na,[1] between Sic'ily and Italy, and, finding a dark cave on the Italian shore opposite the comrade whom she sought —

SCYLLA.

Charyb'dis — she there fixed her abode, and lived upon the porpoises and seals that gambolled near. And, when a boat passed within reach,

[1] Pronounced Mes-sē'-na.

she would dart out from the cavern and drag the reckless sailors in to direful death.

You may think it strange that men ever went near enough for her to seize them. Well, we sometimes say of a man that he has "jumped from the frying-pan into the fire." The ancients used to say, "*Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.*" (He falls upon Scyl'la, desiring to avoid Charyb'dis.) This was what sailors often did.

But who was Charyb'dis?

CHAPTER XIX.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

Close by, a rock of less enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dangerous strait;
Beneath, Charyb'dis holds her boisterous reign
'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main.
HOMER. — *Translated by Pope.*[1]

ONCE Charyb'dis had been a fair young maiden; but when Her'acles came down through Italy, driving the magnificent oxen he had won from Ge'ryon, she contrived to steal some of the finest of the herd. Great Zeus (Jupiter), who watched over his son's labors with deep anxiety, was so angry at this that he hurled one of his thunderbolts at Charyb'dis's head,

[1] Appendix, Note 47.

knocked her, I don't know how many miles, and made a natural curiosity of her. I will let Ver'gil describe her after the transformation: —

"On the right hand is Scyl'la, and on the left the unappeased Charyb'dis sits; and thrice in succession she sucks the huge waves into her capacious throat, and, at equal intervals, belches them forth again, and lashes, with their spray, the very stars." [1]

The Greek poet Homer, whom I have quoted at the head of the chapter, also calls her "divine," I suppose out of respect to her parents,[2] and represents her as more dangerous than Scyl'la.

It was from dread of these two monsters that the Grecians waited for the light.

Yet they never would have passed in safety but for Pe'leus, one of their number.

He had married The'tis, a sea-nymph, who lived in great splendor at the bottom of the Mediterra'nean. That is to say, her father Ne'reus lived there, but she was an amphibious

[1] Appendix, Note 48.
[2] Poseidon and Ge (Terra).

beauty, and could live on land also; else Pe'leus would have been a widower all his wedded life, for he couldn't breathe under water any better than you can. Luckily for Pe'leus and our other heroes, The'tis was then at home on a visit, and her sister Ne'reids had proposed to her a little marine picnic, to which she had agreed. Preparations had been made for this event with a great deal more confidence than is felt in getting ready for picnics of the usual earthly sort; for, as the girls were immortal, they were sure of being alive and well the next morning; and they had no anxiety about the weather, since they didn't care a sea-shell whether it rained or not.

Next morning they were up betimes, when it first occurred to them that they had not decided where to go. So they agreed to leave the whole matter to Amphitri'te, the wife of Posei'don, who knew the sea-bottom better than any of the others. She accordingly proposed that they should take a trip round the island of Sic'ily, and visit the spot "where Scyl'la frowned and where Charyb'dis roared."

All liked the plan, and they started forth in high glee.

When they had nearly reached the spot, something passed over their heads that seemed like a flying cloud. At this all looked up, naturally enough; while the silver-footed The'tis uttered a cry, and darted to the surface quicker than a pickerel. For the *something* was the Ar'go, and she had seen Pe'leus looking over the rail.

On learning of the Greeks' intent to run the dangerous gantlet, The'tis shuddered at what the probable result of the endeavor would have been had she not happened around at such a fortunate moment; but quickly calling to her sisters, who were waiting for her down below, they gathered around the Ar'go on either side, and joyously bore it through the waves in safety to the open sea. Nor did they leave the heroes till they guided the good ship beyond the Pe'trai Plagk'tai,[1] or the Wandering Rocks, and past the Island of the Sun, whereon the sacred oxen fed. There they separated, with mutual good wishes; and the sea-nymphs went back to their

[1] Pronounced pet'-rye plank'-tie.

picnic, while the Ar'gonauts continued till they came to the isles of the Phæa'cians.

The Phæa'cians were said to have descended from Phæ'ax, one of Posei'don's many sons. They were a lazy and luxuriant people, who thought more of something good to eat and drink than of almost anything else. Indeed, Hor'ace, a great Latin poet, calls a certain glutton, *Phæ'ax*, in allusion to the well-known habits of this people. Ho'mer says they lived upon the Island *Sche'ria*, which some think was the same as old Corcy'ra, now called Cor'fu; but other great scholars choose to think of it as wholly fabulous.

At this island there was an unexpected meeting. The Col'chians, whom Æe'tes had sent out in pursuit of his daughter, had separated into three bands, and one of them was at the Isle of Sche'ria. On the arrival of the Ar'gonauts, Æe'tes' subjects at once urged Alcin'oüs, the king of the island, to give up Mede'a to them, that they might take her back to her father. This Alcin'oüs agreed to do, if she were not already Ja'son's wife. The matter

was to be decided the next day; but meanwhile Are'te, the Phæa'cian queen, who was something of a match-maker, called in a priest and had the couple married that night; and so the Col'chians were disappointed after all. They did not dare return to Æe'tes empty-handed, so they remained in Alcino'ŭs's kingdom.

Now, as history states that a colony of Col'chians settled in the Isle of Cor'fu about the year 1349, B. C., that furnishes one reason for supposing that the ancient Sche'ria and the modern Cor'fu may be the same. It will also give us some idea of the time when the First Ship made her eventful voyage. But always recollect that deeds and dates alike are doubtful in the mythologic times.

Assuming Cor'fu, or Corcy'ra, to be the island whence the home-bound Ar'gonauts now embark, we may follow the remainder of their route upon the map with ease. They sailed south, of course, but did not succeed in doubling Cape Male'a, as they had hoped, for a violent wind drove them to the coast of Lib'ya (Africa).

Here they went on shore, and lost one of

their companions by so doing. Mop'sus, who had served them so well in the passage of the Dark Blue Dashers, trod on one of the serpents which infest the Lib'yan coast, was bitten, and died. The Greeks were filled with sorrow at his loss; and Ja'son built for him a handsome monument upon the shore, where, in after days, the Africans erected a memorial temple.

After the burial of their dead friend, the heroes started homeward once again, and came to the island of Crete. There they attempted to land, when Ta'los, or Ta'lus, the man of brass, came rushing down to meet them.

I have before told you that he was made by Hephæs'tos.

He was the guardian of the island Crete, and used to run around it, with unwearied steps, three times a day, on the lookout for travellers. If he saw any people approaching the shore, he would jump into a big fire and heat himself red-hot. Then, when they landed, the hard-hearted fellow would seize them in his arms, and press them to his glowing breast, and lay his brazen cheek against their terror-stricken faces, and

laugh, with fiendish glee, at his victims' shrieks of agony, until he cast them from him, a mere mass of scorched and shrivelled flesh.

From neck to heel there ran a single vein, in which his boiling life-blood coursed; and as the Ar'gonauts drew near, Pœ'as, a skilful archer, caught up the bow which Her'acles had left on board, and sent a steel-pointed arrow whizzing towards the brazen sentinel.

It struck the fatal vein, and forth there gushed a stream of liquid fire, that fell upon the water with a smoking hiss. Ta'los reeled and staggered, made a desperate but unsuccessful effort to keep his feet, then fell, with hideous clang, upon the loud-resounding shore.[1]

Having landed and obtained supplies, the Ar'gonauts again pressed forward; for now that they were nearing home, it seemed as if they could not wait a single instant, but must voyage night and day.

But a thick darkness fell about them, and they wandered from their course; for either Lyn'ceus's eyes were dim with long watching, and with weeping for Mop'sus' fate, or the

[1] Appendix, Note 49.

darkness was a supernatural one, sent by some hostile divinity to destroy them, or by some friendly one to try their faith.

Then Apol'lo pitied them, and took his stand on the Melan'tian Rocks, and shot an arrow, which flashed forth with such a vivid light it could be seen a hundred miles away. The lost mariners then saw, near at hand, an island, on which they landed; and because it came to them so suddenly from the darkness, they called it An'aphe (*appeared*); and by the name of An'aphi it is known to-day.

Next morning they erected an altar to Apol'lo Ægle'tes, the Lightener, and offered sacrifices. Then they went to the island of Ægi'na, and took a fresh supply of water, thence between Eubœ'a and Lo'cris to the Pagase'an bay, and HOME!

There was great rejoicing in Iol'cos on that day, for the adventurers had been gone so long that all their friends believed them dead.

But amid the general gladness there was one heart heavy with rage and disappointment.

It beat in the false bosom of the wicked Pe'lias.

CHAPTER XX.

LIFE AND DEATH.

Ja'son Æson'ides[1] afflictive toils achieved
(Which Pe'lias, mighty monarch, bold in wrong,
Unrighteous, violent of deed, imposed:)
And much enduring reached th' Iol'chian coast.
HESIOD. — *Translated by Elton.*[2]

WELL, my young friends, the story of the Ar'go is nearly done. Some of you have gone with me, in spirit, through the whole eventful voyage. And as fellow-travellers on board an ocean steamer, when the port is reached at which they are to separate, bid each other good-by with a lingering hand-clasp, and with hopes of other meetings in the days to come — so now as I leave you with

[1] Son of Æ'son. [2] Appendix, Note 50.

reluctance, I have hopes that some time hereafter we may together tread the mythologic fields again.

If I were to tell you all the various accounts of Ja'son and Mede'a after they landed at Iol'cos, you would be utterly confused. So I shall not even hint at many of them, but from the curious mass of myths I shall select those that are most consistent with the tale, and, at the same time, those to which you will find allusions in the poems and sketches of our best authors.

Thus, among the works of Campbell, there is a translation from another poet, the Greek Eurip'ides, which begins: —

> "Oh, haggard queen! to Athens dost thou guide
> Thy glowing chariot, steeped in kindred gore."

Now, I have grave doubts whether the best of you can explain that allusion; but when this tale is ended, I hope you will understand that, and be ready for something harder.

There was great feasting when the Greeks returned to Thes'saly, as you might suppose; but our hero, Ja'son, did not find perfect enjoyment. His poor old mother was dead; and

some hinted that she had been so cruelly treated by Pe'lias that she had died by her own hand. Æ'son himself was in his dotage, hardly recognized his son, and could take no active part in his welcome home.

Pe'lias was old too; but as his father was a god, he did not mind his age so much as his half-brother, though Æ'son was several years his junior. And he still refused to give up the kingdom. As usual, he found some excuse for his refusal: he was very fertile in reasons — most rascals are.

He claimed that Ja'son had not fulfilled the conditions on which he was to have the crown. He had not brought back the Golden Fleece.[1] Ja'son was quite downcast at first, and it is uncertain what he would have done had it not been for Mede'a. She encouraged him to rouse up from his melancholy, promising to make Æ'son young again, and to obtain the kingdom of Iol'cos for himself.

It is not surprising that Ja'son should have had a great deal of confidence in his wife's

[1] See p. 158.

ability, for she had already proved herself the wiser, if the wickeder, of the two. So, like a good sensible husband, he left everything to her management, and said he would run down to Cor'inth, and dedicate the Ar'go to the sea-god, Posei'don, who had a temple there.

For he felt grateful to the ruler of the waters for his safe return at last, and did not, like too many sailors, forget his prayers as soon as he got to land.

No sooner had Ja'son left home, than Mede'a began to prepare her plot.

It was now full moon, the time all witches take to gather magic herbs.

No ice-flower needed she this time, yet plants of no less potence sought she, far and wide. She cut them always with a brazen sickle, and tied them up in separate bundles, with hairs from the tail of a snow-white horse.

She searched the forest through, and climbed the steeps of Pe'lion, and, more than once, called down that serpent-chariot — which seemed to be ever in mid-air above her waiting her command — and flashed off to some far-distant peak, or

into the tangled depths of some untrodden swamp, in search of plants, and seeds, and stones, and shells, and blood, and living things, necessary to compound the wondrous liquid on which hung the hopes of her success.

When all was ready, she came back again to Æ'son's hut; for during all this time she had not stepped her foot within a house, or spoken to a living soul. She waited till the old man had fallen asleep, and then shut herself up with him alone, and began her sorcery.

Peacefully the old man slept upon his bed, while Æe'tes's daughter into her witches' caldron cast the material she had so carefully provided. She muttered and mumbled, and her eyes shone with an unearthly light, as she stirred the seething mass with a dead twig which she had gathered on the mountain.

Now and then she would break off a portion of the brittle branch, while her brows were knit as in supreme anxiety or pain.

Suddenly her forehead became smooth, and an eager look of expectation overspread her face. The twig bent now, instead of breaking.

A moment more, and buds appeared upon the naked wood; then leaves shot forth, and covered it with green; and what had been the end I may not say, for Mede'a threw it hastily upon the floor, and, catching a knife from her girdle, plunged it to the hilt in sleeping Æ'son's throat.

What think you Ja'son would have said, had he been witness of this bloody act? Would not the memory of the boy Absyr'tus, and the thought of all the long and toilsome wanderings of the Greeks, combined with the sight of his white-haired, bleeding father, have caused him to hate this handsome woman with eternal hatred? It would seem so; and that, perchance, was why she worked her spell in Ja'son's absence.

The purple blood ran down, and formed a dark pool on the earthen floor. The old man's face was white, and his form was still.

It was the critical moment. Haste would be fatal; delay, deadly. Mede'a's hand did not tremble, but a bright spot burned on either cheek, as she ladled out some of her steaming liquid with a curious shell, and poured it into

the knife-wound in the dead man's throat. Again and again she repeated the act, and then sealed the opening with a thin strip of tenacious bark, smeared with some adhesive gum. Then she filled a silver goblet with the liquid that was left, and, raising the body to a sitting posture, poured it down the throat.

The change was marvellous, and quicker than the eye could follow; it was as if a juggler had thrown off a false beard and wig, and stood before you quite another man.

> "His feeble frame resumes a youthful air,
> A glossy brown his hoary beard and hair;
> The meagre paleness from his aspect fled,
> And in its room sprang up a florid red;
> Thro' all his limbs a youthful vigor flies,
> His emptied arteries swell with fresh supplies." [1]

Æson was young again, — as young to all seeming as was his son, who so lately had mourned his father's feebleness. And Mede'a had done it all. What power she possessed! and how sad it was that she sometimes used that power for evil!

Young Æ'son called up to see old Pe'lias the

[1] Appendix, Note 51.

MEDEA'S MAGIC.

next morning, and, you may well believe, the latter was surprised. He was very gracious to his brother, and wished to know all about what had happened to effect such a marvellous result. Æ'son did not tell him, for the very reason that he did not know himself. He only knew that Mede'a had done it, but, for the life of him, he couldn't tell how; because, you see, he was asleep at the time, and was as much surprised, when he woke up, as Adam was when he found Eve.

Pe'lias felt gloomy enough; and, to aggravate the matter, his birthday was approaching. Now, if anything will make a man (or woman, either) feel old, it is to have a birthday come around, with its provoking regularity of appearance.

But Pe'lias had several daughters, who loved their father as good daughters should; and they resolved to give him a unique birthday gift. So they went to see Mede'a, and tried to bribe her to sell them the secret by which she had made Ja'son's father young.

This was just the thing for which Mede'a hoped. So she appointed a meeting with them

in a secluded spot at midnight, telling them to bring an old sheep that was worthless, and just ready to die.

They were promptly at the spot, as directed; and there Mede'a pretended to show them how to work the charm.

She had a little of her powerful elixir left, with which she sent the bubbling wine of youth coursing through Æ'son's veins. She took that along with her, and secretly put it in the caldron. Then, in the presence of the sisters, she laid in some herbs that they well knew, but having no virtue in themselves, either for good or ill, and, covering them with clear spring-water, kindled a fire beneath.

She then taught them a pretended form of words which they must repeat. When this was duly learned, and the water had begun to boil, she plunged the knife into the throat of the sheep, and ordered the girls to cut him quickly in pieces and throw him into the caldron. They did as ordered, and, in a few short seconds, while they repeated what they believed were magic words, something bounced up against the

lid and knocked it off, and out jumped a beautiful lamb, and ran frisking away. For not as much care was required to make over a sheep as to reconstruct a man, and the life-giving liquor at the bottom of the kettle had done its work.

The sisters were delighted with their experiment, and could hardly wait for the eventful day to dawn.

It came at last, as days do, whether expected or not, and this was what it brought.

On the night before, Mede'a gave Pe'lias's daughters a sleeping potion to administer to their father, so that he should not wake and interrupt the ceremony. Why she did not give him something in this draught to kill him decently, and save the awful scene that was to come, I cannot understand. It must have been on account of that vein of cruelty which we know ran through her nature, for we must not forget she was old Æe'tes's daughter, and, had she not *loved* Ja'son, she would have rejoiced at his destruction as grimly as the Col'chian king himself.

A few minutes before midnight, the usurper's daughters tenderly, and with trembling expectation, bore their father's sleeping form to an upper room in the palace. Mede'a was already there to oversee the ceremony and make sure, as she said, that there were no mistakes. But, with a refinement of cruelty that could only dwell in a witch's heart, she said that the sisters must do everything themselves, giving as a reason that their father would love them so much the more, if they alone should bring his lost youth back.

When the midnight hour came, they lighted the fire, threw in the herbs, and poured in the pure spring-water. Presently the steam began to lift the copper lid, and Mede'a exclaimed, "Now is the time!"

The brave girls shuddered, for the next act was to dismember their own beloved parent. A moment they stood motionless, when Mede'a cried: —

"Fools! Will ye lose all?"

Frenzied by these words, Alces'tis rushed to her father's side and dealt the first and fatal

blow. We will draw a veil over the dreadful scene. Enough to say that the disjointed Pe'lias was soon in the steaming caldron, around which his anxious daughters stood with burdened hearts.

But, as you are prepared to know, they waited in vain. Mede'a, whose work was done, stole out silently, and they were left alone. When they found out the cruel stratagem, their hearts were ready to break. They rushed from the chamber of death, and Alces'tis sought out her brother Acas'tus, and told him all.

"Miserable girl!" he cried, "for this act thou shalt die!" and he lifted up his sword to smite her, but she fled to her husband, Adme'tus, one of the returned Ar'gonauts. Acas'tus made an attack upon him and took him prisoner, and was about to slay him, when Alces'tis came, and offered herself as his ransom.

In the mean time, Ja'son was concerting measures for gaining the kingdom of Iol'cos. Pe'leus, who had an ancient grudge to settle with Acas'tus's queen, readily joined him; and the Dioscu'ri (Cas'tor and Polydeu'ces) agreed to go, just for the love of adventure. At that time, too, it

happened that Her'acles, who had got back to Greece, came, wearied, from one of his mighty exploits, and rested at the house of Adme'tus. He there learned of the impending fate of Alces'tis, and vowed to rescue her. So he joined with Ja'son, and the city was soon captured. Alces'tis was rescued, Pe'leus's old enemy was slain, and at last Ja'son and Æ'son had their rights.

What became of the latter I cannot say; but Ja'son and Mede'a are said to have lived happily in Iol'cos for ten years. At the end of that time, however, Ja'son's fickle fancy rested on Creü'sa,[1] daughter of the king of Cor'inth; and he startled his wife one day by saying that he was going to divorce her and wed king Cre'on's daughter. Mede'a concealed her feelings, and somewhat piqued Ja'son by her seeming indifference; for she even gave her husband a wedding gift for his new bride.

The foolish Ja'son suspected nothing, and bore the fair Creü'sa, as Mede'a's gift, a robe and crown of wondrous beauty. She put them

[1] Appendix, Note 52.

MEDEA'S REVENGE.

on; but when the first rays of sunlight struck upon them they glowed an instant with a dazzling light, and then the lovely maiden was wrapped in a sheet of inextinguishable flame.

Her father darted to the rescue and lost his life; but Ja'son, to whom wisdom came at last, recognized Mede'a's handiwork, and knew all human aid was useless. For Mede'a's grandfather, the Sun-god He'lios, fed the fires.

King Cre'on, his daughter, and his palace, were utterly consumed; and Ja'son, dumb with grief, stood gazing on the smoking ruins. Suddenly he heard above him, in the air, a mocking laugh, and, looking up, beheld Mede'a in her serpent-chariot. Her hands and garments were stained with blood, and as she passed — oh, horror! — she flung down to him the lifeless bodies of their two sons. Then, with another laugh of mingled scorn and hatred, she sped away to Ath'ens to begin again a life of love and sorcery.

Ja'son's heart was well-nigh breaking. He had been swiftly and terribly punished. And worst of all, his punishment came through the

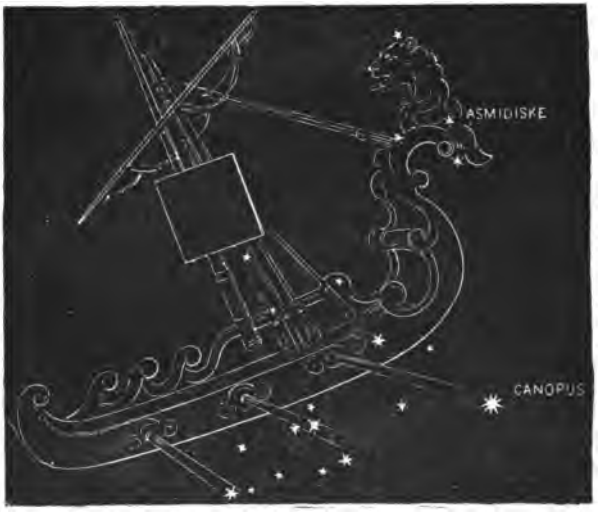
sufferings of others. He wandered sadly down to the shore, where the old Ar'go lay, and dreamed again the fancies of his youth, when he had been innocent and brave. Alas! how sad was now his history! He sighed wearily, and cried aloud, "O ye gods, have mercy on me, and take my worthless life!" He then waited, as if in half expectation that Zeus would send a pitying thunderbolt, at his request, to free him from his wretchedness. But the heavens were dumb, and only the light plash of the wavelets broke the silence of the summer afternoon.

He sat down beneath the Ar'go's prow, and leaned his head upon his hand. He mused, sorrowfully, for a time, and while musing he fell asleep.

His prayer was answered then; for a beam from the decaying vessel fell upon him as he lay in peaceful slumber, and he never waked again.

As for The First Ship itself, — which, after all, is perhaps the greatest hero of our tale, since it had fewer imperfections, — it was translated to the heavens and placed among the

stars. And if you ever sail to the waters of the Southern Hemisphere, you will see above you, at night, among the other constellations of the summer sky, ARGO NAVIS, which is no other than our good ship ARGO gone to its reward.



APPENDIX.

NOTE 1, p. 11.

Unde graves iræ cognata in mœnia Baccho,
Quod sævæ Junonis opus, cui sumpserit arcum
Infelix Athamas, cur non expaverit ingens
Ionium, socio casura Palæmone mater.

STATIUS, *Thebaid*, i. 11.

Atamante divenne tanto insano
Che veggendo la moglie co' duo figli
Venir carcata di ciascuna mano,
Gridò: Tendiam le reti, sì ch' io pigli
La lionessa e i lioncini al varco;
E poi distese i dispietati artigli
Prendendo l'un che avea nome Learco,
E rotollo, e percosselo ad un sasso;
E quella s'annegò con l'altro incarco.

DANTE, *Inferno*, XXX. 4.

Athamas grew so insane that he, seeing his wife with the two sons come laden on either hand cried: "Spread we the nets, that I may take the lioness and her young lions at the pass;" and then stretched out his pitiless talons, grasping the one that had the name Learchus; and whirled and dashed him on a rock: and she with her other burden drowned herself.

Translated by Carlyle.

See OVID, *Metam.* iv. 416 *ff.*

NOTE 2, p. 14.

Αἰγοντι δ' ἐν καὶ θαλάσσᾳ
Μετὰ κόραισι Νηρῆος ἁλίαις βίοτον ἄφθιτον
Ἰνοῖ τετάχθαι τὸν ὅλον ἀμφὶ χρόνον.

PINDAR, *Olympian Odes*, ii. 31.

NOTE 3, p. 14.

By Leucothea's lovely hands
And her son that rules the strands.

MILTON, *Comus*, line 875.

NOTE 4, p. 15.

Annuit oranti Neptunus, et abstulit illis
Quod mortale fuit; maiestatemque verendam
Imposuit, nomenque simul faciemque novavit:
Leucothoëque deum cum matre Palæmona dixit.

OVID, *Metam*, B. iv. 539.

Translated by Laurence Eusden.

NOTE 5, p. 20.

Κείνου νῆ' ἐλάοντες ἐπι προχοὰς ποταμοῖο
Πύργους εἰσόψεσθε Κυταιέος Αἰήταο
Ἄλσός τε σκιόειν Ἄρεος, τόθι κῶας ἐπ' ἄκρης
Πεπτάμενον φηγοῖο δράκων, τέρας αἰνὸν ἰδέσθαι,
Ἀμφὶς δπιπτεύει διδοκημένος· οὐ δέ οἱ ἦμαρ,
Οὐ κνέφας ἡδύμος ὕπνος ἀναιδέα δάμναται δσσε.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, ii. 404.

NOTE 6, p. 34.

Vidi et crudeles dantem Salmonea pœnas,
Dum flammas Jovis et sonitus imitatur Olympi.
Quattuor hic invectus equis, et lampada quassans,
Per Graium populos, mediæque per Elidis urbem
Ibat ovans, Divumque sibi poscebat honorem:
Demens! qui nimbos, et non imitabile fulmen
Ære et cornipedum cursu simularet equorum.
At pater omnipotens densa inter nubila telum
Contorsit (non ille faces, nec fumea taedis
Lumina) praecipitemque immani turbine adegit.

VERGIL, *Æneid*, vi. 585.

NOTE 6 a, p. 35.

Non eadem omnibus [sunt] honesta atque turpia, sed omnia majorum institutis [judicantur]. . . . Neque enim Cimoni fuit turpe, Atheniensium summo viro, sororem germanam habere in matrimonio, quippe cum ejus cives eodem uterentur instituto. At id quidem nostris moribus nefas habetur.

NEPOS, *Prologue* to the "*Lives.*"

NOTE 7, p. 37.

The scholiast on Pindar says that the name given to Jason by his parents was Diomedes, and that Chiron first called him *Jason.*

NOTE 8, p. 40.

Ἦλθε δέ οἱ κρυόεν πυκινῷ μάντευμα θυμῷ
Πὶρ μέσον ὁμφαλὸν εὐδένδροιο ῥηθὲν ματέρος·
Τὸν μονοκρήπιδα πάντως ἐν φυλακῇ σχεθέμεν μεγάλᾳ
Εὖτ' ἂν αἰπεινῶν ἀπὸ σταθμῶν ἐς εὐδείελον
Χθόνα μόλῃ κλειτᾶς Ἰωλκοῦ.

PINDAR, *Pythian Odes*, iv. 73.

NOTE 9, p. 42.

Anthon's Smith's Classical Dictionary, article *Delphi.*

NOTE 10, p. 50.

Καὶ δ' ἄλλως ἔτι καὶ πρὶν ἐμοὶ μέγα φίλατ' Ἰήσων
Ἐξόρ' ἐπι προχοῇσιν ἅλις πλήθοντος Ἀναύρου
Ἀνδρῶν εὐνομίης πειρωμένῃ ἀντιβόλησεν
Θήρης ἰξανιών· νιφετῷ δ' ἐπαλύνετο πάντα
Οὔρεα καὶ σκοπιαὶ περιμήκεες, οἱ δὲ κατ' αὐτῶν
Χείμαρροι καναχηδὰ κυλινδόμενοι φορέοντο.
Γρηῒ δὲ μ' εἰσαμένην ὁλοφίρατο, καὶ μ' ἀναείρας
Αὐτὰς ἑοῖς ὤμοισι διεκ προυλὶς φέρεν ὑδωρ.
Τῶ νύ μοι ἄλληκτον περιτίεται·

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, iii. 66.

Quelli è Jason, che per cuore e per senno
Li Colchi del monton privati fene.

Jason is he, whose skill and prowess won
The ram from Colchos.

DANTE'S *Inferno*, xviii. 86.
Translated by Cary.

NOTE 11, p. 52.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear,
Ponderous and huge! which not a Greek could rear.
From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire
Old Chiron felled, and shaped it for his sire;
A spear which stern Achilles only wields,
The death of heroes and the dread of fields!

POPE'S HOMER'S *Iliad*, xix. 420.

NOTE 12, p. 61.

Τόνδε μέν, οἷόπερ οὕνεκ' ἀφ' Ἑλλάδος ἄλλοι ἄγερθεν
Κλείουσ' Αἴσονος οἷὸν Ἰήσονα Κρηθείδαο.
. . . . . .
Ὅς δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι πάντες, ὅσοι συνέπονται ἑταῖροι,
Ἀθανάτων υἷές τε καὶ ἡμίθεοι γεγάασιν.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, iii. 356.

NOTE 13, p. 65.

Pindar says (*Pyth.* iv. 165) that Pelias frankly proposed to Jason that if he would fetch the Golden Fleece he would give him the kingdom without more ado. Diodorus Siculus says (iv. 40), that Jason *asked permission* of Pelias to go upon his quest. Pelias granted the request, hoping his nephew would perish in the attempt.

NOTE 14, p. 72.

At cantu commotæ Erebi de sedibus imis
Umbræ ibant tenues, simulacraque luce carentum:
Quam multa in sylvis avium se millia condunt
Vesper ubi, aut hybernus agit de montibus imber
. . . . . .

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Note 17. p. 79

Diodorus Siculus says that some derived the name from the swiftness of the Argo.

Pliny Hist. iv. 41, 2

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NOTE 19, p. 82.

Αὐτὰρ τόνγ' ἐνέπουσιν ἀτειρέας οὔρεσι πέτρας
Θέλξαι ἀοιδάων ἐνοπῇ ποταμῶν τε ῥέεθρα.
Φηγοὶ δ' ἀγριάδες, κείνης ἔτι σήματα μολπῆς,
Ἀκτῆς Θρηικίης Ζώνης ἔπι τηλεθόωσαι
Ἑξείης στιχόωσιν ἐπήτριμοι, ἃς ὀγ' ἐπιπρὸ
Θελγομένας φόρμιγγι κατήγαγε Πιερίηθεν.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, i. 26.

NOTE 20, p. 86.

"It is said that he took the part of Juno against Jupiter, and Jupiter hurled him out of heaven. He was *three days in falling*, and at last was picked up half dead, and with one leg broken, by the fishermen of the island of Lemnos." —

BREWER'S *Dict. of Phrase and Fable, Article "Mulciber."*

"Hephaestus was *nine days falling* from Olympus to the earth, where he at length alighted on the island of Lemnos." — BERENS'S *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome*, p. 98.

Both these accounts are contrary to Homer (*Iliad*, p. 592).

Πᾶν δ' ἦμαρ φερόμην, ἅμα δ' ἠελίῳ καταδύντι
Κάππεσον ἐν Λήμνῳ.

All day I fell, and at sunset I lighted upon Lemnos; and Milton, to whom Brewer refers, relates the myth as follows: —

How he fell
From Heaven they fabled; thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements. From morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropped from the zenith like a falling star
On Lemnos, th' Ægean isle.

Paradise Lost, i. 740.

It would seem as if Berens had confounded Mulciber (Hephaestos *or* Vulcan) with Lucifer (Satan); for in "Paradise Lost," i. 50, Milton says of the latter:—

> Nine times the space that measures day and night
> To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
> Confounded though immortal.

But it will be observed that of the time consumed by Satan's fall Milton says nothing, although the arch-fiend dropped a goodly distance—"from th' ethereal sky . . . to bottomless perdition;"—the period of nine days is the time during which he "lay confounded" after the catastrophe.

NOTE 21, p. 87.

Pindar, however, says they went to Lemnos *after* they had captured the Fleece. *Pyth.*, iv. 251.

NOTE 22, p. 90.

> Ὑμῖν μὲν δὴ μοῖρα θεῶν χρειώ τε περῆσαι
> Ἐνθάδε κῶας ἄγοντας· ἀπειρέσιοι δ' ἐνὶ μέσσῳ
> Κεῖσί τε δεῦρό τ' ἔασιν ἀνερχομένοισιν ἄεθλοι.
>
> APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, i. 440.

NOTE 23, p. 91.

Pontus *Euxinus*, or The *Hospitable* Sea, was originally Pontus *Axenos;* i.e., The *Inhospitable* Sea (DIODORUS SICULUS, iv. 40, 4. PINDAR calls it *Axeinos* in Pyth. iv. 361); but after civilized colonies had settled on its shores, the old name was changed to a more *eu*phonious one.

NOTE 24, p. 91.

Apollonius says that *before* they set sail, and while most of the crew had gone up on the mountain to see the outlook, the giants tried to block up the channel with huge stones; but that Hercules, who had remained at the ship, bent his bow against them and slew several. Just then the chiefs, returning, put the rest to flight.

NOTE 25, p. 99.

Αὐτὰρ ὃ πλαγείς
Ἴκτιος ἐν φύλλοισι τεθαλόσιν ἐξετανύσθη.
Ἔνθα μάχη ὁριμεῖα πάλιν γένετ' ὀρθωθέντος·
Ἀλλήλους δ' ὄλεκον στερεοῖς θείνοντες ἰμᾶσιν.

THEOCRITUS, *Idyl* xxii., *l.* 105.

NOTE 26, p. 101.

According to Apollonius, Polydeuces used Amycus's cestus, choosing the pair that lay nearest him.

NOTE 27, p. 101.

This victor, glorious in his olive wreath,
Had once eyes, eye-brows, nose, and ears, and teeth;
But turning cestus-champion, to his cost,
These and, still worse! his heritage he lost.

LUCILIUS in Greek Anthology.
Translated by Fawkes.

NOTE 28, p. 106.

Keightley's Mythology, ed. 1831, p. 422. Theocritus (Idyl xxii.) inverts this account, and says: "Even already had Argo fled forth from the Clashing Rocks, and the dread jaws of snowy Pontus, and was come to the land of the Bebryces." (*Lang's* Translation.) He then goes on to give the contest between Amycus and Polydeuces, already recorded.

NOTE 29, p. 106.

"Other accounts say that he was deprived of sight for having revealed to mortals the future, which was shown him by Apollo; or that Poseidon had so punished him for having shown the sons of Phrixus the way to Greece. It is even said that the Argonauts so avenged the blinding of his children."—KEIGHTLEY'S *Myth.*, p. 422. Also see the preface to this book, p. viii.

NOTE 30, p. 110.

Ἀργώ,
Ἄτις Κυανεᾶν οὐχ ἥψατο συνδρομάδων ναῦς,
Ἀλλὰ διεξάϊξε, βαθὺν δ' εἰσέδραμε Φᾶσιν,
Αἰετὸς ὣς μέγα λαῖτμα, ἀφ' ὧ τότε χοιράδες ἔσταν.

THEOCRITUS, *Idyl* xiii., *l.* 21.

NOTE 31, p. 112.

Apollonius says he was incurable.

NOTE 32, p. 115. POPE'S HOMER'S *Odyssey*, xii. 71 *ff.*

NOTE 33, p. 115.

Apollonius says it was Euphemus; but as Mopsus was a soothsayer and understood bird-language (see Seeman's Mythology, p. 299) I have ventured to make an innovation.

NOTE 34, p. 115.

Mopsus was really a Thessalian. The Bœotians were said to be more stupid than the other Greeks, hence the term "Bœotian" became one of reproach.

NOTE 35, p. 119.

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κύλικος καὶ χείλεος ἄκρου.

"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

NOTE 36, p. 122.

Ἐς Φᾶσιν δ' ἔπειτεν
Ἦλυθον, ἔνθα κελαινώπεσσι Κόλχοισιν βίαν
Μῖξαν, Αἰήτᾳ παρ' αὐτῷ.

PINDAR, *Pyth.*, iv. 211.

NOTE 37, p. 130.

Tate and Stonestreet's translation of the following passage:—

Quem, nisi crudelem, non tangat Iäsonis ætas,
Et genus, et virtus? quem non, ut cætera desint,
Forma movere potest? certe mea pectora movit.
At, nisi opem tulero, taurorum afflabitur ore:

Concurretque suae segetis tellure creatis
Hostibus: aut avido dabitur fera præda draconi.
Hoc ego si patiar, tum me de tigride natam,
Tum ferrum et scopulos gestare in corde fatebor.
Cur non et specto pereuntem? oculosque videndo
Conscelero? . . .
Di meliora velint: quamquam non ista precanda
Sed facienda mihi. . . .
. . . accingere; et omnem
Pelle moram! Tibi se semper debebit Iäson,
Te face solenni junget sibi; perque Pelasgas
Servatrix urbes matrum celebrabere turba.

OVID, *Metam.*, vii. 26.

NOTE 38, p. 133.

Πρωτοφυὲς τόγ' ἀνέσχε, κατασταξαντος ἔραζε
Αἰετοῦ ὠμηστέω κνημοῖς ἔνι Καυκασίοισιν
Αἱματόεντ' ἐχῶρα Προμηθῆος μογεροῖο.
Τοῦ δ' ἤτοι ἄνθος μὲν ὅσον πήχυιον ὕπερθεν
Χροιῇ Κωρυκίῳ ἴκελον κρόκῳ ἐξεφαάνθη,
Καυλοῖσιν διδύμοισιν ἐπήορον· ἡ δ' ἐνι γαίῃ
Ξαρκὶ νεοτμήτῳ ἐναλιγκίη ἔπλετο ῥίζα.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautics*, iii. 850.

NOTE 39, p. 134.

Hesiod gives the story at length in his Theogony, line 523 *ff.* He thus describes Prometheus's punishment: —

Καί οἱ ἐπ' αἰετὸν ὦρσε τανύπτερον· αὐτὰρ ὅγ' ἦπαρ
Ἤσθιεν ἀθάνατον· τὸ δ' ἀέξετο ἶσον ἀπάντῃ
Νυκτός, ὅσον πρόπαν ἦμαρ ἔδοι τανυσίπτερος ὄρνις.
Τὸν μὲν ὅρ' Ἀλκμήνης καλλισφύρου ἄλκιμος υἱὸς
Ἡρακλέης ἔκτεινε, κακὴν δ' ἀπὸ νοῦσον ἄλαλκεν
Ἰαπετιονίδῃ, καὶ ἐλύσατο δυσφροσυνάων.

Down he sent from high
The broad-winged Eagle: she his liver gorged
Immortal; for it sprang with life, and grew
In the night season, and the waste repair'd

Of what by day the bird of spreading wing
Devoured. But fair Alcmena's valiant son
The torturer slew, and from Prometheus drove
The cruel plague, and freed him from his pangs.
Translated by Elton.

NOTE 40, p. 141.

Inde (fide maius) glebae coepere moveri:
Primaque de sulcis acies apparuit hastae.
Tegmina mox capitum picto nutantia cono:
Mox umeri pectusque, onerataque bracchia telis
Existunt: crescitque seges clipeata virorum.
OVID, *Metam.*, iii. 106.

The clods grow warm and crumble where he sows,
And now the pointed spears advance in rows:
Now nodding plumes appear, and shining crests;
Now the broad shoulders and the rising breasts;
O'er all the field the breathing harvest swarms,
A growing host, — a crop of men in arms.
Translated by Addison.

NOTE 41, p. 144.

Ille gravem medios silicem iaculatus in hostes,
A se depulsum Martem convertit in ipsos.
Terrigenæ pereunt per mutua vulnera fratres,
Civilique cadunt acie.
OVID, *Metam.*, vii. 139.

NOTE 42, p. 147. OVID, *Metam.*, B. xi. 1–66. VERGIL, *Georgics*, iv. 521.

NOTE 43, p. 153.

"Somne omnipotens, te Colchis ab omni
Orbe voco, inque unum iubeo nunc ire draconem,
Quæ freta saepe tuo domui, quæ nubila cornu
Fulminaque et toto quidquid micat æthere; sed nunc

Nunc age maior ades fratrique simillime Leto.
Te quoque, Phrixeæ pecudis fidissime custos,
Tempus ab hac oculos tandem deflectere cura.
Quem metius me astante dolum? servabo parumper
Ipsa nemus; longum interea tu pone laborem."
Ille haud Æolio discedere fessus ab auro,
Nec dare permissae (quamvis iuvet) ora quieti
Sustinet; ac primi percussus nube soporis
Horruit, et dulces excussit ab arbore somnos.
Contra Tartareis Colchis spumare venenis,
Cunctaque Lethæi quassare silentia rami
Perstat, et adverso luctantia lumina cantu
Obruit, atque omnem linguaque manuque fatigat
Vim Stygiam; ardentes donec sopor occupet iras.

VALERIUS FLACCUS, *Argonautica*, viii. 70–87.
Translated by Elton.

NOTE 44, p. 155.

Apollonius says Absyrtus was older than Medea; that he pursued Medea and the Argonauts; and that Jason himself slew him, having laid an ambush for him by Medea's aid.

NOTE 44 a, p. 164.

Dryden's translation of the following passage:—

Picus, equum domitor; quem capta cupidine conjux
Aurea percussum virga, versumque venenis,
Fecit avem Circe, sparsitque coloribus alas.

VERGIL, *Æneid*, vii. 189.

Ovid, in his "Metamorphoses," xiv. 320, gives a somewhat extended account of Circe's love and Picus's transformation.

NOTE 44 b, p. 166.

Proxima Circaeae raduntur litora terrae;
Dives inaccessos ubi Solis filia lucos
Assiduo resonat cantu . . .
. . . . . .

Hinc exaudiri gemitus, iraeque leonum
Vincla recusantum et sera sub nocte rudentum,
Setigerique sues atque in præsepibus ursi
Sævire, ac formae magnorum ululare luporum,
Quos hominum ex facie dea sæva potentibus herbis
Induerat Circe in voltus ac terga ferarum.

VERGIL, *Æneid*, vii. 10–20.

"First they skirt the shores of Circe's land, where the rich daughter of the Sun makes her groves resound with constant song. . . . From here come to their ears the angry growling of lions, raging against their chains and roaring at the dead of night; bristly boars, too, and caged bears voice their rage, and shapes of huge wolves fiercely howl. These the cruel goddess Circe had changed by magic herbs from the mien of men to beasts in looks and form."

Translated by Collar, in "*School Classics.*"

NOTE 45, p. 170.

Some authors represent them as human only to the waist, while the rest of their bodies were those of birds. Some say there were but two.

NOTE 46, p. 174. *Odyssey*, B. xii. 107 (POPE).

NOTE 47, p. 183. *Odyssey*, B. xii. 125 (POPE).

NOTE 48, p. 184.

Dextrum Scylla latus, lævum implacata Charybdis
Obsidet: atque imo barathri ter gurgite vastos
Sorbet in abruptum fluctus, rursusque sub auras
Erigit alternos, et sidera verberat unda.

VERGIL, *Æneid*, iii. 420.

NOTE 49, p. 190.

The account given by Apollonius is less dramatic and probably not more truthful.

NOTE 50, p. 192.

Τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπέτελλε μέγας βασιλεὺς ὑπερήνωρ,
Ὑβριστὴς Πελίης, καὶ ἀτάσθαλος, ὀβριμοεργός.
Τοὺς τελέσας ἐς Ἰωλκὸν ἀφίκετο, πολλὰ μογήσας
Αἰσονίδης.

HESIOD, *Theogony*, 995.

NOTE 51, p. 198.

Barba comaequae
Canitie posita nigrum rapuere colorem
Pulsa fugit macies, abeunt pallorque situsque,
Adiectoque cavae supplentur corpore rugae,
Membraque luxuriant. Aeson miratur et olim
Ante quater denos hunc se reminiscitur annos.

OVID, *Metam.*, vii. 288.

NOTE 52, p. 204.

Euripides calls her *Glauke*.

BURMANN'S CATALOGUE OF THE ARGONAUTS.

COLLECTED FROM ALL THE ANCIENT WRITERS.

1. Acas'tus.
2. Ac'tor.
3. Actor'ides.
4. Acto'rion.
5. Adme'tus.
6. Æthal'ides.
7. Alme'nus.
8. Amphiara'us.
9. Amphid'amas.
10. Amphi'on.
11. Amponi'tus.
12. Ancæ'us.
13. Ancæ'us 2d.
14. Anchis'teüs.
15. Are'ius.
16. Ar'gus.
17. Ar'gus 2d.
18. Arme'nius.
19. Ascal'aphus.
20. Askle'pios.
21. Aste'rion.
22. Aste'rius.
23. Atalan'ta.
24. Auge'as.
25. Autol'ycus.
26. Azo'rus.
27. Bu'phagus.
28. Bu'tes.
29. Cæ'neüs.
30. Cal'ais.
31. Can'thus.
32. Cas'tor.
33. Ce'pheüs.
34. Ci'us.

35. Clym'enus.
36. Cly'tius.
37. Coro'nus.
38. Cylin'drus.
39. Deil'eon.
40. Deuca'lion.
41. Echi'on.
42. Ergi'nus.
43. Eribo'tes.
44. Eume'don.
45. Euphe'mus.
46. Eury'alus.
47. Euryd'amas.
48. Euryt'ion.
49. Eu'rytus.
50. Glau'cus.
51. Her'acles.
52. Hippal'cimus.
53. Hy'las.
54. I'das.
55. Id'mon.
56. Iola'us.
57. Iph'iclus.
58. Iph'iclus 2d.
    Iphid'amas (probably a corruption for Amphid'amas).
59. Iph'itus.
60. I'phys (Iphis).
61. Ixit'ion.
62. Ja'son.
63. Laer'tes.
64. Laoc'oön.
65. Le'itus.
66. Leod'ocus.
67. Lyn'ceüs.
68. Me'las.
69. Melea'ger.
70. Menœ'tius.
71. Mop'sus.
72. Nau'plius.
73. Ne'leüs.
74. Nes'tor.
75. Oï'leus.
76. Or'pheüs.
77. Palæ'mon.
78. Pe'leüs.
79. Pene'leüs.
80. Periclym'enus.
81. Phale'rus.
82. Pha'nus.
83. Philam'mon.
84. Philocte'tes.
85. Phle'ias (Phli'as).
86. Phlo'gius.
87. Pho'cus.
88. Phron'tis.
89. Pirith'oüs.
90. Pœ'as.
91. Polydeu'ces.
92. Polyphe'mus.
93. Pria'sus.
94. Staph'ylus.
95. Tal'aüs.
96. Tel'amon.
97. Ther'sanon.
98. The'seüs.
99. Thes'salus.
100. Thes'tor.
101. Ti'phys.
102. Ty'deüs.
103. Ze'tes.

PRONOUNCING INDEX.

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