# Metamorphoses

*by Ovid · translated by Henry T. Riley (1851)*

The whole book, word for word, from The Metamorphoses of Ovid, literally translated into English prose with notes and explanations by Henry T. Riley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1851, Bohn's Classical Library; this transcription follows the George Bell reprint of 1893 and the David McKay printing of 1899). Riley's own footnotes and his "Explanation" after each fable are kept, in place; words he supplied to complete the sense are shown in {braces}. Public domain in the United States. Text from Project Gutenberg eBook #21765 and #26073, with its chapter headings, italics and line breaks kept; illustration notes and the contents list are left out.

## Introduction

The Metamorphoses of Ovid are a compendium of the Mythological narratives of ancient Greece and Rome, so ingeniously framed, as to embrace a large amount of information upon almost every subject connected with the learning, traditions, manners, and customs of antiquity, and have afforded a fertile field of investigation to the learned of the civilized world. To present to the public a faithful translation of a work, universally esteemed, not only for its varied information, but as being the masterpiece of one of the greatest Poets of ancient Rome, is the object of the present volume.

To render the work, which, from its nature and design, must, of necessity, be replete with matter of obscure meaning, more inviting to the scholar, and more intelligible to those who are unversed in Classical literature, the translation is accompanied with Notes and Explanations, which, it is believed, will be found to throw considerable light upon the origin and meaning of some of the traditions of heathen Mythology.

In the translation, the text of the Delphin edition has been generally adopted; and no deviation has been made from it, except in a few instances, where the reason for such a step is stated in the notes; at the same time, the texts of Burmann and Gierig have throughout been carefully consulted. The several editions vary materially in respect to punctuation; the Translator has consequently used his own discretion in adopting that which seemed to him the most fully to convey in each passage the intended meaning of the writer.

The Metamorphoses of Ovid have been frequently translated into the English language. On referring to Mr. Bohn's excellent Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Classics and their Translations, we find that the whole of the work has been twice translated into English Prose, while five translations in Verse are there enumerated. A prose version of the Metamorphoses was published by Joseph Davidson, about the middle of the last century, which professes to be "as near the original as the different idioms of the Latin and English will allow;" and to be "printed for the use of schools, as well as of private gentlemen." A few moments' perusal of this work will satisfy the reader that it has not the slightest pretension to be considered a literal translation, while, by its departure from the strict letter of the author, it has gained nothing in elegance of diction. It is accompanied by "critical, historical, geographical, and classical notes in English, from the best Commentators, both ancient and modern, beside a great number of notes, entirely new;" but notwithstanding this announcement, these annotations will be found to be but few in number, and, with some exceptions in the early part of the volume, to throw very little light on the obscurities of the text. A fifth edition of this translation was published so recently as 1822, but without any improvement, beyond the furbishing up of the old-fashioned language of

the original preface. A far more literal translation of the Metamorphoses is that by John Clarke, which was first published about the year 1735, and had attained to a seventh edition in 1779. Although this version may be pronounced very nearly to fulfil the promise set forth in its title page, of being "as literal as possible," still, from the singular inelegance of its style, and the fact of its being couched in the conversational language of the early part of the last century, and being unaccompanied by any attempt at explanation, it may safely be pronounced to be ill adapted to the requirements of the present age. Indeed, it would not, perhaps, be too much to assert, that, although the translator may, in his own words, "have done an acceptable service to such gentlemen as are desirous of regaining or improving the skill they acquired at school," he has, in many instances, burlesqued rather than translated his author. Some of the curiosities of his version will be found set forth in the notes; but, for the purpose of the more readily justifying this assertion, a few of them are adduced: the word "nitidus" is always rendered "neat," whether applied to a fish, a cow, a chariot, a laurel, the steps of a temple, or the art of wrestling. He renders "horridus," "in a rude pickle;" "virgo" is generally translated "the young lady;" "vir" is "a gentleman;" "senex" and "senior" are indifferently "the old blade," "the old fellow," or "the old gentleman;" while "summa arx" is "the very tip-top." "Misera" is "poor soul;" "exsilio" means "to bounce forth;" "pellex" is "a miss;" "lumina" are "the peepers;" "turbatum fugere" is "to scower off in a mighty bustle;" "confundor" is "to be jumbled;" and "squalidus" is "in a sorry pickle." "Importuna" is "a plaguy baggage;" "adulterium" is rendered "her pranks;" "ambages" becomes either "a long rabble of words," "a long-winded detail," or "a tale of a tub;" "miserabile carmen" is "a dismal ditty;" "increpare hos" is "to rattle these blades;" "penetralia" means "the parlour;" while "accingere," more literally than elegantly, is translated "buckle to." "Situs" is "nasty stuff;" "oscula jungere" is "to tip him a kiss;" "pingue ingenium" is a circumlocution for "a blockhead;" "anilia instrumenta" are "his old woman's accoutrements;" and "repetito munere Bacchi" is conveyed to the sense of the reader as, "they return again to their bottle, and take the other glass." These are but a specimen of the blemishes which disfigure the most literal of the English translations of the Metamorphoses.

In the year 1656, a little volume was published, by J[ohn] B[ulloker,] entitled "Ovid's Metamorphosis, translated grammatically, and, according to the propriety of our English tongue, so far as grammar and the verse will bear, written chiefly for the use of schools, to be used according to the directions in the preface to the painfull schoolmaster, and more fully in the book called, 'Ludus Literarius, or the Grammar school, chap. 8.'" Notwithstanding a title so pretentious, it contains a translation of no more than the first 567 lines of the first Book, executed in a fanciful and pedantic manner; and its rarity is now the only merit of the volume. A literal interlinear translation of the first Book "on the plan recommended by Mr. Locke," was published in 1839, which had been already preceded by "a selection from the Metamorphoses of Ovid, adapted to the Hamiltonian system, by a literal and interlineal translation," published by

James Hamilton, the author of the Hamiltonian system. This work contains selections only from the first six books, and consequently embraces but a very small portion of the entire work.

For the better elucidation of the different fabulous narratives and allusions, explanations have been added, which are principally derived from the writings of Herodotus, Apollodorus, Pausanias, Dio Cassius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Strabo, Hyginus, Nonnus, and others of the historians, philosophers, and mythologists of antiquity. A great number of these illustrations are collected in the elaborate edition of Ovid, published by the Abbé Banier, one of the most learned scholars of the last century; who has, therein, and in his "Explanations of the Fables of Antiquity," with indefatigable labour and research, culled from the works of ancient authors, all such information as he considered likely to throw any light upon the Mythology and history of Greece and Rome.

This course has been adopted, because it was considered that a statement of the opinions of contemporary authors would be the most likely to enable the reader to form his own ideas upon the various subjects presented to his notice. Indeed, except in two or three instances, space has been found too limited to allow of more than an occasional reference to the opinions of modern scholars. Such being the object of the explanations, the reader will not be surprised at the absence of critical and lengthened discussions on many of those moot points of Mythology and early history which have occupied, with no very positive result, the attention of Niebuhr, Lobeck, Müller, Buttmann, and many other scholars of profound learning.

## Book I, The Argument (lines 1–4)

My design leads me to speak of forms changed into new bodies.[1] Ye Gods, (for you it was who changed them,) favor my attempts,[2] and bring down the lengthened narrative from the very beginning of the world, {even} to my own times.[3]

[Footnote 1: *Forms changed into new bodies*.--Ver. 1. Some commentators cite these words as an instance of Hypallage as being used for ‘corpora mutata in novas formas,’ ‘bodies changed into new forms;’ and they fancy that there is a certain beauty in the circumstance that the proposition of a subject which treats of the changes and variations of bodies should be framed with a transposition of words. This supposition is perhaps based rather on the exuberance of a fanciful imagination than on solid grounds, as if it is an instance of Hypallage, it is most probably quite accidental; while the passage may be explained without any reference to Hypallage, as the word ‘forma’ is sometimes used to signify the thing itself; thus the words ‘formæ deorum’ and ‘ferarum’ are used to signify ‘the Gods,’ or ‘the wild beasts’ themselves.]

[Footnote 2: *Favor my attempts*.--Ver. 3. This use of the word ‘adspirate’ is a metaphor taken from the winds, which, while they fill the ship’s sails, were properly said ‘adspirare.’ It has been remarked, with some justice, that this invocation is not sufficiently long or elaborate for a work of so grave and dignified a nature as the Metamorphoses.]

[Footnote 3: *To my own times*.--Ver. 4. That is, to the days of Augustus Cæsar.]

## Book I, Fable I (lines 5–31)

*God reduces Chaos into order. He separates the four elements, and disposes the several bodies, of which the universe is formed, into their proper situations.*

At first, the sea, the earth, and the heaven, which covers all things, were the only face of nature throughout the whole universe, which men have named Chaos; a rude and undigested mass,[4] and nothing {more} than an inert weight, and the discordant atoms of things not harmonizing, heaped together in the same spot. No Sun[5] as yet gave light to the world; nor did the Moon,[6] by increasing, recover her horns anew. The Earth did not {as yet} hang in the surrounding air, balanced by its own weight, nor had Amphitrite[7] stretched out her arms along the lengthened margin of the coasts. Wherever, too, was the land, there also was the sea and the air; {and} thus was the earth without firmness, the sea unnavigable, the air void of light; in no one {of them} did its {present} form exist. And one was {ever} obstructing the other; because in the same body the cold was striving with the hot, the moist with the dry, the soft with the hard, things having weight with {those} devoid of weight.

To this discord God and bounteous Nature[8] put an end; for he separated the earth from the heavens, and the waters from the earth, and distinguished the clear heavens from the gross atmosphere. And after he had unravelled these {elements}, and released them from {that} confused heap, he combined them, {thus} disjoined, in harmonious unison, {each} in {its proper} place. The element of the vaulted heaven,[9] fiery and without weight, shone forth, and selected a place for itself in the highest region; next after it, {both} in lightness and in place, was the air; the Earth was more weighty than these, and drew {with it} the more ponderous atoms, and was pressed together by its own gravity. The encircling waters sank to the lowermost place, [10] and surrounded the solid globe.

[Footnote 4: *A rude and undigested mass.*--Ver. 7. This is very similar to the words of the Scriptures, ‘And the earth was without form and void,’ Genesis, ch. i. ver. 2.]

[Footnote 5: *No Sun.*--Ver. 10. Titan. The Sun is so called, on account of his supposed father, Hyperion, who was one of the Titans. Hyperion is thought to have been the first who, by assiduous observation, discovered the course of the Sun, Moon, and other luminaries. By them he regulated the time for the seasons, and imparted this knowledge to others. Being thus, as it were, the father of astronomy, he has been feigned by the poets to have been the father of the Sun and the Moon.]

[Footnote 6: *The Moon.*--Ver. 11. Phœbe. The Moon is so called from the Greek φοῖβος, ‘shining,’ and as being the sister of Phœbus, Apollo, or the Sun.]

[Footnote 7: *Amphitrite*.--Ver. 14. She was the daughter of Oceanus and Doris, and the wife of Neptune, God of the Sea. Being the Goddess of the Ocean, her name is here used to signify the ocean itself.]

[Footnote 8: *Nature*.--Ver. 21. 'Natura' is a word often used by the Poet without any determinate signification, and to its operations are ascribed all those phenomena which it is found difficult or impossible to explain upon known and established principles. In the present instance it may be considered to mean the invisible agency of the Deity in reducing Chaos into a form of order and consistency. 'Et' is therefore here, as grammarians term it, an expositive particle; as if the Poet had said, 'Deus sive natura,' 'God, or in other words, nature.']

[Footnote 9: *The element of the vaulted heaven*.--Ver. 26. This is a periphrasis, signifying the regions of the firmament or upper air, in which the sun and stars move; which was supposed to be of the purest fire and the source of all flame. The heavens are called 'convex,' from being supposed to assume the same shape as the terrestrial globe which they surround.]

[Footnote 10: *The lowermost place*.--Ver. 31. 'Ultima' must not be here understood in the presence of 'infima,' or as signifying 'last,' or 'lowest,' in a strict philosophical sense, for that would contradict the account of the formation of the world given by Hesiod, and which is here closely followed by Ovid; indeed, it would contradict his own words,--'Circumfluus humor coercuit solidum orbem.' The meaning seems to be, that the waters possess the lowest place only in respect to the earth whereon we tread, and not relatively to the terrestrial globe, the supposed centre of the system, inasmuch as the external surface of the earth in some places rises considerably, and leaves the water to subside in channels.]

## Riley's Explanation

The ancient philosophers, unable to comprehend how something could be produced out of nothing, supposed a matter pre-existent to the Earth in its present shape, which afterwards received form and order from some powerful cause. According to them, God was not the Creator, but the Architect of the universe, in ranging and disposing the elements in situations most suitable to their respective qualities. This is the Chaos so often sung of by the poets, and which Hesiod was the first to mention.

It is clear that this system was but a confused and disfigured tradition of the creation of the world, as mentioned by Moses; and thus, beneath these fictions, there lies some faint glimmering of truth. The first two chapters of the book of Genesis will be found to throw considerable light on the foundation of this Mythological system of the world's formation.

Hesiod, the most ancient of the heathen writers who have enlarged upon this subject, seems to have derived much of his information from the works of Sanchoniatho, who is supposed to have borrowed his ideas concerning Chaos from that passage in the second verse of the first Chapter of Genesis, which mentions the darkness that was spread over the whole universe--'and darkness was upon the face of the deep'--for he expresses himself almost in those words. Sanchoniatho lived before the Trojan war, and professed to have received his information respecting the original construction of the world from a priest of 'Jehovah,' named Jerombaal. He wrote in the Phœnician language; but we have only a translation of his works, by Philo Judæus, which is by many supposed to be spurious. It is, however, very probable, that from him the Greeks borrowed their notions regarding Chaos, which they mingled with fables of their own invention.

## Book I, Fable II (lines 32–88)

*After the separation of matter, God gives form and regularity to the universe; and all other living creatures being produced, Prometheus moulds earth tempered with water, into a human form, which is animated by Minerva.*

When thus he, whoever of the Gods he was,[11] had divided the mass {so} separated, and reduced it, so divided, into {distinct} members; in the first place, that it might not be unequal on any side, he gathered it up into the form of a vast globe; then he commanded the sea to be poured around it, and to grow boisterous with the raging winds, and to surround the shores of the Earth, encompassed {by it}; he added also springs, and numerous pools and lakes, and he bounded the rivers as they flowed downwards, with slanting banks. These, different in {different} places, are some of them swallowed up[12] by {the Earth} itself; some of them reach the ocean, and, received in the expanse of waters that take a freer range, beat against shores instead of banks.

He commanded the plains,[13] too, to be extended, the valleys to sink down, the woods to be clothed with green leaves, the craggy mountains to arise; and, as on the right-hand side,[14] two Zones intersect the heavens, and as many on the left; {and as} there is a fifth hotter than these, so did the care of the Deity distinguish this enclosed mass {of the Earth} by the same number, and as many climates are marked out upon the Earth. Of these, that which is the middle one[15] is not habitable on account of the heat; deep snow covers two[16] {of them}. Between either these he placed as many more,[17] and gave them a temperate climate, heat being mingled with cold.

Over these hangs the air, which is heavier than fire, in the same degree that the weight of water is lighter than the weight of the earth. Here he ordered vapors, here too, the clouds to take their station; the thunder, too, to terrify the minds of mortals, and with the lightnings, the winds that bring on cold. The Contriver of the World did not allow these indiscriminately to take possession of the sky. Even now, (although they each of them govern their own blasts in a distinct tract) they are with great difficulty prevented from rending the world asunder, so great is the discord of the brothers.[18] Eurus took his way[19] towards {the rising of} Aurora and the realms of Nabath[20] and Persia, and the mountain ridges exposed to the rays of the morning. The Evening star, and the shores which are warm with the setting sun, are bordering upon Zephyrus.[21] The terrible Boreas invaded Scythia,[22] and the regions of the North. The opposite quarter is wet with continual clouds, and the drizzling South Wind.[23] Over these he placed the firmament, clear and devoid of gravity, and not containing anything of the dregs of earth.

Scarcely had he separated all these by fixed limits, when the stars, which had long lain hid, concealed beneath that mass {of Chaos}, began to glow through the range of the heavens. And that no region might be destitute of its own {peculiar} animated beings, the stars and the forms of the Gods[24] possess the tract of heaven; the waters fell to be inhabited by the smooth fishes; [25] the Earth received the wild beasts, {and} the yielding air the birds.

{But} an animated being, more holy than these, more fitted to receive higher faculties, and which could rule over the rest,[26] was still wanting. {Then} Man was formed. Whether it was that the Artificer of all things, the original of the world in its improved state, framed him from divine elements;[27] or whether, the Earth, being newly made, and but lately divided from the lofty æther, still retained some atoms of its kindred heaven, which, tempered with the waters of the stream, the son of Iapetus fashioned after the image of the Gods, who rule over all things. And, whereas other animals bend their looks downwards upon the Earth, to Man he gave a countenance to look on high and to behold the heavens, and to raise his face erect to the stars. Thus, that which had been lately rude earth, and without any regular shape, being changed, assumed the form of Man, {till then} unknown.

[Footnote 11: *Whoever of the Gods he was.*--Ver. 32. By this expression the Poet perhaps may intend to intimate that the God who created the world was some more mighty Divinity than those who were commonly accounted Deities.]

[Footnote 12: *Are some of them swallowed up.*--Ver. 40. He here refers to those rivers which, at some distance from their sources, disappear and continue their course under ground. Such was the stream of Arethusa, the Lycus in Asia, the Erasinus in Argolis, the Alpheus in Peloponnesus, the Arcas in Spain, and the Rhone in France. Most of these, however, after descending into the earth, appear again and discharge their waters into the sea.]

[Footnote 13: *He commanded the plains.*--Ver. 43. The use here of the word 'jussit,' signifying 'ordered,' or 'commanded,' is considered as being remarkably sublime and appropriate, and serving well to express the ease wherewith an infinitely powerful Being accomplishes the most difficult works. There is the same beauty here that was long since remarked by Longinus, one of the most celebrated critics among the ancients, in the words used by Moses, 'And God said, Let there be light, and there was light,' Genesis, ch. i. ver. 3.]

[Footnote 14: *On the right-hand side.*--Ver. 45. The "right hand" here refers to the northern part of the globe, and the "left hand" to the southern. He here speaks of the zones. Astronomers have divided the heavens into five parallel circles. First, the equinoctial, which lies in the middle, between the poles of the earth, and obtains its name from the equality of days and nights on the earth while the sun is in its plane. On each side are the two tropics, at the distance of 23 deg. 30

min., and described by the sun when in his greatest declination north and south, or at the summer and winter solstices. That on the north side of the equinoctial is called the tropic of Cancer, because the sun describes it when in that sign of the ecliptic; and that on the south side is, for a similar reason, called the tropic of Capricorn. Again, at the distance of 23½ degrees from the poles are two other parallels called the polar circles, either because they are near to the poles, or because, if we suppose the whole frame of the heavens to turn round on the plane of the equinoctial, these circles are marked out by the poles of the ecliptic. By means of these parallels, astronomers have divided the heavens into four zones or tracks. The whole space between the two tropics is the middle or torrid zone, which the equinoctial divides into two equal parts. On each side of this are the temperate zones, which extend from the tropics to the two polar circles. And lastly, the portions enclosed by the polar circles make up the frigid zones. As the planes of these circles produced till they reached the earth, would also impress similar parallels upon it, and divide it in the same manner as they divide the heavens, astronomers have conceived five zones upon the earth, corresponding to those in the heavens, and bounded by the same circles.]

[Footnote 15: *That which is the middle one.*--Ver. 49. The ecliptic in which the sun moves, cuts the equator in two opposite points, at an angle of 23½ degrees; and runs obliquely from one tropic to another, and returns again in a corresponding direction. Hence, the sun, which in the space of a year, performs the revolution of this circle, must in that time be twice vertical to every place in the torrid zone, except directly under the tropics, and his greatest distance from their zenith at noon, cannot exceed 47 degrees. Thus his rays being often perpendicular, or nearly so, and never very oblique, must strike more forcibly, and cause more intense heat in that spot. Being little acquainted with the extent and situation of the earth, the ancients believed it uninhabitable. Modern discovery has shown that this is not the case as to a considerable part of the torrid zone, though with some parts of it our acquaintance is still very limited.]

[Footnote 16: *Deep snow covers two.*--Ver. 50. The two polar or frigid zones. For as the sun never approaches these nearer than the tropic on that side, and is, during one part of the year, removed by the additional extent of the whole torrid zone, his rays must be very oblique and faint, so as to leave these tracts exposed to almost perpetual cold.]

[Footnote 17: *He placed as many more.*--Ver. 51. The temperate zones, lying between the torrid and the frigid, partake of the character of each in a modified degree, and are of a middle temperature between hot and cold. Here, too, the distinction of the seasons is manifest. For in either temperate zone, when the sun is in that tropic, which borders upon it, being nearly vertical, the heat must be considerable, and produce summer; but when he is removed to the other tropic by a distance of 47 degrees, his rays will strike but faintly, and winter will be the consequence. The intermediate spaces, while he is moving from one tropic to the other, make spring and autumn.]

[Footnote 18: *The brothers*.--Ver. 60. That is, the winds, who, according to the Theogony of Hesiod, were the sons of Astreus, the giant, and Aurora.]

[Footnote 19: *Eurus took his way*.--Ver. 61. The Poet, after remarking that the air is the proper region of the winds, proceeds to take notice that God, to prevent them from making havoc of the creation, subjected them to particular laws, and assigned to each the quarter whence to direct his blasts. Eurus is the east wind, being so called from its name, because it blows from the east. As Aurora, or the morning, was always ushered in by the sun, who rises eastward, she was supposed to have her habitation in the eastern quarter of the world; and often, in the language of ancient poetry, her name signifies the east.]

[Footnote 20: *The realms of Nabath*.--Ver. 61. From Josephus we learn that Nabath, the son of Ishmael, with his eleven brothers, took possession of all the country from the river Euphrates to the Red Sea, and called it Nabathæa. Pliny the Elder and Strabo speak of the Nabatæi as situated between Babylon and Arabia Felix, and call their capital Petra. Tacitus, in his Annals (Book ii. ch. 57), speaks of them as having a king. Perhaps the term 'Nabathæa regna' implies here, generally, the whole of Arabia.]

[Footnote 21: *Are bordering upon Zephyrus*.--Ver. 63. The region where the sun sets, that is to say, the western part of the world, was assigned by the ancients to the Zephyrs, or west winds, so called by a Greek derivation because they cherish and enliven nature.]

[Footnote 22: *Boreas invaded Scythia*.--Ver. 34. Under the name of Scythia, the ancients generally comprehended all the countries situate in the extreme northern regions. 'Septem trio,' meaning the northern region of the world, is so called from the 'Triones,' a constellation of seven stars, near the North Pole, known also as the Ursa Major, or Greater Bear, and among the country people of our time by the name of Charles's Wain. Boreas, one of the names of 'Aquilo,' or the 'north wind,' is derived from a Greek word, signifying 'an eddy.' This name was probably given to it from its causing whirlwinds occasionally by its violence.]

[Footnote 23: *The drizzling South Wind*.--Ver. 66. The South Wind is especially called rainy, because, blowing from the Mediterranean sea on the coast of France and Italy, it generally brings with it clouds and rain.]

[Footnote 24: *The forms of the Gods*.--Ver. 73. There is some doubt what the Poet here means by the 'forms of the Gods.' Some think that the stars are meant, as if it were to be understood that they are forms of the Gods. But it is most probably only a poetical expression for the Gods themselves, and he here assigns the heavens as the habitation of the Gods and the stars; these last, according to the notion of the Platonic philosophers being either intelligent beings, or guided and actuated by such.]

[Footnote 25: *Inhabited by the smooth fishes*.--Ver. 74. 'Cesserunt nitidis habitandæ piscibus;' Clarke translates 'fell to the neat fishes to inhabit.']

[Footnote 26: *Could rule over the rest*.--Ver. 77. This strongly brings to mind the words of the Creator, described in the first chapter of Genesis, ver. 28. 'And God said unto them--*have dominion* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.']

[Footnote 27: *Framed him from divine elements*.--Ver. 78. We have here strong grounds for contending that the ancient philosophers, and after them the poets, in their account of the creation of the world followed a tradition that had been copied from the Books of Moses. The formation of man, in Ovid, as well as in the Book of Genesis, is the last work of the Creator, and was, for the same purpose, that man might have dominion over the other animated works of the creation.]

## Riley's Explanation

According to Ovid, as in the book of Genesis, man is the last work of the Creator. The information derived from Holy Writ is here presented to us, in a disfigured form. Prometheus, who tempers the earth, and Minerva, who animates his workmanship, is God, who formed man, and 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.'

Some writers have labored to prove that this Prometheus, of the heathen Mythology, was a Scriptural character. Bochart believes him to have been the same with Magog, mentioned in the book of Genesis. Prometheus was the son of Iapetus, and Magog was the son of Japhet, who, according to that learned writer, was identical with Iapetus. He says, that as Magog went to settle in Scythia, so did Prometheus; as Magog either invented, or improved, the art of founding metals, and forging iron, so, according to the heathen poets, did Prometheus. Diodorus Siculus asserts that Prometheus was the first to teach mankind how to produce fire from the flint and steel.

The fable of Prometheus being devoured by an eagle, according to some, is founded on the name of Magog, which signifies 'a man devoured by sorrow.' Le Clerc, in his notes on Hesiod, says, that Epimetheus, the brother of Prometheus, was the same with the Gog of Scripture, the brother of Magog. Some writers, again, have exerted their ingenuity to prove that Prometheus is identical with the patriarch Noah.

## Book I, Fable III (lines 89–112)

*The formation of man is followed by a succession of the four ages of the world. The first is the Golden Age, during which Innocence and Justice alone govern the world.*

The Golden Age was first founded, which, without any avenger, of its own accord, without laws, practised both faith and rectitude. Punishment, and the fear {of it}, did not exist, and threatening decrees were not read upon the brazen {tables},[28] fixed up {to view}, nor {yet} did the suppliant multitude dread the countenance of its judge; but {all} were in safety without any avenger. The pine-tree, cut from its {native} mountains, had not yet descended to the flowing waves, that it might visit a foreign region; and mortals were acquainted with no shores beyond their own. Not as yet did deep ditches surround the towns; no trumpets of straightened, or clarions of crooked brass,[29] no helmets, no swords {then} existed. Without occasion for soldiers, the minds {of men}, free from care, enjoyed an easy tranquillity.

The Earth itself, too, in freedom, untouched by the harrow, and wounded by no ploughshares, of its own accord produced everything; and men, contented with the food created under no compulsion, gathered the fruit of the arbute-tree, and the strawberries of the mountain, and cornels, and blackberries adhering to the prickly bramble-bushes, and acorns which had fallen from the wide-spreading tree of Jove. {Then} it was an eternal spring; and the gentle Zephyrs, with their soothing breezes, cherished the flowers produced without any seed. Soon, too, the Earth unploughed yielded crops of grain, and the land, without being renewed, was whitened with the heavy ears of corn. Then, rivers of milk, then, rivers of nectar were flowing, and the yellow honey was distilled from the green holm oak.

[Footnote 28: *Read upon the brazen tables*.--Ver. 91. It was the custom among the Romans to engrave their laws on tables of brass, and fix them in the Capitol, or some other conspicuous place, that they might be open to the view of all.]

[Footnote 29: *Clarions of crooked brass*.--Ver. 98. ‘Cornu’ seems to have been a general name for the horn or trumpet; whereas the “tuba” was a straight trumpet, while the ‘lituus’ was bent into a spiral shape. Lydus says that the ‘lituus’ was the sacerdotal trumpet, and that it was employed by Romulus when he proclaimed the title of his newly-founded city. Acro says that it was peculiar to the cavalry, while the ‘tuba’ belonged to the infantry. The notes of the ‘lituus’ are usually described as harsh and shrill.]

## Riley's Explanation

The heathen poets had learned, most probably from tradition, that our first parents lived for some time in peaceful innocence; that, without tillage, the garden of Eden furnished them with fruit and food in abundance; and that the animals were submissive to their commands: that after the fall the ground became unfruitful, and yielded nothing without labor; and that nature no longer spontaneously acknowledged man for its master. The more happy days of our first parents they seem to have styled the Golden Age, each writer being desirous to make his own country the scene of those times of innocence. The Latin writers, for instance, have placed in Italy, and under the reign of Saturn and Janus, events, which, as they really happened, the Scriptures relate in the histories of Adam and of Noah.

## Book I, Fable IV (lines 113–150)

*In the Silver Age, men begin not to be so just, nor, consequently, so happy, as in the Golden Age. In the Brazen Age, which succeeds, they become yet less virtuous; but their wickedness does not rise to its highest pitch until the Iron Age, when it makes its appearance in all its deformity.*

Afterwards (Saturn being driven into the shady realms of Tartarus), the world was under the sway of Jupiter; {then} the Silver Age succeeded, inferior to {that of} gold, but more precious than {that of} yellow brass. Jupiter shortened the duration of the former spring, and divided the year into four periods by means of winters, and summers, and unsteady autumns, and short springs. Then, for the first time, did the parched air glow with sultry heat, and the ice, bound up by the winds, was pendant. Then, for the first time, did men enter houses; {those} houses were caverns, and thick shrubs, and twigs fastened together with bark. Then, for the first time, were the seeds of Ceres buried in long furrows, and the oxen groaned, pressed by the yoke {of the ploughshare}.

The Age of Brass succeeded, as the third {in order}, after these; fiercer in disposition, and more prone to horrible warfare, but yet free from impiety. The last {Age} was of hard iron. Immediately every species of crime burst forth, in this age of degenerated tendencies;[30] modesty, truth, and honor took flight; in their place succeeded fraud, deceit, treachery, violence, and the cursed hankering for acquisition. The sailor now spread his sails to the winds, and with these, as yet, he was but little acquainted; and {the trees}, which had long stood on the lofty mountains, now, {as} ships bounded[31] through the unknown waves. The ground, too, hitherto common as the light of the sun and the breezes, the cautious measurer marked out with his lengthened boundary.

And not only was the rich soil required to furnish corn and due sustenance, but men even descended into the entrails of the Earth; and riches were dug up, the incentives to vice, which the Earth had hidden, and had removed to the Stygian shades.[32] Then destructive iron came forth, and gold, more destructive than iron; then War came forth, that fights through the means of both,[33] and that brandishes in his blood-stained hands the clattering arms. Men live by rapine; the guest is not safe from his entertainer, nor the father-in-law from the son-in-law; good feeling, too, between brothers is a rarity. The husband is eager for the death of the wife, she {for that} of her husband. Horrible stepmothers {then} mingle the ghastly wolfsbane; the son prematurely makes inquiry[34] into the years of his father. Piety lies vanquished, and the virgin Astræa[35] is the last of the heavenly {Deities} to abandon the Earth, {now} drenched in slaughter.

[Footnote 30: *Age of degenerated tendencies*.--Ver. 128. 'Vena' signifies among other things, a vein or track of metal as it lies in the mine. Literally, 'venæ pejoris' signifies 'of inferior metal.']

[Footnote 31: *Now as ships bounded*.--Ver. 134. 'Insultavere carinæ.' This line is translated by Clarke, 'The keel-pieces bounced over unknown waves.']

[Footnote 32: *To the Stygian shades*.--Ver. 139. That is, in deep caverns, and towards the centre of the earth; for Styx was feigned to be a river of the Infernal Regions, situate in the depths of the earth.]

[Footnote 33: *Through the means of both*.--Ver. 142. Gold forms, perhaps, more properly the sinews of war than iron. The history of Philip of Macedon gives a proof of this, as he conquered Greece more by bribes than the sword, and used to say, that he deemed no fortress impregnable, where there was a gate large enough to admit a camel laden with gold.]

[Footnote 34: *Prematurely makes inquiry*.--Ver. 148. Namely, by inquiring of the magicians and astrologers, that by their skill in casting nativities, they might inform them the time when their parents were likely to die, and to leave them their property.]

[Footnote 35: *Astræa*.--Ver. 150. She was the daughter of Astræus and Aurora, or of Jupiter and Themis, and was the Goddess of Justice. On leaving the earth, she was supposed to have taken her place among the stars as the Constellation of the Virgin.]

### Riley's Explanation

The Poet here informs us, that during the Golden Age, a perpetual spring reigned on the earth, and that the division of the year into seasons was not known until the Silver Age. This allusion to Eden is very generally to be found in the works of the heathen poets. The Silver Age is succeeded by the Brazen, and that is followed by the Iron Age, which still continues. The meaning is, that man gradually degenerated from his primeval innocence, and arrived at that state of wickedness and impiety, of which the history of all ages, ancient and modern, presents us with so many lamentable examples.

The limited nature of their views, and the fact that their exuberant fancy was the source from which they derived many of their alleged events, naturally betrayed the ancient writers into great inconsistencies. For in the Golden Age of Saturn, we find wars waged, and crimes committed. Saturn expelled his father, and seized his throne; Jupiter, his son, treated Saturn as he had done his father Uranus; and Jupiter, in his turn, had to wage war against the Giants, in their attempt to dispossess him of the heavens.

## Book I, Fable V (lines 151–162)

*The Giants having attempted to render themselves masters of heaven, Jupiter buries them under the mountains which they have heaped together to facilitate their assault; and the Earth, animating their blood, forms out of it a cruel and fierce generation of men.*

And that the lofty {realms of} æther might not be more safe than the Earth, they say that the Giants aspired to the sovereignty of Heaven, and piled the mountains, heaped together, even to the lofty stars. Then the omnipotent Father, hurling his lightnings, broke through Olympus,[36] and struck Ossa away from Pelion, that lay beneath it. While the dreadful carcasses lay overwhelmed beneath their own structure, they say that the Earth was wet, drenched with the plenteous blood of her sons, and that she gave life to the warm gore; and that, lest no memorial of this ruthless race should be surviving, she shaped them into the form of men. But that generation, too, was a despiser of the Gods above, and most greedy of ruthless slaughter, and full of violence: you might see that they derived their origin from blood.

[Footnote 36: *Olympus*.--Ver. 154. Olympus was a mountain between Thessaly and Macedonia. Pelion was a mountain of Thessaly, towards the Pelasgic gulf; and Ossa was a mountain between Olympus and Pelion. These the Giants are said to have heaped one on another, in order to scale heaven.]

### Riley's Explanation

The war of the giants, which is here mentioned, is not to be confounded with that between Jupiter and the Titans, who were inhabitants of heaven. The fall of the angels, as conveyed by tradition, probably gave rise to the story of the Titans; while, perhaps, the building of the tower of Babel may have laid the foundation of that of the attempt by the giants to reach heaven. Perhaps, too, the descendants of Cain, who are probably the persons mentioned in Scripture as the children 'of men' and 'giants,' were the race depicted under the form of the Giants, and the generation that sprung from their blood. See Genesis, ch. vi. ver. 2, 4.

## Book I, Fable VI (lines 163–215)

*Jupiter, having seen the crimes of this impious race of men, calls a council of the Gods, and determines to destroy the world.*

When the Father {of the Gods}, the son of Saturn, beheld this from his loftiest height, he groaned aloud; and recalling to memory the polluted banquet on the table of Lycaon, not yet publicly known, from the crime being but lately committed, he conceives in his mind vast wrath, and such as is worthy of Jove, and calls together a council; no delay detains them, thus summoned.

There is a way on high,[37] easily seen in a clear sky, and which, remarkable for its very whiteness, receives the name of the Milky {Way}. Along this is the way for the Gods above to the abode of the great Thunderer and his royal palace. On the right and on the left side the courts of the ennobled Deities[38] are thronged, with open gates. The {Gods of} lower rank[39] inhabit various places; in front {of the Way}, the powerful and illustrious inhabitants of Heaven have established their residence. This is the place which, if boldness may be allowed to my expression, I should not hesitate to style the palatial residence of Heaven. When, therefore, the Gods above had taken their seats in the marble hall of assembly; he himself, elevated on his seat, and leaning on his sceptre of ivory, three or four times shook the awful locks[40] of his head, with which he makes the Earth, the Seas, and the Stars to tremble. Then, after such manner as this, did he open his indignant lips:--

“Not {even} at that time was I more concerned for the empire of the universe, when each of the snake-footed monsters was endeavoring to lay his hundred arms on the captured skies. For although that was a dangerous enemy, yet that war was with but one stock, and sprang from a single origin. Now must the race of mortals be cut off by me, wherever Nereus[41] roars on all sides of the earth; {this} I swear by the Rivers of Hell, that glide in the Stygian grove beneath the earth. All methods have been already tried; but a wound that admits of no cure, must be cut away with the knife, that the sound parts may not be corrupted. I have {as subjects}, Demigods, and I have the rustic Deities, the Nymphs,[42] and the Fauns, and the Satyrs, and the Sylvans, the inhabitants of the mountains; these, though as yet, we have not thought them worthy of the honor of Heaven, let us, at least, permit to inhabit the earth which we have granted them. And do you, ye Gods of Heaven, believe that they will be in proper safety, when Lycaon remarkable for his cruelty, has formed a plot against {even} me, who own and hold sway over the thunder and yourselves?”

All shouted their assent aloud, and with ardent zeal they called for vengeance on one who dared such {crimes}. Thus, when an impious band[43] {madly} raged to extinguish the Roman name in the blood of Cæsar, the human race was astonished with sudden terror at ruin so universal, and the whole earth shook with horror. Nor was the affectionate regard, Augustus, of thy subjects less grateful to thee, than that was to Jupiter. Who, after he had, by means of his voice and his hand, suppressed their murmurs, all of them kept silence. Soon as the clamor had ceased, checked by the authority of their ruler, Jupiter again broke silence in these words:

"He, indeed, (dismiss your cares) has suffered {dire} punishment; but what was the offence and what the retribution, I will inform you. The report of the iniquity of the age had reached my ears; wishing to find this not to be the truth, I descended from the top of Olympus, and, a God in a human shape, I surveyed the earth. 'Twere an endless task to enumerate how great an amount of guilt was everywhere discovered; the report itself was below the truth."

[Footnote 37: *There is a way on high*.--Ver. 168. The Poet here gives a description of the court of heaven; and supposing the galaxy, or Milky Way, to be the great road to the palace of Jupiter, places the habitations of the Gods on each side of it, and adjoining the palace itself. The mythologists also invented a story, that the Milky Way was a track left in the heavens by the milk of Juno flowing from the mouth of Hercules, when suckled by her. Aristotle, however, suspected what has been since confirmed by the investigations of modern science, that it was formed by the light of innumerable stars.]

[Footnote 38: *The ennobled Deities*.--Ver. 172. These were the superior Deities, who formed the privy councillors of Jupiter, and were called 'Di majorum gentium,' or, 'Di consentes.' Reckoning Jupiter as one, they were twelve in number, and are enumerated by Ennius in two limping hexameter lines:--

'Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Jovis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo.']

[Footnote 39: *The Gods of lower rank*.--Ver. 173. These were the 'Dii minorum gentium,' or inferior Deities.]

[Footnote 40: *Shook the awful locks*.--Ver. 179. This awful nod of Jupiter, the sanction by which he confirms his decrees, is an idea taken from Homer; by whom it is so vividly depicted at the end of the first book of the Iliad, that Phidias, in his statue of that God, admired for the awful majesty of its looks, is said to have derived his conception of the features from that description. Virgil has the same idea in the Æneid, book x; 'Annuit, et totum metu tremefecit Olympum.']

[Footnote 41: *Nereus*.--Ver. 187. He was one of the most ancient of the Deities of the sea, and was the son of Oceanus and Tethys.]

[Footnote 42: *The Nymphs*.--Ver. 192. The terrestrial Nymphs were the Dryads and Hamadryads, who haunting the woods, and the duration of their existence depending upon the life of particular trees, derived their name from the Greek word δρῦς, 'an oak.' The Oreades were nymphs who frequented the mountains, while the Napeæ lived in the groves and valleys. There were also Nymphs of the sea and of the rivers; of which, the Nereids were so called from their father Nereus, and the Oceanitides, from Oceanus. There were also the Naiads, or nymphs of the fountains, and many others.]

[Footnote 43: *Thus when an impious band*.--Ver. 200. It is a matter of doubt whether he here refers to the conspiracies of Brutus and Cassius against Julius Cæsar, or whether to that against Augustus, which is mentioned by Suetonius, in the nineteenth chapter of his History. As Augustus survived the latter conspiracy, and the parallel is thereby rendered more complete, probably this is the circumstance here alluded to.]

### Riley's Explanation

It is to be presumed, that Ovid here follows the prevailing tradition of his time; and it is surprising how closely that tradition adheres to the words of Scripture, relative to the determination of the Almighty to punish the earth by a deluge, as disclosed in the sixth chapter of Genesis. The Poet tells us, that the King of heaven calls the Gods to a grand council, to deliberate upon the punishment of mankind, in retribution for their wickedness. The words of Scripture are, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, 'I will destroy man, whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them.'" --Genesis, ch. vi. ver. 5, 6, 7.

Tradition seems to have faithfully carried down the fact, that, amid this universal corruption, there was still at least one just man, and here it attributes to Deucalion the merit that belonged to Noah.

## Book I, Fable VII (lines 216–243)

*Lycaon, king of Arcadia, in order to discover if it is Jupiter himself who has come to lodge in his palace, orders the body of an hostage, who had been sent to him, to be dressed and served up at a feast. The God, as a punishment, changes him into a wolf.*

I had {now} passed Mænalus, to be dreaded for its dens of beasts of prey, and the pine-groves of cold Lycæus, together with Cyllene.[44] After this, I entered the realms and the inhospitable abode of the Arcadian tyrant, just as the late twilight was bringing on the night. I gave a signal that a God had come, and the people commenced to pay their adorations. In the first place, Lycaon derided their pious supplications. Afterwards, he said, I will make trial, by a plain proof, whether this is a God, or whether he is a mortal; nor shall the truth remain a matter of doubt. He then makes preparations to destroy me, when sunk in sleep, by an unexpected death; this mode of testing the truth pleases him. And not content with that, with the sword he cuts the throat of an hostage that had been sent from the nation of the Molossians,[45] and then softens part of the quivering limbs, in boiling water, and part he roasts with fire placed beneath. Soon as he had placed these on the table, I, with avenging flames, overthrew the house upon the household Gods,[46] worthy of their master. Alarmed, he himself takes to flight, and having reached the solitude of the country, he howls aloud, and in vain attempts to speak; his mouth gathers rage from himself, and through its {usual} desire for slaughter, it is directed against the sheep, and even still delights in blood. His garments are changed into hair, his arms into legs; he becomes a wolf, and he still retains vestiges of his ancient form. His hoariness is still the same, the same violence {appears} in his features; his eyes are bright as before; {he is still} the same image of ferocity.

“Thus fell one house; but one house alone did not deserve to perish; wherever the earth extends, the savage Erinnys[47] reigns. You would suppose that men had conspired to be wicked; let all men speedily feel that vengeance which they deserve to endure, for such is my determination.”

[Footnote 44: *Together with Cyllene.*--Ver. 217. Cyllenus, or Cyllene, was a mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Mercury, who was hence called by the poets Cyllenius. Lycæus was also a mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Pan, and was covered with groves of pine-trees.]

[Footnote 45: *Of the Molossians.*--Ver. 226. The Molossi were a people of Epirus, on the eastern side of the Ambracian gulf. Ovid here commits a slight anachronism, as the name was derived from Molossus, the son of Neoptolemus, long after the time of Lycaon. Besides, as Burmann observes, who could believe that ‘wars could be waged at such an early period between nations so distant as the Molossi and the Arcadians?’ Apollodorus says, that it was a child of the same

country, whose flesh Lycaon set before Jupiter. Other writers say that it was Nyctimus, the son of Lycaon, or Arcas, his grandson, that was slain by him.]

[Footnote 46: *Upon the household Gods*.--Ver. 231. This punishment was awarded to the Penates, or household Gods of Lycaon, for taking such a miscreant under their protection.]

[Footnote 47: *The savage Erinnys*.--Ver. 241. Erinnys was a general name given to the Furies by the Greeks. They were three in number--Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megæra. These were so called, either from the Greek ἔρις νοῦ, 'the discord of the mind,' or from ἐν τῇ ἔρα ναίειν, 'their inhabiting the earth,' watching the actions of men.]

## Riley's Explanation

If Ovid is not here committing an anachronism, and making Jupiter, before the deluge, relate the story of a historical personage, who existed long after it, the origin of the story of Lycaon must be sought in the antediluvian narrative. It is just possible that the guilty Cain may have been the original of Lycaon. The names are not very dissimilar: they are each mentioned as the first murderer; and the fact, that Cain murdered Abel at the moment when he was offering sacrifice to the Almighty, may have given rise to the tradition that Lycaon had set human flesh before the king of heaven. The Scripture, too, tells us, that Cain was personally called to account by the Almighty for his deed of blood.

The punishment here inflicted on Lycaon was not very dissimilar to that with which Cain was visited. Cain was sentenced to be a fugitive and a wanderer on the face of the earth; and such is essentially the character of the wolf, shunned by both men and animals. Of course, there are many points to which it is not possible to extend the parallel. Some of the ancient writers tell us, that there were two Lycaons, the first of whom was the son of Phoroneus, who reigned in Arcadia about the time of the patriarch Jacob; and the second, who succeeded him, polluted the festivals of the Gods by the sacrifice of the human race; for, having erected an altar to Jupiter, at the city of Lycosura, he slew human victims on it, whence arose the story related by the Poet. This solution is given by Pausanias, in his Arcadica. We are also told by that historian, and by Suidas, that Lycaon was, notwithstanding, a virtuous prince, the benefactor of his people, and the promoter of improvement.

## Book I, Fable VIII (lines 244–312)

*Jupiter, not thinking the punishment of Lycaon sufficient to strike terror into the rest of mankind, resolves, on account of the universal corruption, to extirpate them by a universal deluge.*

Some, by their words approve the speech of Jupiter, and give spur to him, {indignantly} exclaiming; others, by {silent} assent fulfil their parts. Yet the {entire} destruction of the human race is a cause of grief to them all, and they inquire what is to be the form of the earth in future, when destitute of mankind? who is to place frankincense[48] on the altars? and whether it is his design to give up the nations for a prey to the wild beasts? The ruler of the Gods forbids them making these enquiries, to be alarmed (for that the rest should be his care); and he promises, {that} from a wondrous source {he will raise} a generation unlike the preceding race.

And now he was about to scatter his thunder over all lands; but he was afraid lest, perchance, the sacred æther might catch fire, from so many flames, and the extended sky might become inflamed. He remembers, too, that it was in the {decrees of} Fate, that a time should come,[49] at which the sea, the earth, and the palace of heaven, seized {by the flames}, should be burned, and the laboriously-wrought fabric of the universe should be in danger of perishing. The weapons forged by the hands of the Cyclops are laid aside; a different {mode of} punishment pleases him: to destroy mankind beneath the waves, and to let loose the rains from the whole tract of Heaven. At once he shuts the North Wind in the caverns of Æolus, and {all} those blasts which dispel the clouds drawn over {the Earth}; and {then} he sends forth the South Wind. With soaking wings the South Wind flies abroad, having his terrible face covered with pitchy darkness; his beard {is} loaded with showers, the water streams down from his hoary locks, clouds gather upon his forehead, his wings and the folds of his robe[50] drip with wet; and, as with his broad hand he squeezes the hanging clouds, a crash arises, and thence showers are poured in torrents from the sky. Iris,[51] the messenger of Juno, clothed in various colors, collects the waters, and bears a supply {upwards} to the clouds.

The standing corn is beaten down, and the expectations of the husbandman, {now} lamented by him, are ruined, and the labors of a long year prematurely perish. Nor is the wrath of Jove satisfied with his own heaven; but {Neptune}, his azure brother, aids him with his auxiliary waves. He calls together the rivers, which, soon as they had entered the abode of their ruler, he says, “I must not now employ a lengthened exhortation; pour forth {all} your might, so the occasion requires. Open your abodes, and, {each} obstacle removed, give full rein to your streams.” {Thus} he commanded; they return, and open the mouths of their fountains,[52] and roll on into the ocean with unobstructed course. He himself struck the Earth with his trident,

{on which} it shook, and with a tremor laid open the sources of its waters. The rivers, breaking out, rush through the open plains, and bear away, together with the standing corn, the groves, flocks, men, houses, and temples, together with their sacred {utensils}. If any house remained, and, not thrown down, was able to resist ruin so vast, yet the waves, {rising} aloft, covered the roof of that {house}, and the towers tottered, overwhelmed beneath the stream. And now sea and land had no mark of distinction; everything now was ocean; and to that ocean shores were wanting. One man takes possession of a hill, another sits in a curved boat, and plies the oars there where he had lately ploughed; another sails over the standing corn, or the roof of his country-house under water; another catches a fish on the top of an elm-tree. An anchor (if chance so directs) is fastened in a green meadow, or the curving keels come in contact with the vineyards, {now} below them; and where of late the slender goats had cropped the grass, there unsightly sea-calves are now reposing their bodies.

The Nereids wonder at the groves, the cities, and the houses under water; dolphins get into the woods, and run against the lofty branches, and beat against the tossed oaks. The wolf swims[53] among the sheep; the wave carries along the tawny lions; the wave carries along the tigers. Neither does the powers of his lightning-shock avail the wild boar, nor his swift legs the stag, {now} borne away. The wandering bird, too, having long sought for land, where it may be allowed to light, its wings failing, falls down into the sea. The boundless range of the sea had overwhelmed the hills, and the stranger waves beat against the heights of the mountains. The greatest part is carried off by the water: those whom the water spares, long fastings overcome, through scantiness of food.

[Footnote 48: *To place frankincense*.--Ver. 249. In those early ages, corn or wheaten flour, was the customary offering to the Deities, and not frankincense, which was introduced among the luxuries of more refined times. Ovid is consequently guilty of an anachronism here.]

[Footnote 49: *That a time should come*.--Ver. 256. Lactantius informs us that the Sibyls predicted that the world should perish by fire. Seneca also, in his consolation to Marcia, and in his Quæstiones Naturales, mentions the same destined termination of the present state of the universe. It was a doctrine of the Stoic philosophers, that the stars were nurtured with moisture, and that on the cessation of this nourishment the conflagration of the universe would ensue.]

[Footnote 50: *The folds of his robe*.--Ver. 267. 'Rorant pennæ sinusque,' is quaintly translated by Clarke, 'his wings and the plaits of his coat drop.']

[Footnote 51: *Iris*.--Ver. 271. The mention of Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, in connection with the flood of Deucalion, cannot fail to remind us of the 'bow set in the cloud, for a token of the covenant between God and the earth,' on the termination of Noah's flood.--Gen. x. 14.]

[Footnote 52: *The mouths of their fountains*.--Ver. 281. The expressions in this line and in line 283, are not unlike the words of the 11th verse of the 7th chapter of Genesis, 'The fountains of the great deep were broken up.']

[Footnote 53: *The wolf swims*.--Ver. 304. One commentator remarks here, that there was nothing very wonderful in a dead wolf swimming among the sheep without devouring them. Seneca is, however, too severe upon our author in saying that he is trifling here, in troubling himself on so serious an occasion with what sheep and wolves are doing: for he gravely means to say, that the beasts of prey are terrified to that degree that they forget their carnivorous propensities.]

### Riley's Explanation

Pausanias makes mention of five deluges. The two most celebrated happened in the time of Ogyges, and in that of Deucalion. Of the last Ovid here speaks; and though that deluge was generally said to have overflowed Thessaly only, he has evidently adopted in his narrative the tradition of the universal deluge, which all nations seem to have preserved. He says, that the sea joined its waters to those falling from heaven. The words of Scripture are (Genesis, vii. 11), 'All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.' In speaking of the top of Parnassus alone being left uncovered, the tradition here followed by Ovid probably referred to Mount Ararat, where Noah's ark rested. Noah and his family are represented by Deucalion and Pyrrha. Both Noah and Deucalion were saved for their virtuous conduct; when Noah went out of the ark, he offered solemn sacrifices to God; and Pausanias tells us that Deucalion, when saved, raised an altar to Jupiter the Liberator. The Poet tells us, that Deucalion's deluge was to be the last: God promised the same thing to Noah. Josephus, in his Antiquities, Book i., tells us, that the history of the universal deluge was written by Nicolas of Damascus, Berosus, Mnaseas, and other ancient writers, from whom the Greeks and Romans received it.

## Book I, Fable IX (lines 313–366)

*Neptune appeases the angry waves; and he commands Triton to sound his shell, that the sea may retire within its shores, and the rivers within their banks. Deucalion and Pyrrha are the only persons saved from the deluge.*

Phocis separates the Aonian[54] from the Actæan region; a fruitful land while it was a land; but at that time {it had become} a part of the sea, and a wide plain of sudden waters. There a lofty mountain rises towards the stars, with two tops, by name Parnassus,[55] and advances beyond the clouds with its summit. When here Deucalion (for the sea had covered all other places), borne in a little ship, with the partner of his couch, {first} rested; they adored the Corycian Nymphs,[56] and the Deities of the mountain, and the prophetic Themis,[57] who at that time used to give out oracular responses. No man was there more upright than he, nor a greater lover of justice, nor was any woman more regardful of the Deities than she.

Soon as Jupiter {beholds} the world overflowed by liquid waters, and sees that but one man remains out of so many thousands of late, and sees that but one woman remains out of so many thousands of late, both guiltless, and both worshippers of the Gods, he disperses the clouds; and the showers being removed by the North Wind, he both lays open the earth to the heavens, and the heavens to the earth. The rage, too, of the sea does not continue; and his three-forked trident {now} laid aside, the ruler of the deep assuages the waters, and calls upon the azure Triton standing above the deep, and having his shoulders covered with the native purple shells;[58] and he bids him blow[59] his resounding trumpet, and, the signal being given, to call back the waves and the streams. The hollow-wreathed trumpet[60] is taken up by him, which grows to a {great} width from its lowest twist; the trumpet, which, soon as it receives the air in the middle of the sea, fills with its notes the shores lying under either sun. Then, too, as soon as it touched the lips of the God dripping with his wet beard, and being blown, sounded the bidden retreat; [61] it was heard by all the waters both of earth and sea, and stopped all those waters by which it was heard. Now the sea[62] {again} has a shore; their channels receive the full rivers; the rivers subside; the hills are seen to come forth. The ground rises, places increase {in extent} as the waters decrease; and after a length of time, the woods show their naked tops, and retain the mud left upon their branches.

The world was restored; which when Deucalion beheld to be empty, and how the desolate Earth kept a profound silence, he thus addressed Pyrrha, with tears bursting forth:--“O sister, O wife, O thou, the only woman surviving, whom a common origin,[63] and a kindred descent, and afterwards the marriage tie has united to me, and {whom} now dangers themselves unite to me; we two are the whole people of the earth, whatever {both} the East and the West behold; of all

the rest, the sea has taken possession. And even now there is no certain assurance of our lives; even yet do the clouds terrify my mind. What would now have been thy feelings, if without me thou hadst been rescued from destruction, O thou deserving of compassion? In what manner couldst thou have been able alone to support {this} terror? With whom for a consoler, {to endure} these sorrows? For I, believe me, my wife, if the sea had only carried thee off, should have followed thee, and the sea should have carried me off as well. Oh that I could replace the people {that are lost} by the arts of my father,[64] and infuse the soul into the moulded earth! Now the mortal race exists in us two {alone}. Thus it has seemed good to the Gods, and we remain as {mere} samples of mankind."

[Footnote 54: *The Aonian*.--Ver. 313. Aonia was a mountainous region of Bœotia; and Actæa was an ancient name of Attica, from ἄκτη, the sea-shore.]

[Footnote 55: *By name Parnassus*.--Ver. 317. Mount Parnassus has two peaks, of which the one was called 'Tichoreum,' and was sacred to Bacchus; and the other 'Hypampeum,' and was devoted to Apollo and the Muses.]

[Footnote 56: *The Corycian Nymphs*.--Ver. 320. The Corycian Nymphs were so called from inhabiting the Corycian cavern in Mount Parnassus; they were fabled to be the daughters of Plistus, a river near Delphi. There was another Corycian cave in Cilicia, in Asia Minor.]

[Footnote 57: *The prophetic Themis*.--Ver. 321. Themis is said to have preceded Apollo in giving oracular responses at Delphi. She was the daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and was the first to instruct men to ask of the Gods that which was lawful and right, whence she took the name of Themis, which signifies in Greek, 'that which is just and right.']

[Footnote 58: *The native purple shells*.--Ver. 332. 'Murex' was the name of the shell-fish from which the Tyrian purple, so much valued by the ancients, was procured. Some suppose that the meaning here is, that Triton had his shoulders tinted with the purple color of the murex. It is, however, more probable that the Poet means to say that he had his neck and shoulders studded with the shells of the murex, perhaps as a substitute for scales.]

[Footnote 59: *He bids him blow*.--Ver. 333. There were several Tritons, or minor sea gods. The one mentioned here, the chief Triton, was fabled to be the son of Neptune and Amphitrite, who always preceded Neptune in his course, and whose arrival he was wont to proclaim by the sound of his shell. He was usually represented as swimming, with the upper part of his body resembling that of a human being, while his lower parts terminated with the tail of a fish.]

[Footnote 60: *The hollow-wreathed trumpet*.--Ver. 335. The 'Buccina,' or, as we call it, 'the conch shell,' was a kind of horn, or trumpet, made out of a shell, called 'buccinum.' It was

sometimes artificially curved, and sometimes straight, retaining the original form of the shell. The twisted form of the shell was one of the characteristic features of the trumpet, which, in later times, was made of horn, wood, or metal, so as to imitate the shell. It was chiefly used among the Romans, to proclaim the watches of the day and of the night, which watches were thence called 'buccina prima,' 'secunda,' etc. It was also blown at funerals, and at festive entertainments, both before sitting down to table and after. Macrobius tells us, that Tritons holding 'buccinæ' were fixed on the roof of the temple of Saturn.]

[Footnote 61: *The bidden retreat*.--Ver. 340. 'Canere receptus' was 'to sound the retreat,' as the signal for the soldiers to cease fighting, and to resume their march.]

[Footnote 62: *Now the sea*.--Ver. 343. This and the two following lines are considered as entitled to much praise for their terseness and brevity, as depicting by their short detached sentences the instantaneous effect produced by the commands of Neptune in reducing his dominions to a state of order.]

[Footnote 63: *A common origin*.--Ver. 352. Because Prometheus was the father of Deucalion and Epimetheus of Pyrrha; Prometheus and Epimetheus being the sons of Iapetus. It is in an extended sense that he styles her 'sister,' she being really his cousin.]

[Footnote 64: *The arts of my father*.--Ver. 363. He alludes to the story of his father, Prometheus, having formed men of clay, and animated them with fire stolen from heaven.]

### Riley's Explanation

Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, were, perhaps, originally three brothers, kings of three separate kingdoms. Having been deified each retaining his sovereignty, they were depicted as having the world divided between them; the empire of the sea falling to the share of Neptune. Among his occupations, were those of raising and calming the seas; and Ovid here represents him as being so employed.

## Book I, Fable X (lines 367–415)

*Deucalion and Pyrrha re-people the earth by casting stones behind them, in the manner prescribed by the Goddess Themis, whose oracle they had consulted.*

He {thus} spoke, and they wept. They resolved to pray to the Deities of Heaven, and to seek relief through the sacred oracles. There is no delay; together they repair to the waters of Cephisus,[65] though not yet clear, yet now cutting their wonted channel. Then, when they have sprinkled the waters poured on their clothes[66] and their heads, they turn their steps to the temple of the sacred Goddess, the roof of which was defiled with foul moss, and whose altars were standing without fires. Soon as they reached the steps of the temple, each of them fell prostrate on the ground, and, trembling, gave kisses to the cold pavement. And thus they said:

"If the Deities, prevailed upon by just prayers, are to be mollified, if the wrath of the Gods is to be averted; tell us, O Themis, by what art the loss of our race is to be repaired, and give thy assistance, O most gentle {Goddess} to our ruined fortunes." The Goddess was moved, and gave this response: "Depart from my temple, and cover your heads,[67] and loosen the garments girt {around you}, and throw behind your backs the bones of your great mother." For a long time they are amazed; and Pyrrha is the first by her words to break the silence, and {then} refuses to obey the commands of the Goddess; and begs her, with trembling lips, to grant her pardon, and dreads to offend the shades of her mother by casting her bones. In the meantime they reconsider the words of the response given, {but} involved in dark obscurity, and they ponder them among themselves. Upon that, the son of Prometheus soothes the daughter of Epimetheus with {these} gentle words, and says, "Either is my discernment fallacious, or the oracles are just, and advise no sacrilege. The earth is the great mother; I suspect that the stones in the body of the earth are the bones meant; these we are ordered to throw behind our backs." Although she, descended from Titan,[68] is moved by this interpretation of her husband, still her hope is involved in doubt; so much do they both distrust the advice of heaven; but what harm will it do to try?

They go down, and they veil their heads, and ungird their garments, and cast stones, as ordered, behind their footsteps. The stones (who could have believed it, but that antiquity is a witness {of the thing?}) began to lay aside their hardness and their stiffness, and by degrees to become soft; and when softened, to assume a {new} form. Presently after, when they were grown larger, a milder nature, too, was conferred on them, so that some shape of man might be seen {in them}, yet though but imperfect; and as if from the marble commenced {to be wrought}, not sufficiently distinct, and very like to rough statues. Yet that part of them which was humid with any moisture, and earthy, was turned into {portions adapted for} the use of the body. That which is solid, and cannot be bent, is changed into bones; that which was just now a vein, still remains

under the same name.[69] And in a little time, by the interposition of the Gods above, the stones thrown by the hands of the man, took the shape of a man, and the female {race} was renewed by the throwing of the woman. Thence are we a hardy generation, and able to endure fatigue, and we give proofs from what original we are sprung.

[Footnote 65: *The waters of Cephisus*.--Ver. 369. The river Cephisus rises on Mount Parnassus, and flows near Delphi.]

[Footnote 66: *Poured on their clothes*.--Ver. 371. It was the custom of the ancients, before entering a temple, either to sprinkle themselves with water, or to wash the body all over.]

[Footnote 67: *Cover your heads*.--Ver. 382. It was a custom among the ancients to cover their heads in sacrifice and other acts of worship, either as a mark of humility, or, according to Plutarch, that nothing of ill omen might meet their sight, and thereby interrupt the performance of the rites.]

[Footnote 68: *Descended from Titan*.--Ver. 395. Pyrrha was of the race of the Titans; for Iapetus, her grandfather, was the son of Titan and Terra.]

[Footnote 69: *Under the same name*.--Ver. 410. With his usual propensity for punning, he alludes to the use of the word 'vena,' as signifying either 'a vein' of the body, or a 'streak' or 'vein' in stone, according to the context.]

### Riley's Explanation

In the reign of Deucalion, king of Thessaly, the course of the river Peneus was stopped, probably by an earthquake. In the same year so great a quantity of rain fell, that all Thessaly was overflowed. Deucalion and some of his subjects fled to Mount Parnassus; where they remained until the waters abated. The children of those who were preserved are the stones of which the Poet here speaks. The Fable, probably, has for its foundation the double meaning of the word 'Eben,' or 'Aben,' which signifies either 'a stone,' or 'a child.' The Scholiast on Pindar tells us, too, that the word λάος, which means people, formerly also signified 'a stone.'

The brutal and savage nature of the early races of men may also have added strength to the tradition that they derived their original from stones. After the inundation, Deucalion is said to have repaired to Athens, where he built a temple to Jupiter, and instituted sacrifices in his honor. Some suppose that Cranaus reigned at Athens when Deucalion retired thither; though Eusebius informs us it was under the reign of Cecrops. Deucalion was the son of Prometheus, and his wife Pyrrha was the daughter of his uncle, Epimetheus. After his death, he received the honor of a temple, and was worshipped as a Divinity.

## Book I, Fable XI (lines 416–451)

*The Earth, being warmed by the heat of the sun, produces many monsters: among others, the serpent Python, which Apollo kills with his arrows. To establish a memorial of this event, he institutes the Pythian games, and adopts the surname of Pythius.*

The Earth of her own accord brought forth other animals of different forms; after that the former moisture was thoroughly heated by the rays of the sun, and the mud and the wet fens fermented with the heat; and the fruitful seeds of things nourished by the enlivening soil, as in the womb of a mother, grew, and, in lapse of time, assumed some {regular} shape. Thus, when the seven-streamed Nile[70] has forsaken the oozy fields, and has returned its waters to their ancient channel, and the fresh mud has been heated with the æthereal sun, the laborers, on turning up the clods, meet with very many animals, and among them, some just begun at the very moment of their formation, and some they see {still} imperfect, and {as yet} destitute of {some} of their limbs; and often, in the same body, is one part animated, the other part is coarse earth. For when moisture and heat have been subjected to a due mixture, they conceive; and all things arise from these two.

And although fire is the antagonist of heat, {yet} a moist vapor creates all things, and this discordant concord is suited for generation; when, therefore, the Earth, covered with mud by the late deluge, was thoroughly heated by the æthereal sunshine and a penetrating warmth, it produced species {of creatures} innumerable; and partly restored the former shapes, and partly gave birth to new monsters. She, indeed, might have been unwilling, but then she produced thee as well, thou enormous Python; and thou, unheard-of serpent, wast a {source of} terror to this new race of men, so vast a part of a mountain didst thou occupy.

The God that bears the bow, and that had never before used such arms, but against the deer and the timorous goats, destroyed him, overwhelmed with a thousand arrows, his quiver being well-nigh exhausted, {as} the venom oozed forth through the black wounds; and that length of time might not efface the fame of the deed, he instituted sacred games,[71] with contests famed {in story}, called “Pythia,” from the name of the serpent {so} conquered. In these, whosoever of the young men conquered in boxing, in running, or in chariot-racing, received the honor of a crown of beechen leaves.[72] As yet the laurel existed not, and Phœbus used to bind his temples, graceful with long hair, with {garlands from} any tree.

[Footnote 70: *The seven-streamed Nile*.--Ver. 423. The river Nile discharges itself into the sea by seven mouths. It is remarkable for its inundations, which happen regularly every year, and overflow the whole country of Egypt. To this is chiefly owing the extraordinary fertility of the soil

of that country; for when the waters subside, they leave behind them great quantities of mud, which, settling upon the land, enrich it, and continually reinvigorate it.]

[Footnote 71: *Instituted sacred games*.--Ver. 446. Yet Pausanias, in his Corinthiaca, tells us that they were instituted by Diomedes; others, again, say by Eurylochus the Thessalian; and others, by Amphictyon, or Adrastus. The Pythian games were celebrated near Delphi, on the Crissæan plain, which contained a race-course, a stadium of 1000 feet in length, and a theatre, in which the musical contests took place. They were once held at Athens, by the advice of Demetrius Poliorcetes, because the Ætolians were in possession of the passes round Delphi. They were most probably originally a religious ceremonial, and were perhaps only a musical contest, which consisted in singing a hymn in honor of the Pythian God, accompanied by the music of the cithara. In later times, gymnastic and equestrian games and exercises were introduced there. Previously to the 48th Olympiad, the Pythian games had been celebrated at the end of every eighth year; after that period they were held at the end of every fourth year. When they ceased to be solemnized is unknown; but in the time of the Emperor Julian they still continued to be held.]

[Footnote 72: *Crown of beechen leaves*.--Ver. 449. This was the prize which was originally given to the conquerors in the Pythian games. In later times, as Ovid tells us, the prize of the victor was a laurel chaplet, together with the palm branch, symbolical of his victory.]

### Riley's Explanation

The story of the serpent Python, being explained on philosophical principles, seems to mean, that the heat of the sun, having dissipated the noxious exhalations emitted by the receding waters, the reptiles, which had been produced from the slime left by the flood, immediately disappeared.

If, however, we treat this narrative as based on historical facts, it is probable that the serpent represented some robber who infested the neighborhood of Parnassus, and molested those who passed that way for the purpose of offering sacrifice. A prince, either bearing the name of Apollo, or being a priest of that God, by his destruction liberated that region from this annoyance. This event gave rise to the institution of the Pythian games, which were celebrated near Delphi. Besides the several contests mentioned by Ovid, singing, dancing, and instrumental music, formed part of the exercises of these games. The event which Ovid here places soon after the deluge, must have happened much later, since in the time of Deucalion, the worship of Apollo was not known at Delphi. The Goddess Themis then delivered oracles there, which, previously to her time, had been delivered by the Earth.

## Book I, Fable XII (lines 452–567)

*Apollo, falling in love with Daphne, the daughter of the river Peneus, she flies from him. He pursues her; on which, the Nymph, imploring the aid of her father, is changed into a laurel.*

Daphne, the daughter of Peneus, was the first love of Phœbus; whom, not blind chance, but the vengeful anger of Cupid assigned to him.

The Delian {God},[73] proud of having lately subdued the serpent, had seen him bending the bow and drawing the string, and had said, “What hast thou to do, wanton boy, with gallant arms? Such a burden as that {better} befits my shoulders; I, who am able to give unerring wounds to the wild beasts, {wounds} to the enemy, who lately slew with arrows innumerable the swelling Python, that covered so many acres {of land} with his pestilential belly. Do thou be contented to excite I know not what flames with thy torch; and do not lay claim to praises {properly} my own.”

To him the son of Venus replies, “Let thy bow shoot all things, Phœbus; my bow {shall shoot} thee; and as much as all animals fall short of thee, so much is thy glory less than mine.” He {thus} said; and cleaving the air with his beating wings, with activity he stood upon the shady heights of Parnassus, and drew two weapons out of his arrow-bearing quiver, of different workmanship; the one repels, the other excites desire. That which causes {love} is of gold, and is brilliant, with a sharp point; that which repels it is blunt, and contains lead beneath the reed. This one the God fixed in the Nymph, the daughter of Peneus, but with the other he wounded the {very} marrow of Apollo, through his bones pierced {by the arrow}. Immediately the one is in love; the other flies from the {very} name of a lover, rejoicing in the recesses of the woods, and in the spoils of wild beasts taken {in hunting}, and becomes a rival of the virgin Phœbe. A fillet tied together[74] her hair, put up without any order. Many a one courted her; she hated all wooers; not able to endure, and quite unacquainted with man, she traverses the solitary parts of the woods, and she cares not what Hymen,[75] what love, {or} what marriage means. Many a time did her father say, “My daughter, thou owest me a son-in-law;” many a time did her father say, “My daughter, thou owest me grandchildren.” She, utterly abhorring the nuptial torch,[76] as though a crime, has her beauteous face covered with the blush of modesty; and clinging to her father’s neck, with caressing arms, she says, “Allow me, my dearest father, to enjoy perpetual virginity; her father, in times, bygone, granted this to Diana.”

He indeed complied. But that very beauty forbids thee to be what thou wishest, and the charms of thy person are an impediment to thy desires. Phœbus falls in love, and he covets an alliance with Daphne, {now} seen by him, and what he covets he hopes for, and his own oracles deceive

him; and as the light stubble is burned, when the ears of corn are taken off, and as hedges are set on fire by the torches, which perchance a traveller has either held too near them, or has left {there}, now about the break of day, thus did the God burst into a flame; thus did he burn throughout his breast, and cherish a fruitless passion with his hopes. He beholds her hair hanging unadorned upon her neck, and he says, "And what would {it be} if it were arranged?" He sees her eyes, like stars, sparkling with fire; he sees her lips, which it is not enough to have {merely} seen; he praises both her fingers and her hands, and her arms and her shoulders naked, from beyond the middle; whatever is hidden from view, he thinks to be still more beauteous. Swifter than the light wind she flies, and she stops not at these words of his, as he calls her back:

"O Nymph, daughter of Peneus, stay, I entreat thee! I am not an enemy following thee. In this way the lamb {flies} from the wolf; thus the deer {flies} from the lion; thus the dove flies from the eagle with trembling wing; {in this way} each {creature flies from} its enemy: love is the cause of my following thee. Ah! wretched me! shouldst thou fall on thy face, or should the brambles tear thy legs, that deserve not to be injured, and should I prove the cause of pain to thee. The places are rugged, through which thou art {thus} hastening; run more leisurely, I entreat thee, and restrain thy flight; I myself will follow more leisurely. And yet, inquire whom thou dost please; I am not an inhabitant of the mountains, I am not a shepherd; I am not here, in rude guise,[77] watching the herds or the flocks. Thou knowest not, rash girl, thou knowest not from whom thou art flying, and therefore it is that thou dost fly. The Delphian land, Claros and Tenedos,[78] and the Pataræan palace pays service to me. Jupiter is my sire; by me, what shall be, what has been, and what is, is disclosed; through me, songs harmonize with the strings. My own {arrow}, indeed, is unerring; yet one there is still more unerring than my own, which has made this wound in my heart, {before} unscathed. The healing art is my discovery, and throughout the world I am honored as the bearer of help, and the properties of simples are[79] subjected to me. Ah, wretched me![80] that love is not to be cured by any herbs; and that those arts which afford relief to all, are of no avail for their master."

The daughter of Peneus flies from him, about to say still more, with timid step, and together with him she leaves his unfinished address. Then, too, she appeared lovely; the winds exposed her form to view, and the gusts meeting her fluttered about her garments, as they came in contact, and the light breeze spread behind her her careless locks; and {thus}, by her flight, was her beauty increased. But the youthful God[81] has not patience any longer to waste his blandishments; and as love urges him on, he follows her steps with hastening pace. As when the greyhound[82] has seen the hare in the open field, and the one by {the speed of} his legs pursues his prey, the other {seeks} her safety; the one is like as if just about to fasten {on the other}, and now, even now, hopes to catch her, and with nose outstretched plies upon the footsteps {of the

hare}. The other is in doubt whether she is caught {already}, and is delivered from his very bite, and leaves behind the mouth {just} touching her. {And} so is the God, and {so} is the virgin;[83] he swift with hopes, she with fear.

Yet he that follows, aided by the wings of love, is the swifter, and denies her {any} rest; and is {now} just at her back as she flies, and is breathing upon her hair scattered upon her neck. Her strength being {now} spent, she grows pale, and being quite faint, with the fatigue of so swift a flight, looking upon the waters of Peneus, she says, "Give me, my father, thy aid, if you rivers have divine power. Oh Earth, either yawn {to swallow me}, or by changing it, destroy that form, by which I have pleased too much, and which causes me to be injured."

Hardly had she ended her prayer, {when} a heavy torpor seizes her limbs; {and} her soft breasts are covered with a thin bark. Her hair grows into green leaves, her arms into branches; her feet, the moment before so swift, adhere by sluggish roots; a {leafy} canopy overspreads her features; her elegance alone[84] remains in her. This, too, Phœbus admires, and placing his right hand upon the stock, he perceives that the breast still throbs beneath the new bark; and {then}, embracing the branches as though limbs in his arms, he gives kisses to the wood, {and} yet the wood shrinks from his kisses. To her the God said: "But since thou canst not be my wife, at least thou shalt be my tree; my hair, my lyre,[85] my quiver shall always have thee, oh laurel! Thou shalt be presented to the Latian chieftains, when the joyous voice of the soldiers shall sing the song of triumph,[86] and the long procession shall resort to the Capitol. Thou, the same, shalt stand as a most faithful guardian at the gate-posts of Augustus before his doors,[87] and shalt protect the oak placed in the centre; and as my head is {ever} youthful with unshorn locks, do thou, too, always wear the lasting honors of thy foliage."

Pæan had ended {his speech}; the laurel nodded assent with its new-made boughs, and seemed to shake its top just like a head.

[Footnote 73: *The Delian God*.--Ver. 454. Apollo is so called, from having been born in the Isle of Delos, in the Ægean Sea. The Peneus was a river of Thessaly.]

[Footnote 74: *A fillet tied together*.--Ver. 477. The 'vitta' was a band encircling the head, and served to confine the tresses of the hair. It was worn by maidens and by married women also; but the 'vitta' assumed on the day of marriage was of a different form from that used by virgins. It was not worn by women of light character, or even by the 'libertinæ,' or female slaves who had been liberated; so that it was not only deemed an emblem of chastity, but of freedom also. It was of various colors: white and purple are mentioned. In the later ages the 'vitta' was sometimes set with pearls.]

[Footnote 75: *Hymen*.--Ver. 480. Hymen, or Hymenæus, was one of the Gods of Marriage; hence the name 'Hymen' was given to the union of two persons in marriage.]

[Footnote 76: *The nuptial torch*.--Ver. 483. Plutarch tells us, that it was the custom in the bridal procession to carry five torches before the bride, on her way to the house of her husband. Among the Romans, the nuptial torch was lighted at the parental hearth of the bride, and was borne before her by a boy, whose parents were alive. The torch was also used at funerals, for the purpose of lighting the pile, and because funerals were often nocturnal ceremonies. Hence the expression of Propertius,-- 'Vivimus inter utramque facem,' 'We are living between the two torches.' Originally, the 'tædæ' seem to have been slips or lengths of resinous pine wood: while the 'fax' was formed of a bundle of wooden staves, either bound by a rope drawn round them in a spiral form, or surrounded by circular bands at equal distances. They were used by travellers and others, who were forced to be abroad after sunset; whence the reference in line 493 to the hedge ignited through the carelessness of the traveller, who has thrown his torch there on the approach of morning.]

[Footnote 77: *Here in rude guise*.--Ver. 514. 'Non hic armenta gregesve Horridus observo' is quaintly translated by Clarke, 'I do not here in a rude pickle watch herds or flocks.']

[Footnote 78: *Claros and Tenedos*.--Ver. 516. Claros was a city of Ionia, famed for a temple and oracle of Apollo, and near which there was a mountain and a grove sacred to him. There was an island in the Myrtoan Sea of that name, to which some suppose that reference is here made. Tenedos was an island of the Ægean Sea, in the neighborhood of Troy. Patara was a city of Lycia, where Apollo gave oracular responses during six months of the year. It was from Patara that St. Paul took ship for Phœnicia, Acts, xxi. 1, 2.]

[Footnote 79: *The properties of simples*.--Ver. 522. The first cultivators of the medical art pretended to nothing beyond an acquaintance with the medicinal qualities of herbs and simples; it is not improbable that inasmuch as the vegetable world is nourished and raised to the surface of the earth in a great degree by the heat of the sun, a ground was thereby afforded for allegorically saying that Apollo, or the Sun, was the discoverer of the healing art.]

[Footnote 80: *Ah! wretched me!*--Ver. 523. A similar expression occurs in the Heroides, v. 149, 'Me miseram, quod amor non est medicabilis herbis.']

[Footnote 81: *The youthful God*.--Ver. 531. Apollo was always represented as a youth, and was supposed never to grow old. The Scholiast on the Thebais of Statius, b. i., v. 694, says, 'The reason is, because Apollo is the Sun; and because the Sun is fire, which never grows old.' Perhaps the youthfulness of the Deity is here mentioned, to account for his ardent pursuit of the flying damsel.]

[Footnote 82: *As when the greyhound*.--Ver. 533. The comparison here of the flight of Apollo after Daphne, to that of the greyhound after the hare, is considered to be very beautifully drawn, and to give an admirable illustration of the eagerness with which the God pursues on the one hand, and the anxiety with which the Nymph endeavors to escape on the other. Pope, in his Windsor Forest, has evidently imitated this passage, where he describes the Nymph Lodona pursued by Pan, and transformed into a river. His words are--

'Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly, When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky; Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves, When through the clouds he drives the trembling doves; As from the God she flew with furious pace, Or as the God more furious urged the chase. Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears; Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears; And now his shadow reach'd her as she run, His shadow lengthened by the setting sun; And now his shorter breath, with sultry air, Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.'

The greyhound was probably called 'canis Gallicus,' from having been originally introduced into Italy from Gaul. 'Vertagus' was their Gallic name, which we find used by Martial, and Gratian in his Cynegeticon, ver. 203.]

[Footnote 83: *And so is the virgin*.--Ver. 539. 'Sic Deus et virgo est' is translated by Clarke, 'So is the God and the young lady;' indeed, he mostly translates 'virgo,' 'young lady.']

[Footnote 84: *Her elegance alone*.--Ver. 552. Clarke translates 'Remanet nitor unus in illa,' 'her neatness alone continues in her.']

[Footnote 85: *My lyre*.--Ver. 559. The players of the cithara, the instrument of Apollo, were crowned with laurel, in the scenic representations of the stage.]

[Footnote 86: *The song of triumph*.--Ver. 560. The Poet here pays a compliment to Augustus and the Roman people. The laurel was the emblem of victory among the Romans. On such occasions the 'fasces' of the general and the spears and javelins of the soldiers were wreathed with laurel; and after the time of Julius Cæsar, the Roman general, when triumphing, wore a laurel wreath on his head, and held a branch of laurel in his hand.]

[Footnote 87: *Before his doors*.--Ver. 562. He here alludes to the civic crown of oak leaves which, by order of the Senate, was placed before the gate of the Palatium, where Augustus Cæsar resided, with branches of laurel on either side of it.]

### Riley's Explanation

To explain this Fable, it must be laid down as a principle that there were originally many Jupiters, and Apollos, and Mercuries, whose intrigues being, in lapse of time, attributed to but

one individual, that fact accounts for the great number of children which claimed those respective Gods for their fathers.

Some prince probably, for whom his love of learning had acquired the name of Apollo, falling in love with Daphne, pursued her to the brink of the river Peneus, into which, being accidentally precipitated, she perished in her lover's sight. Some laurels growing near the spot, perhaps gave rise to the story of her transformation; or possibly the etymology of the word 'Daphne,' which in Greek signifies a laurel, was the foundation of the Fable. Pausanias, however, in his Arcadia, gives another version of this story. He says that Leucippus, son of Œnomaus, king of Pisa, falling in love with Daphne, disguised himself in female apparel, and devoted himself to her service. He soon procured her friendship and confidence; but Apollo, who was his rival, having discovered his fraud, one day redoubled the heat of the sun. Daphne and her companions going to bathe, obliged Leucippus to follow their example, on which, having discovered his stratagem, they killed him with the arrows which they carried for the purposes of hunting.

Diodorus Siculus tells us that Daphne was the same with Manto, the daughter of Tiresias, who was banished to Delphi, where she delivered oracles, of the language of which Homer availed himself in the composition of his poems. The inhabitants of Antioch asserted that the adventure here narrated happened in the suburbs of their city, which thence derived its name of Daphne.

## Book I, Fable XIII (lines 568–600)

*Jupiter, pursuing Io, the daughter of Inachus, covers the earth with darkness, and ravishes the Nymph.*

There is a grove of Hæmonia,[88] which a wood, placed on a craggy rock, encloses on every side. They call it Tempe;[89] through this the river Peneus, flowing from the bottom of {mount} Pindus,[90] rolls along with its foaming waves, and in its mighty fall, gathers clouds that scatter {a vapor like} thin smoke,[91] and with its spray besprinkles the tops of the woods, and wearies places, far from near to it, with its noise. This is the home, this the abode, these are the retreats of the great river; residing here in a cavern formed by rocks, he gives law to the waters, and to the Nymphs that inhabit those waters. The rivers of that country first repair thither, not knowing whether they should congratulate, or whether console the parent; the poplar-bearing Spercheus, [92] and the restless Enipeus,[93] the aged Apidanus,[94] the gentle Amphrysus,[95] and Æas, [96] and, soon after, the other rivers, which, as their current leads them, carry down into the sea their waves, wearied by wanderings. Inachus[97] alone is absent, and, hidden in his deepest cavern, increases his waters with his tears, and in extreme wretchedness bewails his daughter Io as lost; he knows not whether she {now} enjoys life, or whether she is among the shades below; but her, whom he does not find anywhere, he believes to be nowhere, and in his mind he dreads the worst.

Jupiter had seen Io as she was returning from her father's stream, and had said, "O maid, worthy of Jove, and destined to make I know not whom happy in thy marriage, repair to the shades of this lofty grove (and he pointed at the shade of the grove) while it is warm, and {while} the Sun is at his height, in the midst of his course. But if thou art afraid to enter the lonely abodes of the wild beasts alone, thou shalt enter the recesses of the groves, safe under the protection of a God, and {that} a God of no common sort; but {with me}, who hold the sceptre of heaven in my powerful hand; {me}, who hurl the wandering lightnings--Do not fly from me;" for {now} she was flying. And now she had left behind the pastures of Lerna,[98] and the Lircæan plains planted with trees, when the God covered the earth far and wide with darkness overspreading, and arrested her flight, and forced her modesty.

[Footnote 88: *A grove of Hæmonia.*--Ver. 568. Hæmonia was an ancient name of Thessaly, so called from its king, Hæmon, a son of Pelasgus, and father of Thessalus, from which it received its later name.]

[Footnote 89: *Call it Tempe.*--Ver. 569. Tempe was a valley of Thessaly, proverbial for its pleasantness and the beauty of its scenery. The river Peneus ran through it, but not with the

violence which Ovid here depicts; for Ælian tells us that it runs with a gentle sluggish stream, more like oil than water.]

[Footnote 90: *Mount Pindus*.--Ver. 570. Pindus was a mountain situate on the confines of Thessaly.]

[Footnote 91: *Like thin smoke*.--Ver. 571. He speaks of the spray, which in the fineness of its particles resembles smoke.]

[Footnote 92: *Spercheus*.--Ver. 579. The Spercheus was a rapid stream, flowing at the foot of Mount Æta into the Malian Gulf, and on whose banks many poplars grew.]

[Footnote 93: *Enipeus*.--Ver. 579. The Enipeus rises in Mount Othrys, and runs through Thessaly. Virgil (Georgics, iv. 468) calls it 'Altus Enipeus,' the deep Enipeus.]

[Footnote 94: *Apidanus*.--Ver. 580. The Apidanus, receiving the stream of the Enipeus at Pharsalia, flows into the Peneus. It is supposed by some commentators to be here called 'senex,' aged, from the slowness of its tide. But where it unites the Enipeus it flows with violence, so that it is probably called 'senex,' as having been known and celebrated by the poets from of old.]

[Footnote 95: *Amphrysus*.--Ver. 580. This river ran through that part of Thessaly known by the name of Phthiotis.]

[Footnote 96: *Æas*.--Ver. 580. Pliny the Elder (Book iii, ch. 23) calls this river Aous. It was a small limpid stream, running through Epirus and Thessaly, and discharging itself into the Ionian sea.]

[Footnote 97: *Inachus*.--Ver. 583. This was a river of Argolis, now known as the Naio. It took its rise either in Lycæus or Artemisium, mountains of Arcadia. Stephens, however, thinks that Lycæus was a mountain of Argolis.]

[Footnote 98: *Lerna*.--Ver. 597. This was a swampy spot on the Argive territory, where the poets say that the dragon with seven heads, called Hydra, which was slain by Hercules, had made his haunt. It is not improbable that the pestilential vapors of this spot were got rid of by means of its being drained under the superintendence of Hercules, on which fact the story was founded. Some commentators, however, suppose the Lerna to have been a flowing stream.]

### Riley's Explanation

The Greeks frequently embellished their mythology with narratives of Phœnician or Egyptian origin. The story of Io probably came from Egypt. Isis was one of the chief divinities of that country, and her worship naturally passed, with their colonies, into foreign countries. Greece

received it when Inachus went to settle there, and in lapse of time Isis, under the name of Io, was supposed to have been his daughter, and the fable was invented which is here narrated by Ovid.

The Greek authors, Apollodorus, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pausanias, say that Io was the daughter of Inachus, the first king of Argos; that Jupiter carried her away to Crete; and that by her he had a son named Epaphus, who went to reign in Egypt, whither his mother accompanied him. They also tell us that she married Apis, or Osiris, who, after his death, was numbered among the Deities of Egypt by the name of Serapis. From them we also learn that Juno, being actuated by jealousy, on the discovery of the intrigue, put Io under the care of her uncle Argus, a man of great vigilance, but that Jupiter having slain him, placed his mistress on board of a vessel which had the figure of a cow at its head; from which circumstance arose the story of the transformation of Io. The Greek writers also state, that the Bosphorus, a part of the Ægean sea, derived its name from the passage of Io in the shape of a cow.

## Book I, Fable XIV (lines 601–688)

*Jupiter, having changed Io into a cow, to conceal her from the jealousy of Juno, is obliged to give her to that Goddess, who commits her to the charge of the watchful Argus. Jupiter sends Mercury with an injunction to cast Argus into a deep sleep, and to take away his life.*

In the meantime Juno looked down upon the midst of the fields, and wondering that the fleeting clouds had made the appearance of night under bright day, she perceived that they were not {the vapors} from a river, nor were they raised from the moist earth, and {then} she looked around {to see} where her husband was, as being one who by this time was full well acquainted with the intrigues of a husband {who had been} so often detected.[99] After she had found him not in heaven, she said, “I am either deceived, or I am injured;” and having descended from the height of heaven, she alighted upon the earth, and commanded the mists to retire. He had foreseen the approach of his wife, and had changed the features of the daughter of Inachus into a sleek heifer. [100] As a cow, too, {she} is beautiful. The daughter of Saturn, though unwillingly, extols the appearance of the cow; and likewise inquires, whose it is, and whence, or of what herd it is, as though ignorant of the truth. Jupiter falsely asserts that it was produced out of the earth, that the owner may cease to be inquired after. The daughter of Saturn begs her of him as a gift. What can {he} do? It is a cruel thing to deliver up his {own} mistress, {and} not to give her up is a cause of suspicion. It is shame which persuades him on the one hand, love dissuades him on the other. His shame would have been subdued by his love; but if so trifling a gift as a cow should be refused to the sharer of his descent and his couch, she might {well} seem not to be a cow.

The rival now being given up {to her}, the Goddess did not immediately lay aside all apprehension; and she was {still} afraid of Jupiter, and was fearful of her being stolen, until she gave her to Argus, the son of Aristor, to be kept {by him}. Argus had his head encircled with a hundred eyes. Two of them used to take rest in their turns, the rest watched, and used to keep on duty.[101] In whatever manner he stood, he looked towards Io; although turned away, he {still} used to have Io before his eyes. In the daytime he suffers her to feed; but when the sun is below the deep earth, he shuts her up, and ties a cord round her neck undeserving {of such treatment}. She feeds upon the leaves of the arbute tree, and bitter herbs, and instead of a bed the unfortunate {animal} lies upon the earth, that does not always have grass {on it}, and drinks of muddy streams. And when, too, she was desirous, as a suppliant, to stretch out her arms to Argus, she had no arms to stretch out to Argus; and she uttered lowings from her mouth, {when} endeavoring to complain. And at {this} sound she was terrified, and was affrighted at her own voice.

She came, too, to the banks, where she was often wont to sport, the banks of {her father}, Inachus; and soon as she beheld her new horns in the water, she was terrified, and, astonished, she recoiled from herself. The Naiads knew her not, and Inachus himself knew her not, who she was; but she follows her father, and follows her sisters, and suffers herself to be touched, and presents herself to them, as they admire {her}. The aged Inachus held her some grass he had plucked; she licks his hand, and gives kisses to the palms of her father. Nor does she restrain her tears; and if only words would follow, she would implore his aid, and would declare her name and misfortunes. Instead of words, letters, which her foot traced in the dust, completed the sad discovery of the transformation of her body. “Ah, wretched me!” exclaims her father Inachus; and clinging to the horns and the neck of the snow-white cow, as she wept, he repeats, “Ah, wretched me! and art thou my daughter, that hast been sought for by me throughout all lands? While undiscovered, thou wast a lighter grief {to me}, than {now, when} thou art found. Thou art silent, and no words dost thou return in answer to mine; thou only heavest sighs from the depth of thy breast, and what alone thou art able to do, thou answerest in lowings to my words. But I, in ignorance {of this}, was preparing the bridal chamber, and the {nuptial} torches for thee; and my chief hope was that of a son-in-law, my next was that of grandchildren. But now must thou have a mate from the herd, now, {too}, an offspring of the herd. Nor is it possible for me to end grief so great by death; but it is a detriment to be a God; and the gate of death being shut against me, extends my grief to eternal ages.”

While thus he lamented, the starry Argus removed her away, and carried the daughter, {thus} taken from her father, to distant pastures. He himself, at a distance, occupies the lofty top of a mountain, whence, as he sits, he may look about on all sides.

Nor can the ruler of the Gods above, any longer endure so great miseries of the granddaughter of Phoroneus;[102] and he calls his son {Mercury}, whom the bright Pleiad, {Maia},[103] brought forth, and orders him to put Argus to death. There is {but} little delay to take wings upon his feet, and his soporiferous wand[104] in his hand, and a cap for his hair.[105] After he had put these things in order, the son of Jupiter leaps down from his father’s high abode upon the earth, and there he takes off his cap, and lays aside his wings; his wand alone was retained. With this, as a shepherd, he drives some she-goats through the pathless country, taken up as he passed along, and plays upon oaten straws joined together.

The keeper appointed by Juno, charmed by the sound of this new contrivance, says, “Whoever thou art, thou mayst be seated with me upon this stone; for, indeed, in no {other} place is the herbage more abundant for thy flock; and thou seest, too, that the shade is convenient for the shepherds.” The son of Atlas sat down, and with much talking he occupied the passing day with his discourse, and by playing upon his joined reeds he tried to overpower his watchful eyes. Yet {the other} strives hard to overcome soft sleep; and although sleep was received by a part of his

eyes, yet with a part he still keeps watch. He inquires also (for the pipe had been {but} lately invented) by what method it had been found out.

[Footnote 99: *So often detected*.--Ver. 606. Clarke translates ‘deprensi toties mariti’ by the expression, ‘who had been so often catched in his roguery.’]

[Footnote 100: *Into a sleek heifer*.--Ver. 611. Clarke renders the words, ‘nitentem juvencam,’ a neat heifer.]

[Footnote 101: *To keep on duty*.--Ver. 627. ‘In statione manebant.’ This is a metaphorical expression, taken from military affairs, as soldiers in turns relieve each other, and take their station, when they keep watch and ward.]

[Footnote 102: *Phoroneus*.--Ver. 668. He was the father of Jasius and of Inachus, the parent of Io. Some accounts, however, say that Inachus was the father of Phoroneus, and the son of Oceanus.]

[Footnote 103: *Pleiad Maia*.--Ver. 670. Maia was one of the seven daughters of Atlas, who were styled Pleiädes after they were received among the constellations.]

[Footnote 104: *Soporiferous wand*.--Ver. 671. This was the ‘caduceus,’ or staff, with which Mercury summoned the souls of the departed from the shades, induced slumber, and did other offices pertaining to his capacity as the herald and messenger of Jupiter. It was represented as an olive branch, wreathed with two snakes. In time of war, heralds and ambassadors, among the Greeks, carried a ‘caduceus.’ It was not used by the Romans.]

[Footnote 105: *A cap for his hair*.--Ver. 672. This was a cap called ‘Petasus.’ It had broad brims, and was not unlike the ‘causia,’ or Macedonian hat, except that the brims of the latter were turned up at the sides.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The story of the Metamorphosis of Io has been already enlarged upon in the Explanation of the preceding Fable. It may, however, not be irrelevant to observe, that myths, or mythological stories or fables, are frequently based upon some true history, corrupted by tradition in lapse of time. The poets, too, giving loose to their fancy in their love of the marvellous, have still further disfigured the original story; so that it is in most instances extremely difficult to trace back the facts to their primitive simplicity, by a satisfactory explanation of each circumstance attending them, either upon a philosophical, or an historical principle of solution.

## Book I, Fable XV (lines 689–712)

*Pan, falling in love with the Nymph Syrinx, she flies from him; on which he pursues her. Syrinx, arrested in her flight by the waves of the river Ladon, invokes the aid of her sisters, the Naiads, who change her into reeds. Pan unites them into an instrument with seven pipes, which bears the name of the Nymph.*

Then the God says, “In the cold mountains of Arcadia, among the Hamadryads of Nonacris,[106] there was one Naiad very famous; the Nymphs called her Syrinx. And not once {alone} had she escaped the Satyrs as they pursued, and whatever Gods either the shady grove or the fruitful fields have {in them}. In her pursuits and her virginity itself she used to devote herself to the Ortygian Goddess;[107] and being clothed after the fashion of Diana, she might have deceived one, and might have been supposed to be the daughter of Latona, if she had not had a bow of cornel wood, the other, {a bow} of gold; and even then did she {sometimes} deceive {people}. Pan spies her as she is returning from the hill of Lycæus, and having his head crowned with sharp pine leaves, he utters such words as these;” it remained {for Mercury} to repeat the words, and how that the Nymph, slighting his suit, fled through pathless spots, until she came to the gentle stream of sandy Ladon;[108] and that here, the waters stopping her course, she prayed to her watery sisters, that they would change her; and {how} that Pan, when he was thinking that Syrinx was now caught by him, had seized hold of some reeds of the marsh, instead of the body of the Nymph; and {how}, while he was sighing there, the winds moving amid the reeds had made a murmuring noise, and like one complaining; and {how} that, charmed by this new discovery and the sweetness of the sound, he had said, “This mode of converse with thee shall ever remain with me;” and that accordingly, unequal reeds being stuck together among themselves by a cement of wax, had {since} retained the name of the damsel.

[Footnote 106: *Nonacris.*--Ver. 690. Nonacris was the name of both a mountain and a city of Arcadia, in the Peloponnesus.]

[Footnote 107: *The Ortygian Goddess.*--Ver. 694. Diana is called “Ortygian,” from the isle of Delos, where she was born, one of whose names was Ortygia, from the quantity of quails, ὄρτυγες, there found.]

[Footnote 108: *Ladon.*--Ver. 702. This was a beautiful river of Arcadia, flowing into the Alpheus: its banks were covered with vast quantities of reeds. Ovid here calls its stream ‘placidum;’ whereas in the fifth book of the Fasti, l. 89, he calls it ‘rapax,’ ‘violent;’ and in the second book of the Fasti, l. 274, its waters are said to be ‘citæ aquæ,’ swift waters. Some commentators have endeavored to reconcile these discrepancies; but the probability is, that Ovid, like many other

poets, used his epithets at random, or rather according to the requirements of the measure for the occasion.]

### Riley's Explanation

This appears to have been an Egyptian fable, imported into the works of the Grecian poets. Pan was probably a Divinity of the Egyptians, who worshipped nature under that name, as we are told by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus. As, however, according to Nonnus, there were not less than twelve Pans, it is possible that the adventure here related may have been supposed to have happened to one of them who was a native of Greece. He was most probably the inventor of the Syrinx, or Pandæan pipe, and, perhaps, formed his first instrument from the produce of the banks of the River Ladon, from which circumstance Syrinx may have been styled the daughter of that river.

## Book I, Fable XVI (lines 713–723)

*Mercury, having lulled Argus to sleep, cuts off his head, and Juno places his eyes in the peacock's tail.*

The Cyllenian God[109] being about to say such things, perceived that all his eyes were sunk in sleep, and that his sight was wrapped[110] in slumber. At once he puts an end to his song, and strengthens his slumbers, stroking his languid eyes with his magic wand. There is no delay; he wounds him, as he nods, with his crooked sword, where the head is joined to the neck; and casts him, all blood-stained, from the rock, and stains the craggy cliff with his gore.

Argus, thou liest low, and the light which thou hadst in so many eyes is {now} extinguished; and one night takes possession of a {whole} hundred eyes. The daughter of Saturn takes them, and places them on the feathers of her own bird, and she fills its tail with starry gems.

[Footnote 109: *The Cyllenian God*.--Ver. 713. Mercury is so called from Cyllene, in Arcadia, where he was born.]

[Footnote 110: *That his sight was wrapped*.--Ver. 714. Clarke translates 'Adopertaque lumina somno,' 'and his peepers covered with sleep.']

### Riley's Explanation

The ancient writers, Asclepiades and Pherecydes, tell us, that Argus was the son of Arestor. He is supposed by some to have been the fourth king of Argos after Inachus, and to have been a person of great wisdom and penetration, on account of which he was said to have a hundred eyes. Io most probably was committed to his charge, and he watched over her with the greatest care.

It is impossible to divine the reason why his eyes were said to have been set by Juno in the tail of the peacock; though, perhaps, the circumstance has no other foundation than the resemblance of the human eye to the spots in the tail of that bird, which was consecrated to Juno. Besides, if Juno is to be considered the symbol of Air, or Æther, through which light is transmitted to us, it is not surprising that the ancients bestowed so many eyes upon the bird which was consecrated to her.

## Book I, Fable XVII (lines 724–779)

*Io, terrified and maddened with dreadful visions, runs over many regions, and stops in Egypt, when Juno, at length, being pacified, restores her to her former shape, and permits her to be worshipped there, under the name of Isis.*

Immediately, she was inflamed with rage, and deferred not the time of {expressing} her wrath; and she presented a dreadful Fury before the eyes and thoughts of the Argive mistress,[111] and buried in her bosom invisible stings, and drove her, in her fright, a wanderer through the whole earth. Thou, O Nile, didst remain, as the utmost boundary of her long wanderings. Soon as she arrived there, she fell upon her knees, placed on the edge of the bank, and raising herself up, with her neck thrown back, and casting to Heaven those looks which then alone she could, by her groans, and her tears, and her mournful lowing, she seemed to be complaining of Jupiter, and to be begging an end of her sorrows.

He, embracing the neck of his wife with his arms, entreats her, at length, to put an end to her punishment; and he says, “Lay aside thy fears for the future; she shall never {more} be the occasion of any trouble to thee;” and {then} he bids the Stygian waters to hear this {oath}. As soon as the Goddess is pacified, {Io} receives her former shape, and she becomes what she was before; the hairs flee from off of her body, her horns decrease, and the orb of her eye becomes less; the opening of her jaw is contracted; her shoulders and her hands return, and her hoof, vanishing, is disposed of into five nails; nothing of the cow remains to her, but the whiteness of her appearance; and the Nymph, contented with the service of two feet, is raised erect {on them}; and {yet} she is afraid to speak, lest she should low like a cow, and timorously tries again the words {so long} interrupted. Now, as a Goddess, she is worshipped by the linen-wearing throng[112] {of Egypt}.

To her, at length, Epaphus[113] is believed to have been born from the seed of great Jove, and throughout the cities he possesses temples joined to {those of} his parent. Phaëton, sprung from the Sun, was equal to him in spirit and in years; whom formerly, as he uttered great boasts, and yielded not {at all} to him, and proud of his father, Phœbus, the grandson of Inachus could not endure; and said, “Thou, {like} a madman, believest thy mother in all things, and art puffed up with the conceit of an imaginary father.”

Phaëton blushed, and in shame repressed his resentment; and he reported to his mother, Clymene,[114] the reproaches of Epaphus; and said, “Mother, to grieve thee still more, I, the free, the bold {youth}, was silent; I am ashamed both that these reproaches can be uttered against us, and that they cannot be refuted; but do thou, if only I am born of a divine race, give

me some proof of so great a descent, and claim me for heaven." {Thus} he spoke, and threw his arms around the neck of his mother; and besought her, by his own head and by that of Merops, [115] and by the nuptial torches of his sisters, that she would give him some token of his real father.

It is a matter of doubt whether Clymene was more moved by the entreaties of Phaëton, or by resentment at the charge made against her; and she raised both her arms to heaven, and, looking up to the light of the Sun, she said, "Son, I swear to thee, by this beam, bright with shining rays, which both hears and sees us, that thou, that thou, {I say}, wast begotten by this Sun, which thou beholdest; by this {Sun}, which governs the world. If I utter an untruth, let him deny himself to be seen by me, and let this light prove the last for my eyes. Nor will it be any prolonged trouble for thee to visit thy father's dwelling; the abode where he arises is contiguous to our regions.[116] If only thy inclination disposes thee, go forth, and thou shalt inquire of himself."

Phaëton immediately springs forth, overjoyed, upon these words of his mother, and reaches the skies in imagination; and he passes by his own Æthiopians, and the Indians situate beneath the rays of the Sun,[117] and briskly wends his way to the rising of his sire.

[Footnote 111: *The Argive mistress*.--Ver. 726. Clarke renders 'Pellicis Argolicæ,' 'of the Grecian miss.']

[Footnote 112: *The linen-wearing throng*.--Ver. 747. The priests, and worshippers of Isis, with whom Io is here said to be identical, paid their adoration to her clothed in linen vestments. Probably, Isis was the first to teach the Egyptians the cultivation of flax.]

[Footnote 113: *Epaphus*.--Ver. 748. Herodotus, in his second book, tells us, that this son of Jupiter, by Io, was the same as the Egyptian God, Apis. Eusebius, quoting from Apollodorus, says that Epaphus was the son of Io, by Telegonus, who married her.]

[Footnote 114: *Clymene*.--Ver. 756. She was a Nymph of the sea, the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys.]

[Footnote 115: *Merops*.--Ver. 763. He was king of Ethiopia, and marrying the Nymph Clymene, was either the stepfather of Phaëton, or, as some writers say, his putative father.]

[Footnote 116: *To our regions*.--Ver. 773. Ethiopia, which, in the time of Ovid, was generally looked upon as one of the regions of the East.]

[Footnote 117: *The rays of the Sun*.--Ver. 778. 'Ignibus sidereis,' means here the 'heat,' or 'fire of the sun,' the sun being considered as a 'sidus,' or 'luminous heavenly body.']

### Riley's Explanation

To the elucidation of this narrative, already given, we will only add, that some of the mythologists inform us, that when Mercury had lulled Argus to sleep, a youth named Hierax awoke him; on which Mercury killed Argus with a stone, and turned Hierax into a spar-hawk.

## Book II, Fable I (lines 1–303)

*Phaëton, insulted by Epaphus, goes to the Palace of Apollo, to beseech him to give some token that he is his son. Apollo, having sworn, by the river Styx, to refuse him nothing that he should desire, he immediately asks to guide his chariot for one day. He is unsuccessful in the attempt, and, the horses running away, the world is in danger of being consumed.*

The palace of the Sun was raised high, on stately columns, bright with radiant gold, and carbuncle that rivals the flames; polished ivory covered its highest top, {and} double folding doors shone with the brightness of silver. The workmanship {even} exceeded the material; for there Mulciber had carved the sea circling round the encompassed Earth; and the orb of the Earth, and the Heavens which hang over that orb. {There} the waves have {in them} the azure Deities, both Triton, sounding {with his shell}, and the changing Proteus, and Ægeon,[1] pressing the huge backs of whales with his arms; Doris,[2] too, and her daughters, part of whom appear to be swimming, part, sitting on the bank, to be drying their green hair; some {are seen} borne upon fishes. The features in all are not the same, nor, however, {remarkably} different: {they are} such as those of sisters ought to be. The Earth has {upon it} men and cities, and woods, and wild beasts, and rivers, and Nymphs, and other Deities of the country. Over these is placed the figure of the shining Heaven, and there are six Signs {of the Zodiac} on the right door, and as many on the left.

Soon as the son of Clymene had arrived thither by an ascending path, and entered the house of his parent, {thus} doubted of; he immediately turned his steps to the presence of his father, and stood at a distance, for he could not bear the refulgence nearer. Arrayed in a purple garment, Phœbus was seated on a throne sparkling with brilliant emeralds. On his right hand, and on his left, the Days, the Months, the Years, the Ages, and the Hours were arranged, at corresponding distances, and the fresh Spring was standing, crowned with a chaplet of blossoms; Summer was standing naked, and wearing garlands made of ears of corn; Autumn, too, was standing besmeared with the trodden-out grapes; and icy Winter, rough with his hoary hair.

Then the Sun, from the midst of this place, with those eyes with which he beholds all things, sees the young man struck with fear at the novelty of {these} things, and says, “What is the occasion of thy journey {hither}? What dost thou seek, Phaëton, in this {my} palace, a son not to be denied by his parent?”

He answers, “O thou universal Light of the unbounded World, Phœbus, my father, if thou grantest me the use of that name; and if Clymene is not concealing an error under a {false} pretext, give me, my parent, some token, by which I may be believed to be really thy progeny;

and remove this uncertainty from my mind." Thus he spoke; but his parent took off the rays shining all around his head, and commanded him to come nearer; and, having embraced him, he says, "{And} neither art thou deserving to be denied to be mine, and Clymene has told thee thy true origin; and that thou mayst have the less doubt, ask any gift thou mayst please, that thou mayst receive it from me bestowing it. Let the lake, by which the Gods are wont to swear, and which is unseen, {even} by my eyes, be as a witness of my promise."

Hardly had he well finished, when he asks for his father's chariot, and for the command and guidance of the wing-footed horses for one day. His father repented that he had {so} sworn, and shaking his splendid head three or four times, he said, "By thine have my words been made rash. I wish I were allowed not to grant what I have promised! I confess, my son, that this alone I would deny thee. {Still}, I may dissuade thee: thy desire is not attended with safety. Thou desirest, Phaëton, a gift {too} great, and {one} which is suited neither to thy strength, nor to such youthful years. Thy lot is that of a mortal; that which thou desirest, belongs not to mortals. {Nay}, thou aimest, in thy ignorance, at even more than it is allowed the Gods above to obtain. Let every one be self-satisfied, {if he likes}; still, with the exception of myself, no one is able to take his stand upon the fire-bearing axle-tree. Even the Ruler of vast Olympus, who hurls the ruthless bolts with his terrific right hand, cannot guide this chariot; and {yet}, what have we greater than Jupiter? The first {part of the} road is steep, and such as the horses, {though} fresh in the morning, can hardly climb. In the middle of the heavens it is high aloft, from whence it is often a {source of} fear, {even} to myself, to look {down} upon the sea and the earth, and my breast trembles with fearful apprehensions. The last stage is a steep descent, and requires a sure command {of the horses}. Then, too, Tethys[3] herself, who receives me in her waves, extended below, is often wont to fear, lest I should be borne headlong {from above}. Besides, the heavens are carried round[4] with a constant rotation, and carry {with them} the lofty stars, and whirl them with rapid revolution. Against this I have to contend; and that force which overcomes {all} other things, {does} not {overcome} me; and I am carried in a contrary direction to the rapid world. Suppose the chariot given {to thee}; what couldst thou do? Couldst thou proceed, opposed to the whirling poles, so that the rapid heavens should not carry thee away? Perhaps, too, thou dost fancy in thy mind that there are groves, and cities of the Gods, and temples enriched with gifts; {whereas}, the way is through dangers, and the forms of wild beasts;[5] and though thou shouldst keep on thy road, and be drawn aside by no wanderings, still thou must pass amid the horns of the threatening Bull, and the Hæmonian[6] bow, and {before} the visage of the raging Lion, and the Scorpion, bending his cruel claws with a wide compass, and the Crab, that bends his claws in a different manner; nor is it easy for thee to govern the steeds spirited by those fires which they have in their breasts, and which they breathe forth from their mouths and their nostrils. Hardly are they restrained by me, when their high-mettled spirit is {once} heated, and their necks struggle against the reins. But do thou have a care, my son, that I be not the

occasion of a gift fatal to thee, and while the matter {still} permits, alter thy intentions. Thou askest, forsooth, a sure proof that thou mayst believe thyself sprung from my blood? I give thee a sure proof in {thus} being alarmed {for thee}; and by my paternal apprehensions, I am shown to be thy father. Lo, behold my countenance! I wish, too, that thou couldst direct thy eyes into my breast, and discover my fatherly concern within! Finally, look around thee, upon whatever the rich world contains, and ask for anything out of the blessings, so many and so great, of heaven, of earth, and of sea; {and} thou shalt suffer no denial. In this one thing alone I beg to be excused, which, {called} by its right name, is a penalty, and not an honor; thou art asking, Phaëton, a punishment instead of a gift. Why, in thy ignorance, art thou embracing my neck with caressing arms? Doubt not; whatever thou shalt desire shall be granted thee (by the Stygian waves I have sworn it); but do thou make thy desire more considerately."

He had finished his admonitions; and yet {Phaëton} resists his advice, and presses his point, and burns with eagerness for the chariot. Wherefore, his parent having delayed as long as he could, leads the young man to the lofty chariot, the gift of Vulcan. The axle-tree was of gold, the poles were of gold; the circumference of the exterior of the wheel was of gold; the range of the spokes was of silver. Chrysolites and gems placed along the yoke in order, gave a bright light from the reflected sun. And while the aspiring Phaëton is admiring these things, and is examining the workmanship, behold! the watchful Aurora opened her purple doors in the ruddy east, and her halls filled with roses. The stars disappear, the troops whereof Lucifer gathers, and moves the last from his station in the heavens. But the father Titan, when he beheld the earth and the universe growing red, and the horns of the far-distant Moon, as if about to vanish, orders the swift Hours to yoke the horses. The Goddesses speedily perform his commands, and lead forth the steeds from the lofty stalls, snorting forth flames, and filled with the juice of Ambrosia; and {then} they put on the sounding bits.

Then the father touched the face of his son with a hallowed drug, and made it able to endure the burning flames, and placed the rays upon his locks, and fetching from his troubled heart sighs presaging his sorrow, he said: "If thou canst here at least, my boy, obey the advice of thy father, be sparing of the whip, and use the bridle with nerve. Of their own accord they are wont to hasten on; the difficulty is to check them in their full career. And let not the way attract thee through the five direct circles.[7] There is a track cut obliquely, with a broad curvature, and bounded by the extremities of three zones, and {so} it shuns the South pole, and the Bear united to the North. Let thy way be here; thou wilt perceive distinct traces of the wheels. And that heaven and earth may endure equal heat, neither drive too low, nor urge the chariot along the summit of the sky. Going forth too high, thou wilt set on fire the signs of the heavens; too low, the earth; in the middle course thou will go most safely. Neither let the right wheel bear thee off towards the twisted Serpent, nor let the left lead thee to the low Altar; hold thy course between

them. The rest I leave to Fortune, who, I pray, may aid thee, and take more care of thee, than thou dost of thyself. Whilst I am speaking, the moist Night has touched the goals placed on the Western shores; delay is not allowed me. I am required; the Morning is shining forth, the darkness being dispersed. Seize the reins with thy hands; or if thou hast a mind capable of change, make use of my advice, {and} not my chariot, while thou art {still} able, and art even yet standing upon solid ground; and while thou art not yet in thy ignorance filling the chariot that thou didst so unfortunately covet."

The other leaps into the light chariot with his youthful body, and stands aloft, and rejoices to take in his hand the reins presented {to him}, and then gives thanks to his reluctant parent. In the meantime the swift Pyroeis, and Eoüs and Æthon, the horses of the sun, and Phlegon, {making} the fourth, fill the air with neighings, sending forth flames, and beat the barriers with their feet. After Tethys, ignorant of the destiny of her grandson, had removed these, and the scope of the boundless universe was given them, they take the road, and moving their feet through the air, they cleave the resisting clouds, and raised aloft by their wings, they pass by the East winds that had arisen from the same parts. But the weight was light; and such as the horses of the sun could not feel; and the yoke was deficient of its wonted weight. And as the curving ships, without proper ballast, are tossed about, and unsteady, through their too great lightness, are borne through the sea, so does the chariot give bounds[8] in the air, unimpeded by its usual burden, and is tossed on high, and is just like an empty one.

Soon as the steeds have perceived this, they rush on, and leave the beaten track, and run not in the order in which {they did} before. He himself becomes alarmed; and knows not which way to turn the reins entrusted {to him}, nor does he know where the way is, nor, if he did know, could he control them. Then, for the first time, did the cold Triones grow warm with sunbeams, and attempt, in vain, to be dipped in the sea that was forbidden {to them}. And the Serpent which is situate next to the icy pole, being before torpid with cold, and formidable to no one, grew warm, and regained new rage from the heat. They say, too,[9] that thou, Boötes, being disturbed, took to flight; although thou wast {but} slow, and thy wain impeded thee. But when, from the height of the skies, the unhappy Phaëton looked down upon the earth, lying far, very far beneath, he grew pale, and his knees shook with a sudden terror; and in a light so great, darkness overspread his eyes. And now he could wish that he had never touched the horses of his father; and now he is sorry that he knew his descent, and that he prevailed in his request; now desiring to be called the son of Merops. He is borne along, just as a ship driven by the furious Boreas, to which its pilot has given up the overpowered helm, {and} which he has resigned to the Gods and {the effect of} his supplications. What can he do? much of heaven is left behind his back; still more is before his eyes. Either {space} he measures in his mind; and at one moment he is looking forward to the West, which it is not allowed him by fate to reach; {and} sometimes he looks back

upon the East. Ignorant what to do, he is stupefied; and he neither lets go the reins, nor is he able to retain them; nor does he know the names of the horses. In his fright, too, he sees strange objects scattered everywhere in various parts of the heavens, and the forms of huge wild beasts. There is a spot where the Scorpion bends his arms into two curves, and with his tail and claws bending on either side, he extends his limbs through the space of two signs {of the Zodiac}. As soon as the youth beheld him wet with the sweat of black venom, and threatening wounds with the barbed point {of his tail}, bereft of sense, he let go the reins, in a chill of horror. Soon as they, falling down, have touched the top of their backs, the horses range at large: and no one restraining them, they go through the air of an unknown region; and where their fury drives them thither, without check, do they hurry along, and they rush on to the stars fixed in the sky, and drag the chariot through pathless places. One while they are mounting aloft, and now they are borne through steep places, and {along} headlong paths in a tract nearer to the earth.

The Moon, too, wonders that her brother's horses run lower than her own, and the scorched clouds send forth smoke. As each region is most elevated, it is caught by the flames, and cleft, it makes {vast} chasms, and becomes dry, its moisture being carried away. The grass grows pale; the trees, with their foliage, are burnt up; and the dry standing corn affords fuel for its own destruction. {But} I am complaining of trifling {ills}. Great cities perish, together with their fortifications, and the flames turn whole nations, with their populations, into ashes; woods, together with mountains, are on fire. Athos[10] burns, and the Cilician Taurus,[11] and Tmolus, [12] and Œta,[13] and Ida,[14] now dry, {but} once most famed for its springs; and Helicon,[15] the resort of the Virgin {Muses}, and Hæmus,[16] not yet {called} Œagrian. Ætna[17] burns intensely with redoubled flames, and Parnassus, with its two summits, and Eryx,[18] and Cynthus,[19] and Othrys, and Rhodope,[20] at length to be despoiled of its snows, and Mimas, [21] and Dindyma,[22] and Mycale,[23] and Cithæron,[24] created for {the performance of} sacred rites. Nor does its cold avail {even} Scythia; Caucasus[25] is on fire, and Ossa with Pindus, and Olympus, greater than them both, and the lofty Alps,[26] and the cloud-bearing Apennines.[27]

Then, indeed, Phaëton beholds the world set on fire on all sides, and he cannot endure heat so great, and he inhales with his mouth scorching air, as though from a deep furnace, and perceives his own chariot to be on fire. And neither is he able now to bear the ashes and the emitted embers; and, on every side, he is involved in heated smoke. Covered with a pitchy darkness, he knows not whither he is going, nor where he is, and is hurried away at the pleasure of the winged steeds. They believe that it was then that the nations of the Æthiopians contracted their black hue,[28] the blood being attracted into the surface of the body. Then was Libya[29] made dry by the heat, the moisture being carried off; then, with dishevelled hair, the Nymphs lamented the springs and the lakes. Bœotia bewails Dirce,[30] Argos Amymone,[31] and Ephyre[32] the

waters of Pirene. Nor do rivers that have got banks distant in situation, remain {secure}; Tanais[33] smokes in the midst of its waters, and the aged Peneus, and Teuthrantian Caïcus,[34] and rapid Ismenus,[35] with Phocean Erymanthus,[36] and Xanthus[37] again to burn, and yellow Lycormas,[38] and Mæander,[39] which sports with winding streams, and the Mygdonian Melas,[40] and the Tænarian Eurotas.[41] The Babylonian Euphrates, too, was on fire, Orontes[42] was in flames, and the swift Thermodon[43] and Ganges,[44] and Phasis,[45] and Ister.[46] Alpheus[47] boils; the banks of Spercheus burn; and the gold which Tagus[48] carries with its stream, melts in the flames. The river birds too, which made famous the Mæonian[49] banks {of the river} with their song, grew hot in the middle of Caÿster. The Nile, affrighted, fled to the remotest parts of the earth, and concealed his head, which still lies hid; his seven last mouths are empty, {become} seven {mere} channels, without any stream. The same fate dries up the Ismarian {rivers}, Hebrus together with Strymon,[50] and the Hesperian[51] streams, the Rhine, and the Rhone, and the Po, and the Tiber, to which was promised the sovereignty of the world.

All the ground bursts asunder; and through the chinks, the light penetrates into Tartarus, and startles the Infernal King with his spouse. The Ocean too, is contracted, and that which lately was sea, is a surface of parched sand; and the mountains which the deep sea had covered, start up and increase {the number of} the scattered Cyclades.[52] The fishes sink to the bottom, and the crooked Dolphins do not care to raise themselves on the surface into the air, as usual. The bodies of sea calves float lifeless on their backs, on the top of the water. The story, too, is, that {even} Nereus himself, and Doris and their daughters, lay hid in the heated caverns. Three times had Neptune ventured, with a stern countenance, to thrust his arms out of the water; three times he was unable to endure the scorching heat of the air. However, the genial Earth, as she was surrounded with sea, amid the waters of the main, and the springs, dried up on every side, which had hidden themselves in the bowels of their cavernous parent, burnt-up, lifted up her all-productive face[53] as far as her neck, and placed her hands to her forehead, and shaking all things with a vast trembling, she sank down a little, and retired below the spot where she is wont to be, and thus she spoke, with a parched voice: “O sovereign of the Gods, if thou approvest of this, if I have deserved it, why do thy lightnings linger? Let me, {if} doomed to perish by the force of fire, perish by thy flames; and alleviate my misfortune, by being the author {of it}. With difficulty, indeed, do I open my mouth for these very words;” (the vapor had oppressed her utterance.) “Behold my scorched hair, and such a quantity of ashes over my eyes, so much {too}, over my features. And dost thou give this as my recompense? this, as the reward of my fertility and of my duty, in that I endure wounds from the crooked plough and harrows, and am harassed all the year through? In that I supply green leaves for the cattle, and corn, a wholesome food for mankind, and frankincense for yourselves? But still, suppose that I am deserving of destruction, why have the waves {deserved this}? Why has thy brother deserved it? Why do the seas,

delivered to him by lot, decrease, and why do they recede still further from the sky? But if regard for neither thy brother nor for myself influences thee, still have consideration for thy own skies; look around, on either side, {how} each pole is smoking; if the fire shall injure them, thy palace will fall in ruins. See! Atlas[54] himself is struggling, and hardly can he bear the glowing heavens on his shoulders. If the sea, if the earth perishes, if the palace of heaven, we are thrown[55] into the confused state of ancient chaos. Save it from the flames, if aught still survives, and provide for the preservation of the universe."

Thus spoke the Earth; nor, indeed, could she any longer endure the vapor, nor say more; and she withdrew her face within herself, and the caverns neighboring to the shades below.

[Footnote 1: *Ægeon*.--Ver. 10. Homer makes him to be the same with Briareus. According to another account, which Ovid here follows, he was a sea God, the son of Oceanus and Terra.]

[Footnote 2: *Doris*.--Ver. 11. She was the daughter of Oceanus, the wife of Nereus, and the mother of the fifty Nereids.]

[Footnote 3: *Tethys*.--Ver. 69. She was the daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and the wife of Oceanus. Her name is here used to signify the ocean itself.]

[Footnote 4: *Are carried round*.--Ver. 70. Clarke thus renders this line,--"Add, too, that the heaven was whisked round with a continual rolling."]

[Footnote 5: *Wild beasts*.--Ver. 78. The signs of the Zodiac.]

[Footnote 6: *Hæmonian*.--Ver. 81. Or Thessalian. He here alludes to the Thessalian Chiron, the Centaur, who, according to Ovid and other writers, was placed in the Zodiac as the Constellation Sagittarius: while others say that Crotus, or Croto, the son of Eupheme, the nurse of the Muses, was thus honored.]

[Footnote 7: *Through the five direct circles*.--Ver. 129. There is some obscurity in this passage, arising from the mode of expression. Phœbus here counsels Phaëton what track to follow, and tells him to pursue his way by an oblique path, and not directly in the plane of the equator. This last is what he calls 'directos via quinque per arcus.' These five arcs, or circles, are the five parallel circles by which astronomers distinguish the heavens, namely, the two polar circles, the two tropics, and the equinoctial. The latter runs exactly in the middle, between the other two circles, so that the expression must be understood to mean, 'pursue not your way directly through that circle which is the middlemost of the five, but observe the track that cuts it obliquely.']

[Footnote 8: *The chariot give bounds*.--Ver. 165-6. Clarke thus renders these lines.--'Thus does the chariot give jumps into the air without its usual weight, and is kicked up on high, and is like one empty.']

[Footnote 9: *They say, too*.--Ver. 176-7. The following is Clarke's translation of these two lines,--'They say, too, that you, Boötes, scowered off in a mighty bustle, although you were but slow, and thy cart hindered thee.']

[Footnote 10: *Athos*.--Ver. 217. Athos (now Monte Santo) was a mountain of Macedonia, so lofty that its shadow was said to extend even to the Isle of Lemnos, which was eighty-seven miles distant.]

[Footnote 11: *Taurus*.--Ver. 217. This was an immense mountain range which ran through the middle of Cilicia, in Asia Minor.]

[Footnote 12: *Tmolus*.--Ver. 217. Tmolus (now Bozdaz) was a mountain of Lydia, famed for its wines and saffron. Pactolus, a stream with sands reputed to be golden, took its rise there.]

[Footnote 13: *Œta*.--Ver. 217. This was a mountain chain, which divided Thessaly from Doris and Phocis; famed for the death of Hercules on one of its ridges.]

[Footnote 14: *Ida*.--Ver. 218. There were two mountains of the name of Ide, or Ida; one in Crete, the other near Troy. The latter is here referred to, as being famed for its springs.]

[Footnote 15: *Helicon*.--Ver. 219. This was a mountain of Bœotia, sacred to the Virgin Muses.]

[Footnote 16: *Hæmus*.--Ver. 219. This, which is now called the Balkan range, was a lofty chain of mountains running through Thrace. Orpheus, the son of Œagrus and Calliope, was there torn in pieces by the Mænades, or Bacchanalian women, whence the mountain obtained the epithet of 'Œagrian.']

[Footnote 17: *Ætna*.--Ver. 220. This is the volcanic mountain of Sicily; the flames caused by the fall of Phaëton, added to its own, caused them to be redoubled.]

[Footnote 18: *Eryx*.--Ver. 221. This was a mountain of Sicily, now called San Juliano. On it, a magnificent temple was erected, in honor of Venus.]

[Footnote 19: *Cynthus*.--Ver. 221. This was a mountain of Delos, on which Apollo and Diana were said to have been born.]

[Footnote 20: *Rhodope*.--Ver. 222. It was a high mountain, capped with perpetual snows, in the northern part of Thrace.]

[Footnote 21: *Mimas*.--Ver. 222. A mountain of Ionia, near the Ionian Sea. It was of very great height; whence Homer calls it ὑψικρημνος.]

[Footnote 22: *Dindyma*.--Ver. 223. This was a mountain of Phrygia, near Troy, sacred to Cybele, the mother of the Gods.]

[Footnote 23: *Mycale*.--Ver. 223. A mountain of Caria, opposite to the Isle of Samos.]

[Footnote 24: *Cithæron*.--Ver. 223. This was a mountain of Bœotia, famous for the orgies of Bacchus, there celebrated. In its neighborhood, Pentheus was torn to pieces by the Mænades, for slighting the worship of Bacchus.]

[Footnote 25: *Caucasus*.--Ver. 224. This was a mountain chain in Asia, between the Euxine and Caspian Seas.]

[Footnote 26: *Alps*.--Ver. 226. This mountain range divides France from Italy.]

[Footnote 27: *Apennines*.--Ver. 226. This range of mountains runs down the centre of Italy.]

[Footnote 28: *Their black hue*.--Ver. 235. The notion that the blackness of the African tribes was produced by the heat of the sun, is borrowed by the Poet from Hesiod. Hyginus, too, says, 'the Indians, because, by the proximity of the fire, their blood was turned black by the heat thereof, became of black appearance themselves.' Notwithstanding the learned and minute investigations of physiologists on the subject, this question is still involved in considerable obscurity.]

[Footnote 29: *Libya*.--Ver. 237. This was a region between Mauritania and Cyrene. The Greek writers, however, often use the word to signify the whole of Africa. Servius gives a trifling derivation for the name, in saying that Libya was so called, because λείπει ὁ ὗετος, 'it is without rain.']

[Footnote 30: *Dirce*.--Ver. 239. Dirce was a celebrated fountain of Bœotia, into which it was said that Dirce, the wife of Lycus, king of Thebes, was transformed.]

[Footnote 31: *Amymone*.--Ver. 240. It was a fountain of Argos, near Lerna, into which the Nymph, Amymone, the daughter of Lycus, king of the Argives, was said to have been transformed.]

[Footnote 32: *Ephyre*.--Ver. 240. It was the most ancient name of Corinth, in the citadel of which, or the Acrocorinthus, was the spring Pyrene, of extreme brightness and purity and sacred to the Muses.]

[Footnote 33: *Tanais*.--Ver. 242. This river, now the Don, after a long winding course, discharges itself into the 'Palus Mæotis,' now the sea of 'Azof.']

[Footnote 34: *Caïcus*.--Ver. 243. This is a river of Mysia, here called 'Teuthrantian,' from Mount Teuthras, in its vicinity.]

[Footnote 35: *Ismenus*.--Ver. 244. Ismenus was a river of Bœotia, that flowed past Thebes into the Euripus.]

[Footnote 36: *Erymanthus*.--Ver. 245. This was a river of Arcadia, which, rising in a mountain of that name, fell into the Alpheus.]

[Footnote 37: *Xanthus*.--Ver. 245. This was a river of Troy; here spoken of as destined to behold flames a second time, in the conflagration of that city.]

[Footnote 38: *Lycormas*.--Ver. 245. This was a rapid river of Ætolia, which was afterwards known by the name of Evenus.]

[Footnote 39: *Mæander*.--Ver. 246. This was a river of Phrygia, flowing between Lydia and Caria; it was said to have 600 windings in its course.]

[Footnote 40: *Melas*.--Ver. 247. This name was given to many rivers of Thrace, Thessaly, and Asia, on account of the darkness of the color of their waters; the name was derived from the Greek word μέλας, 'black.']

[Footnote 41: *Tænarian Eurotas*.--Ver. 247. The Eurotas was a river of Laconia, which flowed under the walls of the city of Sparta, and discharged itself into the sea near the promontory of Tænarus, now called Cape Matapan. The Eurotas is now called 'Basilipotamo,' or 'king of streams.']

[Footnote 42: *Orontes*.--Ver. 248. The Orontes was a river of Asia Minor, which flowed near Antioch.]

[Footnote 43: *Thermodon*.--Ver. 249. This was a river of Cappadocia, near which the Amazons were said to dwell.]

[Footnote 44: *Ganges*.--Ver. 249. This is one of the largest rivers in Asia, and discharges itself into the Persian Gulf; and not, as Gierig says, in his note on this passage, in the Red Sea.]

[Footnote 45: *Phasis*.--Ver. 249. This was a river of Colchis, falling into the Euxine Sea.]

[Footnote 46: *Ister*.--Ver. 249. The Danube had that name from its source to the confines of Germany; and thence, in its course through Scythia to the sea, it was called by the name of

‘Ister.’]

[Footnote 47: *Alpheus*.--Ver. 250. It was a river of Arcadia, in Peloponnesus.]

[Footnote 48: *Tagus*.--Ver. 251. This was a river of Spain, which was said to bring down from the mountains great quantities of golden sand. The Poet here feigns this to be melted by the heat of the sun, and in that manner to be carried along by the current of the river.]

[Footnote 49: *Mæonian*.--Ver. 252. Mæonia was so called from the river Mæon, and was another name of Lydia. The Caÿster, famous for its swans, flowed through Lydia.]

[Footnote 50: *Strymon*.--Ver. 257. The Hebrus and the Strymon were rivers of Thrace. Ismarus was a mountain of that country, famous for its vines.]

[Footnote 51: *Hesperian*.--Ver. 258. Hesperia, or ‘the western country,’ was a general name of not only Spain and Gaul, but even Italy. The Rhine is a river of France and Germany, the Rhone of France. The Padus, or Po, and the Tiber, are rivers of Italy.]

[Footnote 52: *Cyclades*.--Ver. 264. The Cyclades were a cluster of islands in the Ægean Sea, surrounding Delos as though with a circle, whence their name.]

[Footnote 53: *Her all-productive face*.--Ver. 275. The earth was similarly called by the Greeks παμμήτωρ, ‘the mother of all things.’ So Virgil calls it ‘omniparens.’]

[Footnote 54: *Atlas*.--Ver. 296. This was a mountain of Mauritania, which, by reason of its height, was said to support the heavens.]

[Footnote 55: *We are thrown*.--Ver. 299. Clarke translates, ‘In chaos antiquum confundimur,’ ‘We are then jumbled into the old chaos again.’]

## Riley’s Explanation

If we were to regard this fable solely as an allegory intended to convey a moral, we should at once perceive that the adventure of Phaëton represents the wilful folly of a rash young man, who consults his own inclination, rather than the dictates of wisdom and prudence. Some ancient writers tell us that Phaëton was the son of Phœbus and Clymene, while others make the nymph Rhoda to have been his mother. Apollodorus, following Hesiod, says that Herse, the daughter of Cecrops, king of Athens, was the mother of Cephalus, who was carried away by Aurora; which probably means that he left Greece for the purpose of settling in the East. Cephalus had a son named Tithonus, the father of Phaëton. Thus Phaëton was the fourth in lineal descent from Cecrops, who reigned at Athens about 1580, B.C. The story is most probably based upon the fact of some excessive heat that happened in his time. Aristotle supposes that at that period flames

fell from heaven, which ravaged several countries. Possibly the burning of the cities of the plain, or the stay of the sun in his course at the command of Joshua, may have been the foundation of the story. St. Chrysostom suggests that it is based upon an imperfect version of the ascent of Elijah in a chariot of fire; that name, or rather 'Elias,' the Greek form of it, bearing a strong resemblance to Ἥλιος, the Greek name of the sun. Vossius suggests that this is an Egyptian history, and considers the story of the grief of Phœbus for the loss of his son to be another version of the sorrows of the Egyptians for the death of Osiris. The tears of the Heliades, or sisters of Phaëton, he conceives to be identical with the lamentations of the women who wept for the death of Thammuz. The Poet, when he tells us that Phaëton abandoned his chariot on seeing The Scorpion, probably intends to show that the event of which he treats happened in the month in which the sun enters that sign.

Plutarch and Tzetzes tell us that Phaëton was a king of the Molossians, who drowned himself in the Po; that he was a student of astronomy, and foretold an excessive heat which happened in his reign, and laid waste his kingdom. Lucian, also, in his Discourse on Astronomy, gives a similar explanation of the story, and says that this prince dying very young, left his observations imperfect, which gave rise to the fable that he did not know how to drive the chariot of the sun to the end of its course.

## Book II, Fable II (lines 305–324)

*Jupiter, to save the universe from being consumed, hurls his thunder at Phaëton, on which he falls headlong into the river Eridanus.*

But the omnipotent father, having called the Gods above to witness, and him, too, who had given the chariot {to Phaëton}, that unless he gives assistance, all things will perish in direful ruin, mounts aloft to the highest eminence, from which he is wont to spread the clouds over the spacious earth; from which he moves his thunders, and hurls the brandished lightnings. But then, he had neither clouds that he could draw over the earth, nor showers that he could pour down from the sky. He thundered aloud, and darted the poised lightning from his right ear against the charioteer, and at the same moment deprived him both of his life and his seat, and by his ruthless fires restrained the flames. The horses are affrighted, and, making a bound in an opposite direction, they shake the yoke from off their necks, and disengage themselves from the torn harness. In one place lie the reins; in another, the axle-tree wrenched away from the pole; in another part {are} the spokes of the broken wheels; and the fragments of the chariot torn in pieces are scattered far and wide. But Phaëton, the flames consuming his yellow hair, is hurled headlong, and is borne in a long tract through the air; as sometimes a star from the serene sky may appear to fall, although it {really} has not fallen. Him the great Eridanus receives, in a part of the world far distant from his country, and bathes his foaming face.

## Book II, Fable III (lines 325–366)

*The sisters of Phaëton are changed into poplars, and their tears become amber distilling from those trees.*

The Hesperian Naiads[56] commit his body, smoking from the three-forked flames, to the tomb, and inscribe these verses on the stone:--“Here is Phaëton buried, the driver of his father’s chariot, which if he did not manage, still he miscarried in a great attempt.” But his wretched father had hidden his face, overcast with bitter sorrow, and, if only we can believe it, they say that one day passed without the sun.[57] The flames afforded light; and {so far}, there was some advantage in that disaster. But Clymene, after she had said whatever things were to be said amid misfortunes so great, traversed the whole earth, full of woe, and distracted, and tearing her bosom. And first seeking his lifeless limbs, {and} then his bones, she found his bones, however, buried on a foreign bank. She laid herself down on the spot; and bathed with tears the name she read on the marble, and warmed it with her open breast. The daughters of the Sun mourn no less, and give tears, an unavailing gift, to his death; and beating their breasts with their hands, they call Phaëton both night and day, who is doomed not to hear their sad complaints; and they lie scattered about the tomb.

The Moon had four times filled her disk, by joining her horns; they, according to their custom (for use had made custom), uttered lamentations; among whom Phaëthusa, the eldest of the sisters, when she was desirous to lie on the ground, complained that her feet had grown stiff; to whom the fair Lampetie attempting to come, was detained by a root suddenly formed. A third, when she is endeavoring to tear her hair with her hands, tears off leaves; one complains that her legs are held fast by the trunk of a tree, another that her arms are become long branches. And while they are wondering at these things, bark closes upon their loins; and by degrees, it encompasses their stomachs, their breasts, their shoulders, and their hands; and only their mouths are left uncovered, calling upon their mother. What is their mother to do? but run here and there, whither frenzy leads her, and join her lips {with theirs}, while {yet} she may? That is not enough; she tries to pull their bodies out of the trunks {of the trees}, and with her hands to tear away the tender branches; but from thence drops of blood flow as from a wound. Whichever {of them} is wounded, cries out, “Spare me, mother, O spare me, I pray; in the tree my body is being torn. And now farewell.” The bark came over the last words.

Thence tears flow forth; and amber distilling from the new-formed branches, hardens in the sun; which the clear river receives and sends to be worn by the Latian matrons.

[Footnote 56: *The Hesperian Naiads*.--Ver. 325. These were the Naiads of Italy. They were by name Phaëthusa, Lampetie, and Phœbe.]

[Footnote 57: *Passed without the sun*.--Ver. 331. There is, perhaps, in this line some faint reference to a tradition of the sun having, in the language of Scripture, ‘stood still upon Gibeon, in his course, by the command of Joshua, when dispensing the divine vengeance upon the Amorites,’ Joshua, x. 13. Or of the time when ‘the shadow returned ten degrees backward’, by the sun-dial of Ahaz, 2 Kings, xx. 11.]

## Book II, Fable IV (lines 367–400)

*Cycnus, king of Liguria, inconsolable for the death of Phaëton, is transformed into a swan.*

Cycnus, the son of Sthenelus,[58] was present at this strange event; who, although he was related to thee, Phaëton, on his mother's side, was yet more nearly allied in affection. He having left his kingdom (for he reigned over the people and the great cities of the Ligurians[59]) was filling the verdant banks and the river Eridanus, and the wood, {now} augmented by the sisters, with his complaints; when the man's voice became shrill, and gray feathers concealed his hair. A long neck, too, extends from his breast, and a membrane joins his reddening toes; feathers clothe his sides, {and} his mouth holds a bill without a point. Cycnus becomes a new bird; but he trusts himself not to the heavens or the air, as being mindful of the fire unjustly sent from thence. He frequents the pools and the wide lakes, and abhorring fire, he chooses the streams, the {very} contrary of flames.

Meanwhile, the father of Phaëton, in squalid garb, and destitute of his comeliness, just as he is wont to be when he suffers an eclipse of his disk, abhors both the light, himself, and the day; and gives his mind up to grief, and adds resentment to his sorrow, and denies his services to the world. "My lot," says he, "has been restless enough from the {very} beginning of time, and I am tired of labors endured by me, without end and without honor. Let any one else drive the chariot that carries the light. If there is no one, and all the Gods confess that they cannot do it, let {Jupiter} himself drive it; that, at least, while he is trying my reins, he may for a time lay aside the lightnings that bereave fathers. Then he will know, having made trial of the strength of the flame-footed steeds, that he who did not successfully guide them, did not deserve death."

All the Deities stand around the Sun, as he says such things; and they entreat him, with suppliant voice, not to determine to bring darkness over the world. Jupiter, as well, excuses the hurling of his lightnings, and imperiously adds threats to entreaties. Phœbus calls together his steeds, maddened and still trembling with terror, and, subduing them, vents his fury both with whip and lash; for he is furious, and upbraids them with his son, and charges {his death} upon them.

[Footnote 58: *Sthenelus*.--Ver. 367. He was a king of Liguria. Commentators have justly remarked that it was not very likely that a king of Liguria should be related to Clymene, a queen of the Ethiopians, as Ovid, in the next line, says was the case. This story was probably invented by some writer, who fancied that there were two persons of the name of Phaëton; one the subject of eastern tradition, and the other a personage of the Latin mythology.]

[Footnote 59: *The Ligurians*.--Ver. 370. These were a people situate on the eastern side of Etruria, between the rivers Var and Macra. The Grecian writers were in the habit of styling the whole of the north of Italy Liguria.]

## Riley's Explanation

Plutarch places the tomb of Phaëton on the banks of the river Po; and it is not improbable that his mother and sisters, grieving at his fate, ended their lives in the neighborhood of his tomb, being overcome with grief, which gave rise to the story that they were changed into the poplars on its banks, which distilled amber. Some writers say, that they were changed into larch trees, and not poplars. Hesiod and Pindar also make mention of this tradition. Possibly, Cycnus, being a friend of Phaëton, may have died from grief at his loss, on which the poets graced his attachment with the story that he was changed into a swan. Apollodorus mentions two other persons of the name of Cycnus. One was the son of Mars, and was killed before Troy; the other, as Hesiod tells us, was killed by Hercules. Lucian, in his satirical vein, tells us, that inquiring on the banks of the Po for the swans, and the poplars distilling amber, he was told that no such things had ever been seen there; and that even the tradition of Phaëton and his sisters was utterly unknown to the inhabitants of those parts.

## Book II, Fable V (lines 401–465)

*Jupiter, while taking a survey of the world, to extinguish the remains of the fire, falls in love with Calisto, whom he sees in Arcadia; and, in order to seduce that Nymph, he assumes the form of Diana. Her sister Nymphs disclose her misfortune before the Goddess, who drives her from her company, on account of the violation of her vow of chastity.*

But the omnipotent father surveys the vast walls of heaven, and carefully searches, that no part, impaired by the violence of the fire, may fall to ruin. After he has seen them to be secure and in their own {full} strength, he examines the earth, and the works of man; yet a care for his own Arcadia is more particularly his object. He restores, too, the springs and the rivers, that had not yet dared to flow, he gives grass to the earth: green leaves to the trees; and orders the injured forests again to be green. While {thus} he often went to and fro, he stopped short on {seeing} a virgin of Nonacris, and the fires engendered within his bones received {fresh} heat. It was not her employment to soften the wool by teasing, nor to vary her tresses in their arrangement; while a buckle fastened her garment, and a white fillet her hair, carelessly flowing; and at one time she bore in her hand a light javelin, at another, a bow. She was a warrior of Phœbe; nor did any {Nymph} frequent Mænalus, more beloved by Trivia,[60] than she; but no influence is of long duration. The lofty Sun had {now} obtained a position beyond the mid course, when she enters a grove which no generation had {ever} cut. Here she puts her quiver off from her shoulders, and unbends her pliant bow, and lies down on the ground, which the grass had covered, and presses her painted quiver, with her neck laid on it. When Jupiter saw her {thus} weary, and without a protector, he said, “For certain, my wife will know nothing of this stolen embrace; or, if she should chance to know, is her scolding, is it, {I say}, of such great consequence?”

Immediately he puts on the form and dress of Diana, and says, “O Virgin! one portion of my train, upon what mountains hast thou been hunting?” The virgin raises herself from the turf, and says, “Hail, Goddess! {that art}, in my opinion, greater than Jove, even if he himself should hear it.” He both smiles and he hears it, and is pleased at being preferred to himself; and he gives her kisses, not very moderate, nor such as would be given by a virgin. He stops her as she is preparing to tell him in what wood she has been hunting, by an embrace, and he does not betray himself without the commission {of violence}. She, indeed, on the other hand, as far as a woman could do (would that thou hadst seen her, daughter of Saturn, {then} thou wouldst have been more merciful), she, indeed, {I say}, resists; but what damsel, or who {besides}, could prevail against Jupiter? Jove, {now} the conqueror, seeks the heavens above; the grove and the

conscious wood is {now} her aversion. Making her retreat thence, she is almost forgetting to take away her quiver with her arrows, and the bow which she had hung up.

Behold, Dictynna,[61] attended by her train, as she goes along the lofty Mænalus, and exulting in the slaughter of the wild beasts, beholds her, and calls her, thus seen. Being so called, she drew back, and at first was afraid lest Jupiter might be under her {shape}; but after she saw the Nymphs walking along with her, she perceived that there was no deceit,[62] and she approached their train. Alas! how difficult it is not to betray a crime by one's looks! She scarce raises her eyes from the ground, nor, as she used to do, does she walk by the side of the Goddess, nor is she the foremost in the whole company; but she is silent, and by her blushes she gives signs of her injured honor. And Diana, but {for the fact}, that she is a virgin, might have perceived her fault by a thousand indications; the Nymphs are said to have perceived it.

The horns of the Moon were {now} rising again in her ninth course, when the hunting Goddess, faint from her brother's flames, lighted on a cool grove, out of which a stream ran, flowing with its murmuring noise, and borne along the sand worn fine {by its action}. When she had approved of the spot, she touched the surface of the water with her foot; and commending it as well, she says, "All overlookers are far off; let us bathe our bodies, with the stream poured over them." She of Parrhasia[63] blushed; they all put off their clothes; she alone sought {an excuse for} delay. Her garment was removed as she hesitated, which being put off, her fault was exposed with her naked body. Cynthia said to her, in confusion, and endeavoring to conceal her stomach with her hands, "Begone afar hence! and pollute not the sacred springs;" and she ordered her to leave her train.

[Footnote 60: *Trivia*.--Ver. 416. This was an epithet of Diana, as presiding over and worshipped in the places where three roads met, which were called 'trivia.' Being known as Diana on earth, the Moon in the heavens, and Proserpine in the infernal regions, she was represented at these places with three faces; those of a horse, a dog, and a female; the latter being in the middle.]

[Footnote 61: *Dictynna*.--Ver. 441. Diana was so called from the Greek word δικτὺς, 'a net,' which was used by her for the purposes of hunting.]

[Footnote 62: *There was no deceit*.--Ver. 446. Clarke translates 'sensit abesse dolos,' 'she was convinced there was no roguery in the case.']

[Footnote 63: *She of Parrhasia*.--Ver. 460. Calisto is so called from Parrhasia, a region of Arcadia. Parrhasius was the name of a mountain, a grove, and a city of that country and was derived from the name of Parrhasus, a son of Lycaon.]

## Book II, Fables VI and VII (lines 466–550)

*Juno, being jealous that Calisto has attracted Jupiter, transforms her into a Bear. Her son, Arcas, not recognizing his mother in that shape, is about to kill her; but Jupiter removes them both to the skies, where they form the Constellations of the Great and the Little Bear. The raven, as a punishment for his garrulity, is changed from white to black.*

The spouse of the great Thunderer had perceived this some time before, and had put off the severe punishment {designed for her}, to a proper time. There is {now} no reason for delay; and now the boy Arcas (that, too, was a grief to Juno) was born of the mistress {of her husband}. Wherefore, she turned her thoughts, full of resentment, and her eyes {upon her}, and said, "This thing, forsooth, alone was wanting, thou adulteress, that thou shouldst be pregnant, and that my injury should become notorious by thy labors, and that {thereby} the disgraceful conduct of my {husband}, Jupiter, should be openly declared. Thou shalt not go unpunished; for I will spoil that shape of thine, on which thou pridest thyself, and by which thou, mischievous one,[64] dost charm my husband."

{Thus} she spoke; and seizing her straight in front by the hair,[65] threw her on her face to the ground. She suppliantly stretched forth her arms; those arms began to grow rough with black hair,[66] and her hands to be bent, and to increase to hooked claws, and to do the duty of feet, and the mouth, that was once admired by Jupiter, to become deformed with a wide opening; and lest her prayers, and words not needed, should influence her feelings, the power of speech is taken from her; an angry and threatening voice, and full of terror, is uttered from her hoarse throat. Still, her former understanding remains in her, even thus become a bear; and expressing her sorrows by her repeated groans, she lifts up her hands, such as they are, to heaven and to the stars, and she deems Jove ungrateful, though she cannot call him so. Ah! how often, not daring to rest in the lonely wood, did she wander about before her own house, and in the fields once her own. Ah! how often was she driven over the crags by the cry of the hounds; and, a huntress herself, she fled in alarm, through fear of the hunters! Often, seeing the wild beasts, did she lie concealed, forgetting what she was; and, a bear herself, dreaded the he-bears seen on the mountains, and was alarmed at the wolves, though her father was among them.

Behold! Arcas, the offspring of the daughter of Lycaon, ignorant of who is his parent, approaches her, thrice five birthdays being now nearly past; and while he is following the wild beasts, while he is choosing the proper woods, and is enclosing the Erymanthian forests[67] with his platted nets, he meets with his mother. She stood still, upon seeing Arcas, and was like one recognizing {another}. He drew back, and, in his ignorance, was alarmed at her keeping her eyes fixed upon him without ceasing; and, as she was desirous to approach still nearer, he would have pierced

her breast with the wounding spear. Omnipotent {Jove} averted this, and removed both them and {such} wickedness; and placed them, carried through vacant space with a rapid wind, in the heavens, and made them neighboring Constellations.

Juno swelled with rage after the mistress shone amid the stars, and descended on the sea to the hoary Tethys, and the aged Ocean, a regard for whom has often influenced the Gods; and said to them, inquiring the reason of her coming, “Do you inquire why I, the queen of the Gods, am come hither from the æthereal abodes? Another has possession of heaven in my stead. May I be deemed untruthful, if, when the night has made the world dark, you see not in the highest part of heaven stars but lately {thus} honored to my affliction; there, where the last and most limited circle surrounds the extreme part of the axis {of the world}. Is there, then, {any ground} why one should hesitate to affront Juno, and dread my being offended, who only benefit them by my resentment? See what a great thing I have done! How vast is my power! I forbade her to be of human shape; she has been made a Goddess; ’tis thus that I inflict punishment on offenders; such is my mighty power! Let him obtain {for her} her former shape, and let him remove this form of a wild beast; as he formerly did for the Argive Phoronis. Why does he not marry her as well, divorcing Juno, and place her in my couch, and take Lycaon for his father-in-law? But if the wrong done to your injured foster-child affects you, drive the seven Triones away from your azure waters, and expel the stars received into heaven as the reward of adultery, that a concubine may not be received into your pure waves.”

The Gods of the sea granted her request. The daughter of Saturn enters the liquid air in her graceful chariot,[68] with her variegated peacocks; peacocks just as lately tinted, upon the killing of Argus, as thou, garrulous raven, hadst been suddenly transformed into {a bird having} black wings, whereas thou hadst been white before. For this bird was formerly of a silver hue, with snow-white feathers, so that he equalled the doves entirely without spot; nor would he give place to the geese that were to save the Capitol by their watchful voice, nor to the swan haunting the streams. His tongue was the cause of his disgrace; his chattering tongue being the cause, that the color which was white is now the reverse of white.

There was no one more beauteous in all Hæmonia than Larissæan[69] Coronis. At least, she pleased thee, Delphian {God}, as long as she continued chaste, or was not the object of remark. But the bird of Phœbus found out her infidelity;[70] and the inexorable informer winged his way to his master, that he might disclose the hidden offence. Him the prattling crow follows, with flapping wings, to make all inquiries of him. And having heard the occasion of his journey, she says, “Thou art going on a fruitless errand; do not despise the presages of my voice.”

[Footnote 64: *Thou, mischievous one.*--Ver. 475. Clarke, rather too familiarly, renders ‘importuna,’ ‘plaguy baggage.’]

[Footnote 65: *In front by the hair*.--Ver. 476. ‘Adversâ prensis a fronte capillis,’ is rendered by Clarke, ‘seizing her fore-top.’ Had he been describing the combats of two fish-wives, such a version would have been, perhaps, more appropriate than in the present instance.]

[Footnote 66: *With black hair*.--Ver. 478. To the explanation given at the end of the story, we may here add the curious one offered by Palæphatus. He says that Calisto was a huntress who entered the den of a bear, by which she was devoured; and that the bear coming out, and Calisto being no more seen, it was reported that she had been transformed into a bear.]

[Footnote 67: *Erymanthian forests*.--Ver. 499. Erymanthus was a mountain of Arcadia, which was afterwards famous for the slaughter there, by Hercules, of the wild boar, which made it his haunt.]

[Footnote 68: *Graceful chariot*.--Ver. 531. Clarke translates ‘habili curru,’ ‘her neat chariot.’]

[Footnote 69: *Larissæan*.--Ver. 542. Larissa was the chief city of Thessaly, and was situate on the river Peneus.]

[Footnote 70: *Her infidelity*.--Ver. 545. ‘Sed ales sensit adulterium Phœbeius,’ is translated by Clarke, ‘but the Phœban bird found out her pranks.’]

## Riley’s Explanation

Cicero (On the Nature of the Gods, Book iii.) tells us, that Lycaon had a daughter who delighted in the chase, and that Jupiter, the second of that name, the king of Arcadia, fell in love with her. This was the ground on which she was said to have been a favorite of Diana. The story of Calisto having been received into Heaven, and forming the Constellation of the Bear, was perhaps grounded on the fact of Lycaon, her father, having been the first known to take particular notice of this Constellation. The story of the request of Juno, that Tethys will not receive this new Constellation into the Ocean, is probably derived from the circumstance, that the Bear, as well as the other stars within the Arctic Circle, never sets.

Possibly, Arcas, the son of Calisto, dying at a youthful age, may have been the origin of the Constellation of the Lesser Bear.

## Book II, Fable VIII (lines 551–590)

*A virgin, the favorite of Apollo, of the same name with Coronis, is changed into a crow, for a story which she tells Minerva, concerning the basket in which Ericthonius was enclosed.*

“Consider what I was, and what I am, and inquire into my deserts. Thou wilt find that my fidelity was my ruin. For once upon a time, Pallas had enclosed Ericthonius, an offspring born without a mother, in a basket made of Actæan twigs; and had given it to keep to the three virgins born of the two-shaped[71] Cecrops, and had given them this injunction, that they should not inquire into her secrets. I, being hidden among the light foliage, was watching from a thick elm what they were doing. Two {of them}, Pandrosos and Herse, observe their charge without {any} treachery; Aglauros alone calls her sisters cowards, and unties the knots with her hand; but within they behold a child, and a dragon extended by him. I told the Goddess what was done; for which such a return as this is made to me, that I am said to have been banished from the protection of Minerva, and am placed after the bird of the night. My punishment may warn birds not to incur dangers, by their chattering. But I consider {that} she courted me with no inclination of my own, nor asking for any such {favors}. This thou mayst ask of Pallas thyself; although she is angry, she will not, with all her anger, deny this. For Coroneus, one famous in the land of Phocis (I mention what is well known) begot me: and {so} I was a virgin of royal birth, and was courted by rich suitors ({so} despise me not). My beauty was the cause of my misfortune; for while I was passing with slow steps along the sea-shore, on the surface of the sand, as I was wont {to do}, the God of the Ocean beheld me, and was inflamed; and when he had consumed his time to no purpose, in entreating me with soft words, he prepared {to use} violence, and followed me. I fled, and I left the firm shore, and wearied myself in vain on the yielding sand. Then I invoked both Gods and men; but my voice did not reach any mortal. A virgin was moved for a virgin, and gave me assistance. I was extending my arms toward heaven; {when those} arms began to grow black with light feathers. I struggled to throw my garments from off my shoulders, but they were feathers, and had taken deep root in my skin. I tried to beat my naked breast with my hands, but I had now neither hands nor naked breast. I ran; and the sand did not retard my feet as before, and I was lifted up from the surface of the ground. After that, being lifted up, I was carried through the air, and was assigned, as a faultless companion, to Minerva. Yet what does this avail me, if Nyctimene, made a bird for a horrid crime, has succeeded me in my honor?”

[Footnote 71: *Two-shaped*.--Ver. 555. Cecrops is here so called, and in the Greek, διφυὴς from the fact of his having been born in Egypt, and having settled in Greece, and was thus to be reckoned both as an Egyptian, and in the number of the Greeks.]

## Riley's Explanation

Ericthonius was fabled to be the son, or foster-child, of Athene, or Minerva, perhaps because he was the son of the daughter of Cranaus, who had the name of Athene, by a priest of Vulcan, which Divinity was said to have been his progenitor. St. Augustine alleges that he was exposed, and found in a temple dedicated to Minerva and Vulcan. His name being composed of two words, ἔρις and χθὼν, signifying 'contention,' and 'earth,' Strabo imagines that he was the son of Vulcan and the Earth. But it seems that the real ground on which he was called by that name was, that he disputed the right to the crown of Athens with Amphictyon, on the death of Cranaus, the second king. Amphictyon prevailed, but Ericthonius succeeded him. To hide his legs, which were deformed, he is said to have invented chariots; though that is not likely, as Egypt, from which Greece had received many colonies, was acquainted with the use of them from the earliest times. He is also said to have instituted the festival of the Panathenæa, at Athens, whence, in process of time, it was adopted by the whole of Greece.

Hyginus tells us, that after his death he was received into heaven as the constellation 'Auriga,' or 'the Charioteer;' and he further informs us, that the deformity of his legs gave occasion to the saying, that he was half man and half a serpent. Apollodorus says that he was born in Attica; that he was the son of Cranaë, the daughter of Attis; and that he dethroned Amphictyon, and became the fourth king of Athens.

## Book II, Fable IX (lines 591–632)

*Nyctimene having entertained a criminal passion for her father, Nycteus, the Gods, to punish her incest, transform her into an owl. Apollo pierces the breast of Coronis with an arrow, on the raven informing him of the infidelity of his mistress.*

“Has not the thing, which is very well known throughout the whole of Lesbos,[72] been heard of by thee, that Nyctimene defiled the bed of her father? She is a bird indeed; but being conscious of her crime, she avoids {the human} gaze and the light, and conceals her shame in the darkness; and by all {the birds} she is expelled entirely from the sky.”

The raven says to him, saying such things, “May this, thy calling of me back, prove a mischief to thee, I pray; I despise the worthless omen.” Nor does he drop his intended journey; and he tells his master, that he has seen Coronis lying down with a youth of Hæmonia. On hearing the crime of his mistress, his laurel fell down; and at the same moment his usual looks, his plectrum,[73] and his color, forsook the God. And as his mind was {now} burning with swelling rage, he took up his wonted arms, and levelled his bow bent from the extremities, and pierced, with an unerring shaft, that bosom, that had been so oft pressed to his own breast. Wounded, she uttered a groan, and, drawing the steel from out of the wound, she bathed her white limbs with purple blood; and she said, “I might {justly}, Phœbus, have been punished by thee, but {still I might} have first brought forth; now we two shall die in one.” Thus far {she spoke}; and she poured forth her life, together with her blood. A deadly coldness took possession of her body deprived of life.

The lover, too late, alas! repents of his cruel vengeance, and blames himself that he listened {to the bird, and} that he was so infuriated. He hates the bird, through which he was forced to know of the crime and the cause of his sorrow; he hates, too, the string, the bow, and his hand; and together with his hand, {those} rash weapons, the arrows. He cherishes her fallen to the ground, and by late resources endeavors to conquer her destiny; and in vain he practices his physical arts.

When he found that these attempts were made in vain, and that the funeral pile was being prepared, and that her limbs were about to be burnt in the closing flames, then, in truth, he gave utterance to sighs fetched from the bottom of his heart (for it is not allowed the celestial features to be bathed with tears). No otherwise than, as when an axe, poised from the right ear {of the butcher}, dashes to pieces, with a clean stroke, the hollow temples of the sucking calf, while the dam looks on. Yet after Phœbus had poured the unavailing perfumes on her breast, when he had given the {last} embrace and had performed the due obsequies prematurely hastened, he did not

suffer his own offspring to sink into the same ashes; but he snatched the child from the flames and from the womb of his mother, and carried him into the cave of the two-formed Chiron. And he forbade the raven, expecting for himself the reward of his tongue that told no untruth, to perch any longer among the white birds.

[Footnote 72: *Lesbos*.--Ver. 591. This was an island in the Ægean sea, lying to the south of Troy.]

[Footnote 73: *Plectrum*.--Ver. 601. This was a little rod, or staff, with which the player used to strike the strings of the lyre, or cithara, on which he was playing.]

## Riley's Explanation

History does not afford us the least insight into the foundation of the story of Coronis transformed into a crow, for making too faithful a report, nor that of the raven changed from white to black, for talking too much. If they are based upon some events which really happened, we must be content to acknowledge that these Fables refer to the history of two persons entirely unknown to us, and who, perhaps, lived as far back as the time of the daughters of Cecrops, to whom the story seems to bear some relation. Coronis being the name of a crow as well as of a Nymph, Lucian and other writers have fabled that her son, Æsculapius, was produced from the egg of that bird, and was born in the shape of a serpent, under which form he was very generally worshipped.

## Book II, Fable X (lines 633–675)

*Ocyrrhoe, the daughter of the Centaur Chiron, attempting to predict future events, tells her father the fate of the child Æsculapius, on which the Gods transform her into a mare.*

In the meantime the half-beast {Chiron} was proud of a pupil of Divine origin, and rejoiced in the honor annexed to the responsibility. Behold! the daughter of the Centaur comes, having her shoulders covered with her yellow hair; whom once the nymph Chariclo,[74] having borne her on the banks of a rapid stream, called Ocyrrhoë. She was not contented to learn her father's arts {only; but} she sang the secrets of the Fates. Therefore, when she had conceived in her mind the prophetic transports, and grew warm with the God, whom she held confined within her breast, she beheld the infant, and she said, "Grow on, child, the giver of health to the whole world; the bodies of mortals shall often owe their {own existence} to thee. To thee will it be allowed to restore life when taken away; and daring to do that once against the will of the Gods, thou wilt be hindered by the bolts of thy grandsire from being able any more to grant that {boon}. And from a God thou shalt become a lifeless carcase; and a God {again}, who lately wast a carcase; and twice shalt thou renew thy destiny. Thou likewise, dear father, now immortal, and produced at thy nativity, on the condition of enduring for ever, wilt then wish that thou couldst die, when thou shalt be tormented on receiving the blood of a baneful serpent[75] in thy wounded limbs; and the Gods shall make thee from an immortal {being}, subject to death, and the three Goddesses[76] shall cut thy threads."

Something still remained in addition to what she had said. She heaved a sigh from the bottom of her breast, and the tears bursting forth, trickled down her cheeks, and thus she said: "The Fates prevent me, and I am forbidden to say any more, and the use of my voice is precluded. My arts, which have brought the wrath of a Divinity upon me, were not of so much value; I wish that I had not been acquainted with the future. Now the human shape seems to be withdrawing from me; now grass pleases {me} for my food; now I have a desire to range over the extended plains; I am turned into a mare, and into a shape kindred {to that of my father}. But yet, why entirely? For my father partakes of both forms."

As she was uttering such words as these, the last part of her complaint was but little understood; and her words were confused. And presently neither {were} they words indeed, nor did it appear to be the voice of a mare, but of one imitating a mare. And in a little time she uttered perfect neighing, and stretched her arms upon the grass. Then did her fingers grow together, and a smooth hoof united five nails in one continued piece of horn. The length of her face and of her neck increased; the greatest part of her long hair became a tail. And as the hairs lay scattered about her neck, they were transformed into a mane {lying} upon the right side; at once both her

voice and her shape were changed. And this wondrous change gave her the {new} name {of Enippe}.

[Footnote 74: *Chariclo*.--Ver. 636. She was the daughter of Apollo, or of Oceanus, but is supposed not to have been the same person that is mentioned by Apollodorus as the mother of the prophet Tiresias.]

[Footnote 75: *A baneful serpent*.--Ver. 652. This happened when one of the arrows of Hercules, dipped in the poison of the Lernæan Hydra, pierced the foot of Chiron while he was examining it.]

[Footnote 76: *The three Goddesses*.--Ver. 654. Namely, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, the 'Parcæ,' or 'Destinies.']

## Book II, Fable XI (lines 676–707)

*Mercury, having stolen the oxen of Apollo, and Battus having perceived the theft, he engages him, by a present, to keep the matter secret. Mistrusting, however, his fidelity, he assumes another shape, and tempting him with presents, he succeeds in corrupting him. To punish his treachery, the God changes him into a touchstone.*

The Philyrean[77] hero wept, and in vain, {God} of Delphi, implored thy assistance; but neither couldst thou reverse the orders of great Jupiter, nor, if thou couldst have reversed them wast thou then present; {for then} thou wast dwelling in Elis and the Messenian[78] fields. This was the time when a shepherd's skin garment was covering thee, and a stick cut out of the wood was the burden of thy left hand, {and} of the other, a pipe unequal with its seven reeds. And while love is thy concern, while thy pipe is soothing thee, some cows are said to have strayed unobserved into the plains of Pylos.[79] The son of Maia the daughter of Atlas, observes them, and with his {usual} skill hides them, driven off, in the woods. Nobody but an old man, well-known in that country, had noticed the theft: all the neighborhood called him Battus. He was keeping the forests and the grassy pastures, and the set of fine-bred mares of the rich Neleus.[80]

{Mercury} was afraid of him, and took him aside with a gentle hand, and said to him, "Come, stranger, whoever thou art, if, perchance any one should ask after these herds, deny that thou hast seen them; and, lest no requital be paid thee for so doing, take a handsome cow as thy reward;" and {thereupon} he gave {him one}. On receiving it, the stranger returned this answer: "Thou mayst go in safety. May that stone first make mention of thy theft;" and he pointed to a stone. The son of Jupiter feigned to go away. {But} soon he returned, and changing his form, together with his voice, he said, "Countryman, if thou hast seen any cows pass along this way, give me thy help, and break silence about the theft; a female, coupled together with its bull shall be presented thee as a reward." But the old man,[81] after his reward was {thus} doubled, said, "They will be beneath those hills;" and beneath those hills they {really} were. The son of Atlas laughed and said, "Dost thou, treacherous man, betray me to my own self? Dost betray me to myself?" and {then} he turned his perjured breast into a hard stone, which even now is called the "Touchstone;"[82] and this old disgrace is {attached} to the stone that {really} deserves it not.

[Footnote 77: *Philyrean.*--Ver. 676. Chiron was the son of Philyra, by Saturn.]

[Footnote 78: *Messenian.*--Ver. 679. Elis and Messenia were countries of Peloponnesus; the former was on the northwest, and the latter on the southwest side of it.]

[Footnote 79: *Plains of Pylos*.--Ver. 684. There were three cities named Pylos in Peloponnesus. One was in Elis, another in Messenia, and the third was situate between the other two. The latter is supposed to have been the native place of Nestor, though they all laid claim to that honor.]

[Footnote 80: *Neleus*.--Ver. 689. He was the king of Pylos, and the father of Nestor.]

[Footnote 81: *The old man*.--Ver. 702. Clarke quaintly translates 'at senior,' 'but then the old blade.']

[Footnote 82: *The 'Touchstone.'*--Ver. 706. It is a matter of doubt among commentators whether 'index' here means a general term for the touchstone, by which metals are tested; or whether it means that Battus was changed into one individual stone, which afterwards was called 'index.' Lactantius, by his words, seems to imply that the latter was the case. He says, 'He changed him into a stone, which, from this circumstance, is called "index" about Pylos.' 'Index' was a name of infamy, corresponding with the Greek word συκοφάντης, and with our term 'spy.']

## Riley's Explanation

The Centaurs, fabulous monsters, half men and half horses, were perhaps the first horsemen in Thessaly and its neighborhood. It is also probable that Chiron, who was one of these, acquired great fame by the knowledge he had acquired at a time and in a country where learning was little cultivated. The ancients regarded him as the first promulgator of the utility of medicines, in which he was said to have instructed his pupil Æsculapius. He was also considered to be an excellent musician and a good astronomer, as we learn from Homer, Diodorus Siculus, and other authors. Most of the heroes of that age, and among them Hercules and Jason, studied under him. Very probably, the only foundation for the story of the transformation of Ocyrrhoë, was the skill and address which, under her father's instruction, she acquired in riding and the management of horses. For if, as it seems really was the case, the horsemen of that age were taken for monsters, half men and half horses, it is not surprising to find the story that the daughter of a Centaur was transformed into a mare.

Chiron is generally supposed to have marked out the Constellations, for the purpose of directing the Argonauts in their voyage for the recovery of the Golden Fleece.

## Book II, Fable XII (lines 708–764)

*Mercury, falling in love with Herse, the daughter of Cecrops, endeavors to engage Aglauros in his interest, and by her means, to obtain access to her sister. She refuses to assist him, unless he promises to present her with a large sum of money.*

Hence, the bearer of the caduceus raised himself upon equal wings; and as he flew, he looked down upon the fields of Munychia,[83] and the land pleasing to Minerva, and the groves of the well-planted Lycæus. On that day, by chance, the chaste virgins were, in their purity, carrying the sacred offerings in baskets crowned with flowers, upon their heads to the joyful citadel of Pallas. The winged God beholds them returning thence; and he does not shape his course directly forward, but wheels round in the {same} circle. As that bird swiftest in speed, the kite, on espying the entrails, while he is afraid, and the priests stand in numbers around the sacrifice, wings his flight in circles, and yet ventures not to go far away, and greedily hovers around {the object of} his hopes with waving wings, so does the active Cyllenian {God} bend his course over the Actæan towers, and circles round in the same air. As much as Lucifer shines more brightly than the other stars, and as much as the golden Phœbe {shines more brightly} than thee, O Lucifer, so much superior was Herse, as she went, to all the {other} virgins, and was the ornament of the solemnity and of her companions. The son of Jupiter was astonished at her beauty; and as he hung in the air, he burned no otherwise than as when the Balearic[84] sling throws forth the plummet of lead; it flies and becomes red hot in its course, and finds beneath the clouds the fires which it had not {before}.

He alters his course, and, having left heaven, goes a different way; nor does he disguise himself; so great is his confidence in his beauty. This, though it is {every way} complete, still he improves by care, and smooths his hair and {adjusts} his mantle,[85] that it may hang properly, so that the fringe and all the gold may be seen; {and minds} that his long smooth wand, with which he induces and drives away sleep, is in his right hand, and that his wings[86] shine upon his beauteous feet.

A private part of the house had three bed-chambers, adorned with ivory and with tortoiseshell, of which thou, Pandrosos, hadst the right-hand one, Aglauros the left-hand, and Herse had the one in the middle. She that occupied the left-hand one was the first to remark Mercury approaching, and she ventured to ask the name of the God, and the occasion of his coming. To her thus answered the grandson of Atlas and of Pleione: “I am he who carries the commands of my father through the air. Jupiter himself is my father. Nor will I invent pretences; do thou only be willing to be attached to thy sister, and to be called the aunt of my offspring. Herse is the cause of my coming; I pray thee to favor one in love.” Aglauros looks upon him with the same

eyes with which she had lately looked upon the hidden mysteries of the yellow-haired Minerva, and demands for her agency gold of great weight; {and}, in the meantime, obliges him to go out of the house. The warlike Goddess turned upon her the orbs of her stern eyes, and drew a sigh from the bottom {of her heart}, with so great a motion, that she heaved both her breast and the Ægis placed before her valiant breast. It occurred {to her} that she had laid open her secrets with a profane hand, at the time when she beheld progeny created for {the God} who inhabits Lemnos,[87] without a mother, {and} contrary to the assigned laws; and that she could now be agreeable both to the God and to the sister {of Aglauros}, and that she would be enriched by taking the gold, which she, in her avarice, had demanded. Forthwith she repairs to the abode of Envy, hideous with black gore. Her abode is concealed in the lowest recesses of a cave, wanting sun, {and} not pervious to any wind, dismal and filled with benumbing cold; and which is ever without fire, and ever abounding with darkness.

[Footnote 83: *Munychia*.--Ver. 709. Munychia was the name of a promontory and harbor of Attica, between the Piræus and the promontory of 'Sunium.' The spot was so called from Munychius, who there built a temple in honor of Diana.]

[Footnote 84: *Balearic*.--Ver. 727. The Baleares were the islands of Majorca, Minorca, and Iviza, in the Mediterranean, near the coast of Spain. The natives of these islands were famous for their skill in the use of the sling. That weapon does not appear to have been used in the earliest times among the Greeks, as Homer does not mention it; it had, however, been introduced by the time of the war with Xerxes, though even then the sling was, perhaps, rarely used as a weapon. The Acarnanians and the Achæans of Agium, Patræ, and Dymæ were very expert in the use of the sling. That used by the Achæans was made of three thongs of leather, and not of one only, like those of other nations. The natives of the Balearic isles are said to have attained their skill from the circumstance of their mothers, when they were children, obliging them to obtain their food by striking it, from a tree, with a sling. While other slings were made of leather, theirs were made of rushes. Besides stones, plummets of lead, called 'glandes,' (as in the present instance), and μολύβδιδες, of a form between acorns and almonds, were cast in moulds, to be thrown from slings. They have been frequently dug up in various parts of Greece, and particularly on the plains of Marathon. Some have the device of a thunderbolt; while others are inscribed with δέξαι, 'take this.' It was a prevalent idea with the ancients that the stone discharged from the sling became red hot in its course, from the swiftness of its motion.]

[Footnote 85: *Adjusts his mantle*.--Ver. 733. 'Chlamydemque ut pendeat apte, Collocat,' etc., is translated by Clarke--'And he places his coat that it might hang agreeably, that the border and all its gold might appear.']

[Footnote 86: *That his wings*.--Ver. 736. Clarke renders ‘ut tersis niteant talaria plantis,’ ‘that his wings shine upon his spruce feet.’]

[Footnote 87: *God who inhabits Lemnos*.--Ver. 757. Being precipitated from heaven for his deformity, Vulcan fell upon the Isle of Lemnos, in the Ægean Sea, where he exercised the craft of a blacksmith, according to the mythologists. The birth of Ericthonius, by the aid of Minerva, is here referred to.]

### Riley′s Explanation

Cicero tells us, that there were several persons in ancient times named Mercury. The probability is, that one of them fell in love with Herse, one of the daughters of Cecrops, king of Athens; and that Aglauros becoming jealous of her, this tradition was built upon facts of so ordinary a nature.

## Book II, Fable XIII (lines 765–832)

*Pallas commands Envy to make Aglauros jealous of her sister Herse. Envy obeys the request of the Goddess; and Aglauros, stung with that passion, continues obstinate in opposing Mercury's passage to her sister's apartment, for which the God changes her into a statue.*

When the female warrior, to be dreaded in battle, came hither, she stood before the abode (for she did not consider it lawful to go under the roof), and she struck the door-posts with the end of the spear. The doors, being shaken, flew open; she sees Envy within, eating the flesh of vipers, the nutriment of her own bad propensities; and when she sees her, she turns away her eyes. But the other rises sluggishly from the ground, and leaves the bodies of the serpents half devoured, and stalks along with sullen pace. And when she sees the Goddess graced with beauty and with {splendid} arms, she groans, and fetches a deep sigh at her appearance. A paleness rests on her face, {and} leanness in all her body; she never looks direct on you; her teeth are black with rust; her breast is green with gall; her tongue is dripping with venom. Smiles there are none, except such as the sight of grief has excited. Nor does she enjoy sleep, being kept awake with watchful cares; but sees with sorrow the successes of men, and pines away at seeing them. She both torments and is tormented at the same moment, and is {ever} her own punishment. Yet, though Tritonia[88] hated her, she spoke to her briefly in such words as these: "Infect one of the daughters of Cecrops with thy poison; there is occasion so {to do}; Aglauros is she."

Saying no more, she departed, and spurned the ground with her spear impressed on it. She, beholding the Goddess as she departed, with a look askance, uttered a few murmurs, and grieved at the success of Minerva; and took her staff, which wreaths of thorns entirely surrounded; and veiled in black clouds, wherever she goes she tramples down the blooming fields, and burns up the grass, and crops the tops {of the flowers}. With her breath, too, she pollutes both nations and cities, and houses; and at last she descries the Tritonian[89] citadel, flourishing in arts and riches, and cheerful peace. Hardly does she restrain her tears, because she sees nothing to weep at. But after she has entered the chamber of the daughter of Cecrops, she executes her orders; and touches her breast with her hand stained with rust, and fills her heart with jagged thorns. She breathes into her as well the noxious venom, and spreads the poison black as pitch throughout her bones, and lodges it in the midst of her lungs.

And that these causes of mischief may not wander through too wide a space, she places her sister before her eyes, and the fortunate marriage of {that} sister, and the God under his beauteous appearance, and aggravates each particular. By this, the daughter of Cecrops being irritated, is gnawed by a secret grief, and groans, tormented by night, tormented by day, and wastes away in extreme wretchedness, with a slow consumption, as ice smitten upon by a sun often clouded.

She burns at the good fortune of the happy Herse, no otherwise than as when fire is placed beneath thorny reeds, which do not send forth flames, and burn with a gentle heat. Often does she wish to die, that she may not be a witness to any such thing; often, to tell the matters, as criminal, to her severe father. At last, she sat herself down in the front of the threshold, in order to exclude the God when he came; to whom, as he proffered blandishments and entreaties, and words of extreme kindness, she said, “Cease {all this}; I shall not remove myself hence, until thou art repulsed.” “Let us stand to that agreement,” says the active Cyllenian {God}; and he opens the carved door with his wand. But in her, as she endeavors to arise, the parts which we bend in sitting cannot be moved, through their numbing weight. She, indeed, struggles to raise herself, with her body, upright; but the joints of her knees are stiff, and a chill runs through her nails, and her veins are pallid, through the loss of blood.

And as the disease {of} an incurable cancer is wont to spread in all directions, and to add the uninjured parts to the tainted; so, by degrees, did a deadly chill enter her breast, and stop the passages of life, and her respiration. She did not endeavor to speak; but if she had endeavored, she had no passage for her voice. Stone had now possession of her neck; her face was grown hard, and she sat, a bloodless statue. Nor was the stone white; her mind had stained it.

[Footnote 88: *Tritonia*.--Ver. 783. Minerva is said to have been called Tritonia, either from the Cretan word τριτω, signifying ‘a head,’ as she sprang from the head of Jupiter; or from Trito, a lake of Libya, near which she was said to have been born.]

[Footnote 89: *Tritonian*.--Ver. 794. Athens, namely, which was sacred to Pallas, or Minerva, its tutelary divinity.]

### Riley’s Explanation

Pausanias, in his Attica, somewhat varies this story, and says that the daughters of Cecrops, running mad, threw themselves from the top of a tower. It is very probable that on the introduction of the worship of Pallas, or Minerva, into Attica, these daughters of Cecrops may have hesitated to encourage the innovation, and the story was promulgated that the Goddess had in that manner punished their impiety. This seems the more likely, from the fact mentioned by Pausanias that Pandrosos, the third daughter of Cecrops, had, after her death, a temple built in honor of her, near that of Minerva, because she had continued faithful to that Goddess, and had not disobeyed her, as her sisters had done. The reputation and good fame of Herse and Aglauros had, however, been restored by the time of Herodotus, since he informs us that they both had their temples at Athens.

## Book II, Fable XIV (lines 833–875)

*Jupiter assumes the shape of a Bull, and carrying off Europa, swims with her on his back to the isle of Crete.*

When the grandson of Atlas had inflicted this punishment upon her words and her profane disposition, he left the lands named after Pallas, and entered the skies with his waving wings. His father calls him on one side; and, not owning the cause of his love, he says, “My son, the trusty minister of my commands, banish delay, and swiftly descend with thy usual speed, and repair to the region which looks towards thy {Constellation} mother on the left side, (the natives call it Sidonis[90] by name) and drive towards the sea-shore, the herd belonging to the king, which thou seest feeding afar upon the grass of the mountain.”

{Thus} he spoke; and already were the bullocks, driven from the mountain, making for the shore named, where the daughter of the great king, attended by Tyrian virgins, was wont to amuse herself. Majesty and love but ill accord, nor can they continue in the same abode. The father and the ruler of the Gods, whose right hand is armed with the three-forked flames, who shakes the world with his nod, laying aside the dignity of empire, assumes the appearance of a bull; and mixing with the oxen, he lows, and, in all his beauty, walks about upon the shooting grass. For his color is that of snow, which neither the soles of hard feet have trodden upon, nor the watery South wind melted. His neck swells with muscles; dewlaps hang from {between} his shoulders. His horns are small indeed, but such as you might maintain were made with the hand, and more transparent than a bright gem. There is nothing threatening in his forehead; nor is his eye formidable; his countenance expresses peace.

The daughter of Agenor is surprised that he is so beautiful, and that he threatens no attack; but although so gentle, she is at first afraid to touch him. By and by she approaches him, and holds out flowers to his white mouth. The lover rejoices, and till his hoped-for pleasure comes, he gives kisses to her hands; scarcely, oh, scarcely, does he defer the rest. And now he plays with her, and skips upon the green grass; {and} now he lays his snow-white side upon the yellow sand. And, her fear {now} removed by degrees, at one moment he gives his breast to be patted by the hand of the virgin; at another, his horns to be wreathed with new-made garlands. The virgin of royal birth even ventured to sit down upon the back of the bull, not knowing upon whom she was pressing. Then the God, by degrees {moving} from the land, and from the dry shore, places the fictitious hoofs of his feet in the waves near the brink. Then he goes still further, and carries his prize over the expanse of the midst of the ocean. She is affrighted, and, borne off, looks back on the shore she has left; and with her right hand she grasps his horn, {while} the other is placed on his back; her waving garments are ruffled by the breeze.

[Footnote 90: *Sidonis*.--Ver. 840. Sidon, or Sidonis, was a maritime city of Phœnicia, near Tyre, of whose greatness it was not an unworthy rival.]

## Riley's Explanation

This Fable depicts one of the most famous events in the ancient Mythology. As we have already remarked, it is supposed that there were several persons of the name of Zeus, or Jupiter; though there is great difficulty in assigning to each individual his own peculiar adventures. Vossius refers the adventure of Niobe, the daughter of Phoroneus, to Jupiter Apis, the king of Argos, who reigned about B.C. 1770; and that of Danaë to Jupiter Prœtus, who lived about 1350 years before the Christian era. It was Jupiter Tantalus, according to him, that carried off Ganymede; and it was Jupiter, the father of Hercules, that deceived Leda. He says that the subject of the present Fable was Jupiter Asterius, who reigned about B.C. 1400. Diodorus Siculus tells us that he was the son of Teutamus, who, having married the daughter of Creteus, went with some Pelasgians to settle in the island of Crete, of which he was the first king. We may then conclude, that Jupiter Asterius, having heard of the beauty of Europa, the daughter of Agenor, King of Tyre, fitted out a ship, for the purpose of carrying her off by force. This is the less improbable, as we learn from Herodotus, that the custom of carrying those away by force, who could not be obtained by fair means, was very common in these rude ages.

The ship in which Asterius made his voyage, had, very probably, the form of a bull for its figure-head; which, in time, occasioned those who related the adventure, to say, that Jupiter concealed himself under the shape of that animal, to carry off his mistress. Palæphatus and Tzetzes suggest, that the story took its rise from the name of the general of Asterius, who was called Taurus, which is also the Greek name for a bull. Bochart has an ingenious suggestion, based upon etymological grounds. He thinks that the twofold meaning of the word 'Alpha,' or 'Ilpha,' which, in the Phœnician dialect, meant either a ship or a bull, gave occasion to the fable; and that the Greeks, on reading the annals of the Phœnicians, by mistake, took the word in the latter sense.

Europa was honored as a Divinity after her death, and a festival was instituted in her memory, which Hesychius calls 'Hellotia,' from Ἑλλωτὶς, the name she received after her death.

## Book III, Fable I (lines 1–34)

*Jupiter, having carried away Europa, her father, Agenor, commands his son Cadmus to go immediately in search of her, and either to bring back his sister with him, or never to return to Phœnicia. Cadmus, wearied with his toils and fruitless inquiries, goes to consult the oracle at Delphi, which bids him observe the spot where he should see a cow lie down, and build a city there, and give the name of Bœotia to the country.*

And now the God, having laid aside the shape of the deceiving Bull, had discovered himself, and reached the Dictæan land; when her father, ignorant {of her fate}, commands Cadmus to seek her {thus} ravished, and adds exile as the punishment, if he does not find her; being {both} affectionate and unnatural in the self-same act. The son of Agenor, having wandered over the whole world,[1] as an exile flies from his country and the wrath of his father, for who is there that can discover the intrigues of Jupiter? A suppliant, he consults the oracle of Phœbus, and inquires in what land he must dwell. “A heifer,” Phœbus says, “will meet thee in the lonely fields, one that has never borne the yoke, and free from the crooked plough. Under her guidance, go on thy way; and where she shall lie down on the grass, there cause a city to be built, and call it the Bœotian[2] {city}.”

Scarcely had Cadmus well got down from the Castalian cave,[3] {when} he saw a heifer, without a keeper, slowly going along, bearing no mark of servitude upon her neck. He follows, and pursues her steps with leisurely pace, and silently adores Phœbus, the adviser of his way. {And} now he had passed the fords of the Cephisus, and the fields of Panope, {when} the cow stood still and raising her forehead, expansive with lofty horns, towards heaven, she made the air reverberate with her lowings. And so, looking back on her companions that followed behind, she lay down, and reposed her side upon the tender grass. Cadmus returned thanks, and imprinted kisses upon the stranger land, and saluted the unknown mountains and fields. He was {now} going to offer sacrifice to Jupiter, and commanded his servants to go and fetch some water for the libation from the running springs. An ancient grove was standing {there, as yet} profaned by no axe. There was a cavern in the middle {of it}, thick covered with twigs and osiers, forming a low arch by the junction of the rocks; abounding with plenty of water. Hid in this cavern, there was a dragon sacred to Mars,[4] adorned with crests and a golden {color}. His eyes sparkle with fire, {and} all his body is puffed out with poison; three tongues, {too}, are brandished, and his teeth stand in a triple row.

[Footnote 1: *Over the whole world.*--Ver. 6. Apollodorus tells us that Cadmus lived in Thrace until the death of his mother, Telephassa, who accompanied him; and that, after her decease, he proceeded to Delphi to make inquiries of the oracle.]

[Footnote 2: *Bœotian*.--Ver. 13. He implies here that Bœotia received its name from the Greek word βοῦς, ‘an ox’ or ‘cow.’ Other writers say that it was so called from Bœotus, the son of Neptune and Arne. Some authors also say that Thebes received its name from the Syrian word ‘Thebe,’ which signified ‘an ox.’]

[Footnote 3: *Castalian cave*.--Ver. 14. Castalius was a fountain at the foot of Mount Parnassus, and in the vicinity of Delphi. It was sacred to the Muses.]

[Footnote 4: *Sacred to Mars*.--Ver. 32. Euripides says, that the dragon had been set there by Mars to watch the spot and the neighboring stream. Other writers say that it was a son of Mars, Dercyllus by name, and that a Fury, named Tilphosa, was its mother. Ancient history abounds with stories of enormous serpents. The army of Regulus is said by Pliny the Elder, to have killed a serpent of enormous size, which obstructed the passage of the river Bagrada, in Africa. It was 120 feet in length.]

## Riley’s Explanation

Reverting to the history of Europa, it may be here remarked, that Apollodorus has preserved her genealogy. Libya, according to that author, had two sons by Neptune, Belus and Agenor. The latter married Telephassa, by whom he had Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix, and a daughter named Europa. Some ancient writers, however, say, that Europa was the daughter of Phœnix, and the grandchild of Agenor.

Some authors, and Ovid among the rest, have supposed that Europe received its name from Europa. Bochart has, with considerable probability, suggested that it was originally so called from the fair complexion of the people who inhabited it. Europa herself may have received her name also from the fairness of her complexion: hence, the poets, as the Scholiast on Theocritus tells us, invented a fable, that a daughter of Juno stole her mother’s paint, to give it to Europa, who used it with so much success as to ensure, by its use, an extremely fair and beautiful complexion.

## Book III, Fable II (lines 35–130)

*The companions of Cadmus, fetching water from the fountain of Mars, are devoured by the Dragon that guards it. Cadmus, on discovering their destruction, slays the monster, and, by the advice of Minerva, sows the teeth, which immediately produce a crop of armed men. They forthwith quarrel among themselves, and kill each other, with the exception of five who assist Cadmus in building the city of Thebes.*

After the men who came from the Tyrian nation had touched this grove with ill-fated steps, and the urn let down into the water made a splash; the azure dragon stretched forth his head from the deep cave, and uttered dreadful hissings. The urns dropped from their hands; and the blood left their bodies, and a sudden trembling seized their astonished limbs. He wreathes his scaly orbs in rolling spires, and with a spring becomes twisted into mighty folds; and uprearing himself from below the middle into the light air, he looks down upon all the grove, and is of as large a size,[5] as, if you were to look on him entire, {the serpent} which separates the two Bears.

There is no delay; he seizes the Phœnicians (whether they are resorting to their arms or to flight, or whether fear itself is preventing either {step}); some he kills with his sting,[6] some with his long folds, some breathed upon[7] by the venom of his baneful poison.

The sun, now at its height, had made the shadows {but} small: the son of Agenor wonders what has detained his companion and goes to seek his men. His garment was a skin torn from a lion; his weapon was a lance with shining steel, and a javelin; and a courage superior to any weapon. When he entered the grove, and beheld the lifeless bodies, and the victorious enemy of immense size upon them, licking the horrid wounds with bloodstained tongue, he said, “Either I will be the avenger of your death, bodies {of my} faithful {companions}, or {I will be} a sharer {in it}.” {Thus} he said; and with his right hand he raised a huge stone,[8] and hurled the vast {weight} with a tremendous effort. {And} although high walls with lofty towers would have been shaken with the shock of it, {yet} the dragon remained without a wound; and, being defended by his scales as though with a coat of mail, and the hardness of his black hide, he repelled the mighty stroke with his skin. But he did not overcome the javelin as well with the same hardness; which stood fast, fixed in the middle joint of his yielding spine, and sank with the entire {point of} steel into his entrails. Fierce with pain, he turned his head towards his back, and beheld his wounds, and bit the javelin fixed there. And after he had twisted it on every side with all his might, with difficulty he wrenched it from his back; yet the steel stuck fast in his bones. But then, when this newly inflicted wound has increased his wonted fury, his throat swelled with gorged veins, and white foam flowed around his pestilential jaws. The Earth, too, scraped with the scales, sounds again, and the livid steam that issues from his infernal mouth,[9] infects the tainted air. One

while he is enrolled in spires making enormous rings; sometimes he unfolds himself straighter than a long beam. Now with a vast impulse, like a torrent swelled with rain, he is borne along, and bears down the obstructing forests with his breast. The son of Agenor gives way a little; and by the spoil of the lion he sustains the shock, and with his lance extended before him, pushes back his mouth, as it advances. The dragon rages, and vainly inflicts wounds on the hard steel, and fixes his teeth upon the point. And now the blood began to flow from his poisonous palate, and had dyed the green grass with its spray. But the wound was slight; because he recoiled from the stroke, and drew back his wounded throat, and by shrinking prevented the blow from sinking deep, and did not suffer it to go very far. At length, the son of Agenor, still pursuing, pressed the spear lodged in his throat, until an oak stood in his way as he retreated, and his neck was pierced, together with the trunk. The tree was bent with the weight of the serpent, and groaned at having its trunk lashed with the extremity of its tail.

While the conqueror was surveying the vast size of his vanquished enemy, a voice was suddenly heard (nor was it easy to understand whence {it was}, but heard it was). “Why, son of Agenor, art thou {thus} contemplating the dragon slain {by thee}? Even thou {thyself} shalt be seen {in the form of} a dragon.”[10] He, for a long time in alarm, lost his color together with his presence of mind, and his hair stood on end with a chill of terror. Lo! Pallas, the favorer of the hero, descending through the upper region of the air, comes to him, and bids him sow the dragon’s teeth under the earth turned up, as the seeds of a future people. He obeyed; and when he had opened a furrow with the pressed plough, he scattered the teeth on the ground as ordered, the seed of a race of men. Afterwards (’tis beyond belief) the turf began to move, and first appeared a point of a spear out of the furrows, next the coverings of heads nodding with painted cones;[11] then the shoulders and the breast, and the arms laden with weapons start up, and a crop of men armed with shields grows apace. So, when the curtains[12] are drawn up in the joyful theaters, figures are wont to rise, and first to show their countenances; by degrees the rest; and being drawn out in a gradual continuation, the whole appear, and place their feet on the lowest edge {of the stage}. Alarmed with this new enemy, Cadmus is preparing to take arms, when one of the people that the earth had produced cries out, “Do not take up {arms}, nor engage thyself in civil war.” And then, engaged hand to hand, he strikes one of his earth-born brothers with the cruel sword, {while} he himself falls by a dart sent from a distance. He, also, who had put him to death, lives no longer than the other, and breathes forth the air which he has so lately received. In a similar manner, too, the whole troop becomes maddened, and the brothers {so} newly sprung up, fall in fight with each other, by mutual wounds. And now the youths that had the space of {so} short an existence allotted them, beat with throbbing breast their blood-stained mother, five {only} remaining, of whom Echion[13] was one. He, by the advice of Tritonia, threw his arms upon the ground, and both asked and gave the assurance of brotherly concord.

The Sidonian stranger had these as associates in his task, when he built the city that was ordered by the oracle of Phœbus.

[Footnote 5: *As large a size*.--Ver. 44. This description of the enormous size of the dragon or serpent is inconsistent with what the Poet says in line 91, where we find Cadmus enabled to pin his enemy against an oak.]

[Footnote 6: *With his sting*.--Ver. 48. He enumerates in this one instance the various modes by which serpents put their prey to death, either by means of their sting, or, in the case of the larger kinds of serpent, by twisting round it, and suffocating it in their folds.]

[Footnote 7: *Some breathed upon*.--Ver. 49. It was a prevalent notion among the ancients, that some serpents had the power of killing their prey by their poisonous breath. Though some modern commentators on this passage may be found to affirm the same thing, it is extremely doubtful if such is the fact. The notion was, perhaps, founded on the power which certain serpents have of fascinating their prey by the agency of the eye, and thus depriving it of the means of escape.]

[Footnote 8: *A huge stone*.--Ver. 59. 'Molaris' here means a stone as large as a mill-stone, and not a mill-stone itself, for we must remember that this was an uninhabited country, and consequently a stranger to the industry of man.]

[Footnote 9: *His infernal mouth*.--Ver. 76. 'Stygio' means 'pestilential as the exhalations of the marshes of Styx.']

[Footnote 10: *Form of a dragon*.--Ver. 98. This came to pass when, having been expelled from his dominions by Zethus and Amphion, he retired to Illyria, and was there transformed into a serpent, a fate which was shared by his wife Hermione.]

[Footnote 11: *With painted cones*.--Ver. 108. The 'conus' was the conical part of the helmet into which the crest of variegated feathers was inserted.]

[Footnote 12: *When the curtains*.--Ver. 111. The 'Siparium' was a piece of tapestry stretched on a frame, and, rising before the stage, answered the same purpose as the curtain or drop-scene with us, in concealing the stage till the actors appeared. Instead of drawing up this curtain to discover the stage and actors, according to our present practice, it was depressed when the play began, and fell beneath the level of the stage; whence 'aulæa premuntur,' 'the curtain is dropped,' meant that the play had commenced. When the performance was finished, this was raised again gradually from the foot of the stage; therefore 'aulæa tolluntur,' 'the curtain is raised,' would mean that the play had finished. From the present passage we learn, that in drawing it up from the stage, the curtain was gradually displayed, the unfolding taking place, perhaps, below the

boards, so that the heads of the figures rose first, until the whole form appeared in full with the feet resting on the stage, when the 'siparium' was fully drawn up. From a passage in Virgil's Georgics (book iii. l. 25), we learn that the figures of Britons (whose country had then lately been the scene of new conquests) were woven on the canvas of the 'siparium,' having their arms in the attitude of lifting the curtain.]

[Footnote 13: *Echion*.--Ver. 126. The names of the others were Udeus, Chthonius, Hyperenor, and Pelor, according to Apollodorus. To these some added Creon, as a sixth.]

## Riley's Explanation

Agenor, on losing his daughter, commands his sons to go in search of her, and not to return till they have found her. The young princes, either unable to learn what was become of her, or, perhaps, being too weak to recover her out of the hands of the king of Crete, did not return to their father, but established themselves in different countries; Cadmus settling in Bœotia, Cilix in Cilicia, to which he gave his name, and Phœnix, as Hyginus tells us, remaining in Africa. Photius, quoting from Conon, the historian, informs us, that the hope of conquering some country in Europe, and establishing a colony there, was the true ground of the voyage of Cadmus.

Palæphatus, and other writers, say, that the Dragon which was killed by Cadmus was a king of the country, who was named Draco, and was a son of Mars: that his teeth were his subjects, who rallied again after their defeat, and that Cadmus put them all to the sword, except Chthonius, Udeus, Hyperenor, Pelor, and Echion, who became reconciled to him. Heraclitus, however, assures us, that Cadmus really did slay a serpent, which was very annoying to the Bœotian territory. Bochart and LeClerc are of opinion that the Fable has the following foundation:--They say, that in the Phœnician language, the same word signifies either the teeth of a serpent, or short javelins, pointed with brass; that the word which signifies the number five likewise means an army; and that probably, from these circumstances, the Fable may have taken its rise. For the Greeks, in following the annals written in the Phœnician language, while writing the history of the founder of Thebes, instead of describing his soldiers as wearing helmets on their heads, with back and breast-plates, and with darts in their hands pointed with brass, which equipment was then entirely novel in Greece, chose rather to follow the more wonderful version, and to say, that Cadmus had five companions produced from the teeth of a serpent; as, according to Bochart's suggestion, the same Phœnician phrase may either signify a company of men sprung from the teeth of a serpent, or a company of men armed with brazen darts.

This conjecture is, perhaps, confirmed by a story related by Herodotus (book ii.), which resembles it very much. He tells us, that Psammeticus, king of Egypt, being driven to the marshy parts of his kingdom, sent to consult the oracle of Latona, which answered that he should be

restored by brass men coming from the sea. At the time, this answer appeared to him entirely frivolous; but certain Ionian soldiers, being obliged, some years after, to retire to Egypt, and appearing on the shore with their weapons and armor, all of brass, those who perceived them ran immediately to inform the king, that men clad in brass were plundering the country. The prince then fully comprehended the meaning of the oracle, and making an alliance with them, recovered his throne by the assistance they gave him. These brass men come from the sea, and those sprung from the earth were soldiers who assisted Psammeticus and Cadmus in carrying out their objects. Bochart's conjecture is strengthened by the fact, that Cadmus was either the inventor of the cuirass and javelin, or the first that brought them into Greece. Without inquiring further into the subject, we may conclude, that the men sprung from the earth, or the dragon's teeth which were sown, were the people of the country, whom Cadmus found means to bring over to his interest; and that they first helped him to conquer his enemies, and then to build the citadel of Thebes, to ensure his future security. Apollodorus says that Cadmus, to expiate the slaughter of the dragon, was obliged to serve Mars a whole year; which year, containing eight of our years, it is not improbable that Cadmus rendered services for a long time to his new allies before he received any assistance from them.

## Book III, Fable III (lines 131–252)

*Actæon, the grandson of Cadmus, fatigued with hunting and excessive heat, inadvertently wanders to the cool valley of Gargaphie, the usual retreat of Diana, when tired with the same exercise. There, to his misfortune, he surprises the Goddess and her Nymphs while bathing, for which she transforms him into a stag, and his own hounds tear him to pieces.*

And now Thebes was standing; now Cadmus, thou mightst seem happy in thy exile. Both Mars and Venus[14] had become thy father-in-law and mother-in-law; add to this, issue by a wife so illustrious, so many sons[15] and daughters, and grandchildren, dear pledges {of love}; these, too, now of a youthful age. But, forsooth, the last day {of life} must always be awaited by man, and no one ought to be pronounced happy before his death,[16] and his last obsequies. Thy grandson, Cadmus, was the first occasion of sorrow to thee, among so much prosperity, the horns, too, not his own, placed upon his forehead, and you, O dogs, glutted with the blood of your master. But, if you diligently inquire into his {case}, you will find the fault of an accident, and not criminality in him; for what criminality did mistake embrace?

There was a mountain stained with the blood of various wild beasts; and now the day had contracted the meridian shadow of things, and the sun was equally distant from each extremity {of the heavens}; when the Hyantian youth[17] {thus} addressed the partakers of his toils, as they wandered along the lonely haunts {of the wild beasts}, with gentle accent: “Our nets are moistened, my friends, and our spears, too, with the blood of wild beasts; and the day has yielded sufficient sport; when the next morn, borne upon her rosy chariot, shall bring back the light, let us seek again our proposed task. Now Phœbus is at the same distance from both lands, {the Eastern and the Western}, and is cleaving the fields with his heat. Cease your present toils, and take away the knotted nets.” The men execute his orders, and cease their labors. There was a valley, thick set with pitch-trees and the sharp-pointed cypress; by name Gargaphie,[18] sacred to the active Diana. In the extreme recess of this, there was a grotto in a grove, formed by no art; nature, by her ingenuity, had counterfeited art; for she had formed a natural arch, in the native pumice and the light sand-stones. A limpid fountain ran murmuring on the right hand with its little stream, having its spreading channels edged with a border of grass. Here, {when} wearied with hunting, the Goddess of the woods was wont to bathe her virgin limbs in clear water.

After she had entered there, she handed to one of the Nymphs, her armor-bearer, her javelin, her quiver, and her unstrung bow. Another Nymph put her arms under her mantle, when taken off: two removed the sandals from her feet. But Crocale,[19] the daughter of Ismenus, more skilled than they, gathered her hair, which lay scattered over her neck, into a knot, although she herself was with {her hair} loose. Nephele,[20] and Hyale,[21] and Rhanis,[22] fetch water,

Psecas[23] and Phyale[24] {do the same}, and pour it from their large urns. And while the Titanian {Goddess} was there bathing in the wonted stream, behold! the grandson of Cadmus, having deferred the remainder of his sport till {next day}, came into the grove, wandering through the unknown wood, with uncertain steps; thus did his fate direct him.

Soon as he entered the grotto, dropping with its springs, the Nymphs, naked as they were, on seeing a man, smote their breasts, and filled all the woods with sudden shrieks, and gathering round Diana, covered her with their bodies. Yet the Goddess herself was higher than they, and was taller than them all by the neck. The color that is wont to be in clouds, tinted by the rays of the sun {when} opposite, or that of the ruddy morning, was on the features of Diana, when seen without her garments. She, although surrounded with the crowd of her attendants, stood sideways, and turned her face back; and how did she wish that she had her arrows at hand; {and} so she took up water,[25] which she did have {at hand}, and threw it over the face of the man, and sprinkling his hair with the avenging stream, she added these words, the presages of his future woe: “Now thou mayst tell, if tell thou canst, how that I was seen by thee without my garments.” Threatening no more, she places on his sprinkled head the horns of a lively stag; she adds length to his neck, and sharpens the tops of his ears; and she changes his hands into feet, and his arms into long legs, and covers his body with a spotted coat of hair; fear, too is added. The Autonoëian[26] hero took to flight, and wondered that he was so swift in his speed; but when he beheld his own horns in the wonted stream, he was about to say, “Ah, wretched me!” {when} no voice followed. He groaned; that was {all} his voice, and his tears trickled down a face not his own, {but that of a stag}. His former understanding alone remained. What should he do? Should he return home, and to the royal abode? or should he lie hid in the woods? Fear hinders the one {step}, shame the other. While he was hesitating, the dogs espied him, and first Melampus,[27] and the good-nosed Ichnobates gave the signal, in full cry. Ichnobates,[28] was a Gnossian {dog}; Melampus was of Spartan breed. Then the rest rush on, swifter than the rapid winds; Pamphagus,[29] and Dorcæus,[30] and Oribasus,[31] all Arcadian {dogs}; and able Nebrophonus,[32] and with Lælaps,[33] fierce Theron,[34] and Pterelas,[35] excelling in speed, Agre[36] in her scent, and Hylæus,[37] lately wounded by a fierce boar, and Nape,[38] begotten by a wolf, and Pœmenis,[39] that had tended cattle, and Harpyia,[40] followed by her two whelps, and the Sicyonian Ladon,[41] having a slender girth; Dromas,[42] too, and Canace,[43] Sticte,[44] and Tigris, and Alce,[45] and Leucon,[46] with snow-white hair, and Asbolus,[47] with black, and the able-bodied Lacon,[48] and Aëllo,[49] good at running, and Thoüs,[50] and swift Lycisca,[51] with her Cyprian brother, Harpalus,[52] too, having his black face marked with white down the middle, and Melaneus,[53] and Lachne,[54] with a wire-haired body, and Labros,[55] and Agriodos,[56] bred of a Dictæan sire, but of a Laconian dam, and Hylactor,[57] with his shrill note; and others which it were tedious to recount.

This pack, in eagerness for their prey, are borne over rocks and cliffs, and crags difficult of approach, where the path is steep, and where there is no road. He flies along the routes by which he has so often pursued; alas! he is {now} flying from his own servants. Fain would he have cried, “I am Actæon, recognize your own master.” Words are wanting to his wishes; the air resounds with their barking. Melanchætes[58] was the first to make a wound on his back, Theridamas[59] the next; Oresitrophus[60] fastened upon his shoulder. These had gone out later, but their course was shortened by a near cut through the hill. While they hold their master, the rest of the pack come up, and fasten their teeth in his body. Now room is wanting for {more} wounds. He groans, and utters a noise, though not that of a man, {still}, such as a stag cannot make; and he fills the well-known mountains with dismal moans, and suppliant on his bended knees, and like one in entreaty, he turns round his silent looks as though {they were} his arms.

But his companions, in their ignorance, urge on the eager pack with their usual cries, and seek Actæon with their eyes; and cry out “Actæon” aloud, as though he were absent. At his name he turns his head, as they complain that he is not there, and in his indolence, is not enjoying a sight of the sport afforded them. He wished, indeed, he had been away, but there he was; and he wished to see, not to feel as well, the cruel feats of his own dogs. They gather round him on all sides, and burying their jaws in his body, tear their master in pieces under the form of an imaginary stag. And the rage of the quiver-bearing Diana is said not to have been satiated, until his life was ended by many a wound.

[Footnote 14: *Mars and Venus*.--Ver. 132. The wife of Cadmus was Hermione, or Harmonia, who was said to have been the daughter of Mars and Venus. The Deities honored the nuptials with their presence, and presented marriage gifts, while the Muses and the Graces celebrated the festivity with hymns of their own composition.]

[Footnote 15: *So many sons*.--Ver. 134. Apollodorus, Hyginus, and others, say that Cadmus had but one son, Polydorus. If so, ‘tot,’ ‘so many,’ must here refer to the number of his daughters and grandchildren. His daughters were four in number, Autonoë, Ino, Semele, and Agave. Ino married Athamas, Autonoë Aristæus, Agave Echion, while Semele captivated Jupiter. The most famous of the grandsons of Cadmus were Bacchus, Melicerta, Pentheus, and Actæon.]

[Footnote 16: *Before his death*.--Ver. 135. This was the famous remark of Solon to Crœsus, when he was the master of the opulent and flourishing kingdom of Lydia, and seemed so firmly settled on his throne, that there was no probability of any interruption of his happiness. Falling into the hands of Cyrus the Persian, and being condemned to be burnt alive, he recollected this wise saying of Solon, and by that means saved his life, as we are told by Herodotus, who relates the story at length. Euripides has a similar passage in his Troades, line 510.]

[Footnote 17: *The Hyantian youth*.--Ver. 147. Actæon is thus called, as being a Bœotian. The Hyantes were the ancient or aboriginal inhabitants of Bœotia.]

[Footnote 18: *Gargaphie*.--Ver. 156. Gargaphie, or Gargaphia, was a valley situate near Platæa, having a fountain of the same name.]

[Footnote 19: *Crocale*.--Ver. 169. So called, perhaps, from κεκρύφαλος, an ornament for the head, being a coif, band, or fillet of network for the hair called in Latin 'reticulum,' by which name her office is denoted. The handmaid, whose duty it was to attend to the hair, held the highest rank in ancient times among the domestics.]

[Footnote 20: *Nephele*.--Ver. 171. From the Greek word νεφέλη, 'a cloud.']

[Footnote 21: *Hyale*.--Ver. 171. This is from ὕαλος, 'glass,' the name signifying 'glassy,' 'pellucid.' The very name calls to mind Milton's line in his Comus-- 'Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave.']

[Footnote 22: *Rhanis*.--Ver. 171. This name is adapted from the Greek verb ῥαίνω, 'to sprinkle.']

[Footnote 23: *Psecas*.--Ver. 172. From the Greek ψεκὰς, 'a dew-drop.']

[Footnote 24: *Phyale*.--Ver. 172. This is from the Greek φιαλὴ, 'an urn.']

[Footnote 25: *Took up water*.--Ver. 189. The ceremonial of sprinkling previous to the transformation seems not to have been neglected any more by the offended Goddesses of the classical Mythology, than by the intriguing enchantresses of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments; as the unfortunate Beder, when under the displeasure of the vicious queen Labè, experienced to his great inconvenience. The love for the supernatural, combined with an anxious desire to attribute its operations to material and visible agencies, forms one of the most singular features of the human character.]

[Footnote 26: *Autonoëian*.--Ver. 198. Autonoë was the daughter of Cadmus and Hermione, or Harmonia, and the wife of Aristæus, by whom she was the mother of Actæon. We may here remark, that in one of his satires, Lucian introduces Juno as saying to Diana, that she had let loose his dogs on Actæon, for fear lest, having seen her naked, he should divulge the deformity of her person.]

[Footnote 27: *Melampus*.--Ver. 206. These names are all from the Greek, and are interesting, as showing the epithets by which the ancients called their dogs. The pack of Actæon is said to have consisted of fifty dogs. Their names were preserved by several Greek poets, from whom Apollodorus copied them; but the greater part of his list has perished, and what remains is in a

very corrupt state. Hyginus has preserved two lists, the first of which contains thirty-nine names, most of which are similar to those here given by Ovid, and in almost the same order; while the second contains thirty-six names, different from those here given. Æschylus has named but four of them, and Ovid here names thirty-six. Crete, Arcadia, and Laconia produced the most valuable hounds. Melampus, 'Black-foot,' is from the Greek words μέλας, 'black,' and ποῦς, 'a foot.']

[Footnote 28: *Ichnobates*.--Ver. 207. 'Tracer.' From the Greek ἰχνὸς, 'a footstep,' and βαίνω, 'to go.']

[Footnote 29: *Pamphagus*.--Ver. 210. 'Glutton.' From πᾶν, 'all,' and φάγω, 'to eat.']

[Footnote 30: *Dorcæus*.--Ver. 210. 'Quicksight.' From δέρκω, 'to see.']

[Footnote 31: *Oribasus*.--Ver. 210. 'Ranger.' From ὄρος, 'a mountain,' and βαίνω, 'to go.']

[Footnote 32: *Nebrophonus*.--Ver. 211. 'Kill-buck.' From νεβρὸς, 'a fawn,' and φονέω, 'to kill.']

[Footnote 33: *Lælaps*.--Ver. 211. 'Tempest.' So called from its swiftness and power, λαίλαψ, signifying 'a whirlwind.']

[Footnote 34: *Theron*.--Ver. 211. 'Hunter.' From the Greek, θερεύω, 'to trace,' or 'hunt.']

[Footnote 35: *Pterelas*.--Ver. 212. 'Wing.' 'Swift-footed,' from πτερὸν, 'a wing,' and ἐλαύνω, 'to drive onward.']

[Footnote 36: *Agre*.--Ver. 212. 'Catcher.' 'Quick-scented,' from ἄγρα, 'hunting,' or 'the chase.']

[Footnote 37: *Hylæus*.--Ver. 213. 'Woodger,' or 'Wood-ranger;' the Greek ὕλη, signifying 'a wood.']

[Footnote 38: *Nape*.--Ver. 214. 'Forester.' A 'forest,' or 'wood,' being in Greek, νάπη.]

[Footnote 39: *Pœmenis*.--Ver. 215. 'Shepherdess,' From the Greek ποίμενις, 'a shepherdess.']

[Footnote 40: *Harpyia*.--Ver. 215. 'Ravener.' From the Greek word ἅρπυια, 'a harpy,' or 'ravenous bird.']

[Footnote 41: *Ladon*.--Ver. 216. This dog takes its name from Ladon, a river of Sicyon, a territory on the shores of the gulf of Corinth.]

[Footnote 42: *Dromas*.--Ver. 217. 'Runner.' From the Greek δρόμος, 'a race.']

[Footnote 43: *Canace*.--Ver. 217. 'Barker.' The word καναχὴ, signifies 'a noise,' or 'din.']

[Footnote 44: *Sticte*.--Ver. 217. ‘Spot.’ So called from the variety of her colors, as στικτὸς, signifies ‘diversified with various spots,’ from στίζω, ‘to vary with spots.’ ‘Tigris’ means ‘Tiger.’]

[Footnote 45: *Alce*.--Ver. 217. ‘Strong.’ From the Greek ἀλκὴ ‘strength.’]

[Footnote 46: *Leucon*.--Ver. 218. ‘White.’ From λευκὸς, ‘white.’]

[Footnote 47: *Asbolus*.--Ver. 218. ‘Soot,’ or ‘Smut.’ From the Greek ἄσβολος, ‘soot.’]

[Footnote 48: *Lacon*.--Ver. 219. From his native country, Laconia.]

[Footnote 49: *Aëllo*.--Ver. 219. ‘Storm.’ From ἄελλα, ‘a tempest.’]

[Footnote 50: *Thoüs*.--Ver. 220. ‘Swift.’ From θοὸς, ‘swift.’ Pliny the Elder states, that ‘thos’ was the name of a kind of wolf, of larger make, and more active in springing than the common wolf. He says that it is of inoffensive habits towards man; but that it lives by prey, and is hairy in winter, but without hair in summer. It is supposed by some that he alludes to the jackal. Perhaps, from this animal, the dog here mentioned derived his name.]

[Footnote 51: *Lycisca*.--Ver. 220. ‘Wolf.’ From the diminutive of the Greek word λὐκος, ‘a wolf.’ Virgil uses ‘Lycisca’ as the name of a dog, in his Eclogues.]

[Footnote 52: *Harpalus*.--Ver. 222. ‘Snap.’ From ἁρπάζω, ‘to snatch,’ or ‘plunder.’]

[Footnote 53: *Melaneus*.--Ver. 222. ‘Black-coat.’ From the Greek, μέλας, ‘black.’]

[Footnote 54: *Lachne*.--Ver. 222. ‘Stickle.’ From the Greek work λαχνὴ, signifying ‘thickness of the hair.’]

[Footnote 55: *Labros*.--Ver. 224. ‘Worrier.’ From the Greek λάβρος ‘greedy.’ Dicte was a mountain of Crete; whence the word ‘Dictæan’ is often employed to signify ‘Cretan.’]

[Footnote 56: *Agriodos*.--Ver. 224. ‘Wild-tooth.’ From ἄγριος ‘wild,’ and ὀδοῦς, ‘a tooth.’]

[Footnote 57: *Hylactor*.--Ver. 224. ‘Babbler.’ From the Greek word ὑλακτέω, signifying ‘to bark.’]

[Footnote 58: *Melanchætes*.--Ver. 232. ‘Black-hair.’ From the μέλας, ‘black,’ and χαιτὴ, ‘mane.’]

[Footnote 59: *Theridamas*.--Ver. 233. ‘Kilham.’ From θὴρ, ‘a wild beast,’ and δαμάω, ‘to subdue.’]

[Footnote 60: *Oresitrophus*.--Ver. 223. ‘Rover.’ From ὄρος ‘a mountain,’ and τρέφω ‘to nourish.’]

## Riley's Explanation

If the maxim of Horace, 'Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus,' had been a little more frequently observed by the ancient poets, their Deities would not have been so often placed in a degrading or disgusting light before posterity. There cannot be a better illustration of the truth of this than the present Fable, where Ovid represents the chaste and prudent Diana as revenging herself in a cruel and barbarous manner for the indiscretion, or rather misfortune, of an innocent young man.

Cicero mentions several Goddesses of the name of Diana. The first was the daughter of Jupiter and Proserpine; the second of Jupiter and Latona; and the third of Upis and Glauce. Strabo mentions another Diana, named Britomartis, the daughter of Eubalus. The worship, however, of Diana as the Goddess of the Moon, was, most probably, derived from Egypt, with the Isis of whom she is perhaps identical. The adventure narrated in this Fable is most probably to be attributed to Diana Britomartis, as Strabo tells us, that she was particularly fond of the chase. Pausanias, in his Attica, tells the story in much the same terms, but he adds, that on seeing Diana bathing, the novelty of the sight excited Actæon's curiosity, and prompted him to approach nearer. To explain this fable, some authors suggest, that Actæon's dogs becoming mad, devoured him; while others suppose, that having ruined himself by the expense of supporting a large pack of hounds, and a hunting establishment, it was reported that he had been devoured by his dogs. Diodorus Siculus, and Euripides, tell us, that Actæon showed contempt to Diana, and was about to eat of the sacrifice that had been offered to her; and of course, in such a case, punishment at the hands of the Goddess would be deemed a just retribution. Apollodorus says, that Actæon was brought up by Chiron, and that he was put to death on Mount Cithæron, for having seen Diana bathing; though, according to one ancient authority, he was punished for having made improper overtures to Semele. Apollodorus also says, that his dogs died of grief, on the loss of their master, and he has preserved some of their names.

## Book III, Fable IV (lines 253–301)

*Juno, incensed against Semele for her intrigue with Jupiter, takes the form of Beroë, the more easily to ensure her revenge. Having first infused in Semele suspicions of her lover, she then recommends her to adopt a certain method of proving his constancy. Semele, thus deceived, obtains a reluctant promise from Jupiter, to make his next visit to her in the splendor and majesty in which he usually approached his wife.*

They speak in various ways {of this matter}. To some, the Goddess seems more severe than is proper; others praise her, and call her deserving {of her state} of strict virginity: both sides find their reasons. The wife of Jupiter alone does not so much declare whether she blames or whether she approves, as she rejoices at the calamity of a family sprung from Agenor, and transfers the hatred that she has conceived from the Tyrian mistress to the partners of her race. Lo! a fresh occasion is {now} added to the former one; and she grieves that Semele is pregnant from the seed of great Jupiter. She then lets loose her tongue to abuse.

“And what good have I done by railing so often?” said she. “She herself must be attacked {by me}. If I am properly called the supreme Juno, I will destroy her; if it becomes me to hold the sparkling sceptre in my right hand; if I am the queen, and both the sister and wife of Jupiter. The sister {I am}, no doubt. But I suppose she is content with a stolen embrace, and the injury to my bed is but trifling. She is {now} pregnant; that {alone} was wanting; and she bears the evidence of his crime in her swelling womb, and wishes to be made a mother by Jupiter, a thing which hardly fell to my lot alone. So great is her confidence in her beauty. I will take care[61] he shall deceive her; and may I be no daughter of Saturn, if she does not descend to the Stygian waves, sunk {there} by her own {dear} Jupiter.”

Upon this she rises from her throne, and, hidden in a cloud of fiery hue, she approaches the threshold of Semele. Nor did she remove the clouds before she counterfeited an old woman, and planted gray hair on her temples; and furrowed her skin with wrinkles, and moved her bending limbs with palsied step, and made her voice that of an old woman. She became Beroë[62] herself, the Epidaurian[63] nurse of Semele. When, therefore, upon engaging in discourse with her, and {after} long talking, they came to the name of Jupiter, she sighed, and said, “I {only} wish it may be Jupiter; yet I {am apt to} fear everything. Many a one under the name of a God has invaded a chaste bed. Nor yet is it enough that he is Jupiter; let him, if, indeed, he is the real one, give some pledge of his affection; and beg of him to bestow his caresses on thee, just in the greatness and form in which he is received by the stately Juno; and let him first assume his ensigns {of royalty}.” With such words did Juno tutor the unsuspecting daughter of Cadmus. She requested of Jupiter a favor, without naming it. To her the God said, “Make thy choice, thou

shalt suffer no denial; and that thou mayst believe it the more, let the majesty of the Stygian stream bear witness. He {is} the dread and the God of the Gods."

Overjoyed at {what was} her misfortune, and too {easily} prevailing, as now about to perish by the complaisance of her lover, Semele said, "Present thyself to me, just such as the daughter of Saturn is wont to embrace thee, when ye honor the ties of Venus." The God wished to shut her mouth as she spoke, {but} the hasty words had now escaped into air. He groaned; for neither was it {now} possible for her not to have wished, nor for him not to have sworn. Therefore, in extreme sadness, he mounted the lofty skies, and with his nod drew along the attendant clouds; to which he added showers and lightnings mingled with winds, and thunders, and the inevitable thunderbolt.

[Footnote 61: *I will take care.*--Ver. 271. 'Faxo,' 'I will make,' is sometimes used by the best authors for 'fecero;' and 'faxim' for 'faciam,' or 'fecerim.']

[Footnote 62: *Beroë.*--Ver. 278. Iris, in the fifth book of the *Æneid* (l. 620), assumes the form of another Beroë; and a third person of that name is mentioned in the fourth book of the Georgics, l. 34.]

[Footnote 63: *Epidaurian.*--Ver. 278. Epidaurus was a famous city of Argolis, in Peloponnesus, famous for its temple, dedicated to the worship of *Æsculapius*, who was the tutelary Divinity of that city.]

## Riley's Explanation

It is most probable, that an intrigue between a female named Semele and one of the princes called Jupiter having had a tragical end, gave occasion to this Fable. Pausanias, in his Laconica, tells us, that Cadmus, exasperated against his daughter Semele, caused her and her son to be thrown into the sea; and that being thrown ashore at Oreate, an ancient town of Laconia, Semele was buried there.

Semele, according to Apollodorus, was, after her death, ranked among the Goddesses by the name of Thyone. He says that her son Bacchus going down to hell, brought her thence, and carried her up to heaven; where, according to Nonnus, she conversed with Pallas and Diana, and ate at the same table with Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Venus. The author, known by the name of Orpheus, gives Semele the title of Goddess, and Πανβασίλεια, or 'Queen of the Universe.'

## Book III, Fable V (lines 302–338)

*Semele is visited by Jupiter, according to the promise she had obliged him to make; but, being unable to support the effulgence of his lightning, she is burnt to ashes in his presence. Bacchus, with whom she is pregnant, is preserved; and Tiresias decided the dispute between Jupiter and Juno, concerning the sexes.*

And yet, as much as possible, he tries to mitigate his powers. Nor is he now armed with those flames with which he had overthrown the hundred-handed Typhœus; in those, {there is} too much fury. There is another thunder, less baneful, to which the right hand of the Cyclops gave less ferocity and flames, {and} less anger. The Gods above call this second-rate thunder; it he assumes, and he enters the house of Agenor. Her mortal body could not endure[64] the æthereal shock, and she was burned amid her nuptial presents. The infant, as yet unformed, is taken out of the womb of his mother, and prematurely (if we can believe it) is inserted in the thigh of the father, and completes the time that he should have spent in the womb. His aunt, Ino, nurses him privately in his early cradle. After that, the Nyseian Nymphs[65] conceal him, entrusted {to them}, in their caves, and give him the nourishment of milk.

And while these things are transacted on earth by the law of destiny, and the cradle of Bacchus, twice born,[66] is secured; they tell that Jupiter, by chance, well drenched with nectar, laid aside {all} weighty cares, and engaged in some free jokes with Juno, in her idle moments, and said: “Decidedly the pleasure of you, {females}, is greater than that which falls to the lot of {us} males.” She denied it. It was agreed {between them}, to ask what was the opinion of the experienced Tiresias. To him both pleasures were well known. For he had separated with a blow of his staff two bodies of large serpents, as they were coupling in a green wood; and (passing strange) become a woman from a man, he had spent seven autumns. In the eighth, he again saw the same {serpents}, and said, “If the power of a stroke given you is so great as to change the condition of the giver into the opposite one, I will now strike you again.” Having struck the same snakes, his former sex returned, and his original shape came {again}. He, therefore, being chosen as umpire in this sportive contest, confirmed the words of Jove. The daughter of Saturn is said to have grieved more than was fit, and not in proportion to the subject; and she condemned the eyes of the umpire to eternal darkness.

But the omnipotent father (for it is not allowed any God to cancel the acts of {another} Deity) gave him the knowledge of things to come, in recompense for his loss of sight, and alleviated his punishment by this honor.

[Footnote 64: *Could not endure*.--Ver. 308. ‘Corpus mortale tumultus Non tulit æthereos,’ is rendered by Clarke, ‘her mortal body could not bear this æthereal bustle.’]

[Footnote 65: *The Nyseian Nymphs*.--Ver. 314. Nysa was the name of a city and mountain of Arabia, or India. The tradition was, that there the Nyseian Nymphs, whose names were Cysseis, Nysa, Erato, Eryphia, Bromia, and Polyhymnia, brought up Bacchus. The cave where he was concealed from the fury of Juno, was said to have had two entrances, from which circumstance Bacchus received the epithet of Dithyrites. Servius, in his commentary on the sixth Eclogue of Virgil (l. 15), says that Nysa was the name of the female that nursed Bacchus. Hyginus also speaks of her as being the daughter of Oceanus. From the name ‘Nysa,’ Bacchus received, in part, his Greek name ‘Dionysus.’]

[Footnote 66: *Twice born*.--Ver. 318. Clarke thus translates and explains this line--‘They tell you, that Jupiter well drenched;’ *i.e.* ‘fuddled with nectar,’ etc.]

## Book III, Fable VI (lines 339–401)

*Echo, having often amused Juno with her stories, to give time to Jupiter's mistresses to make their escape, the Goddess, at last, punishes her for the deception. She is slighted and despised by Narcissus, with whom she falls in love.*

He, much celebrated by fame throughout the cities of Aonia,[67] gave unerring answers to the people consulting him. The azure Liriope[68] was the first to make essay and experiment of his infallible voice; whom once Cephisus encircled in his winding stream, and offered violence to, {when} enclosed by his waters. The most beauteous Nymph produced an infant from her teeming womb, which even then might have been beloved, and she called him Narcissus. Being consulted concerning him, whether he was destined to see the distant season of mature old age; the prophet, expounding destiny, said, "If he never recognizes himself." Long did the words of the soothsayer appear frivolous; {but} the event, the thing {itself}, the manner of his death, and the novel nature of his frenzy, confirmed it.

And now the son of Cephisus had added one to three times five years, and he might seem to be a boy and a young man as well. Many a youth,[69] and many a damsel, courted him; but there was so stubborn a pride in his youthful beauty, {that} no youths, no damsels made any impression on him. The noisy Nymph, who has neither learned to hold her tongue after another speaking, nor to speak first herself, resounding Echo, espied him, as he was driving the timid stags into his nets. Echo was then a body, not a voice; and yet the babbler had no other use of her speech than she now has, to be able to repeat the last words out of many. Juno had done this; because when often she might have been able to detect the Nymphs in the mountains in the embrace of her {husband}, Jupiter, she purposely used to detain[70] the Goddess with a long story, until the Nymphs had escaped. After the daughter of Saturn perceived {this}, she said, "But small exercise of this tongue, with which I have been deluded, shall be allowed thee, and a very short use of thy voice." And she confirmed her threats by the event. Still, in the end of one's speaking she redoubles the voice, and returns the words she hears. When, therefore, she beheld Narcissus[71] wandering through the pathless forests, and fell in love with him, she stealthily followed his steps; and the more she followed him, with the nearer flame did she burn. In no other manner than as when the native sulphur, spread around[72] the tops of torches, catches the flame applied {to it}. Ah! how often did she desire to accost him in soft accents, and to employ soft entreaties! Nature resists, and suffers her not to begin; but what {Nature} does permit, that she is ready for; to await his voice, to which to return her own words.

By chance, the youth, being separated from the trusty company of his attendants, cries out, "Is there any one here?" and Echo answers "Here!" He is amazed; and when he has cast his eyes on

every side, he cries out with a loud voice, “Come!” {Whereon} she calls {the youth} who calls. He looks back; and again, as no one comes, he says, “Why dost thou avoid me?” and just as many words as he spoke, he receives. He persists; and being deceived by the imitation of an alternate voice, he says, “Let us come together here;” and Echo, that could never more willingly answer any sound whatever, replies, “Let us come together here!” and she follows up her own words, and rushing from the woods,[73] is going to throw her arms around the neck she has {so} longed for. He flies; and as he flies, he exclaims, “Remove thy hands from thus embracing me; I will die first, before thou shalt have the enjoyment of me.” She answers nothing but “Have the enjoyment of me.” {Thus} rejected, she lies hid in the woods, and hides her blushing face with green leaves, and from that time lives in lonely caves; but yet her love remains, and increases from the mortification of her refusal. Watchful cares waste away her miserable body; leanness shrivels her skin, and all the juices of her body fly off in air. Her voice and her bones alone are left.

Her voice {still} continues, {but} they say that her bones received the form of stones. Since then, she lies concealed in the woods, and is never seen on the mountains: {but} is heard in all {of them}. It is her voice {alone} which remains alive in her.

[Footnote 67: *Aonia*.--Ver. 339. Aonia was a mountainous district of Bœotia, so called from Aon, the son of Neptune, who reigned there. The name is often used to signify the whole of Bœotia.]

[Footnote 68: *Liriope*.--Ver. 342. She was the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, and was the mother of the youth Narcissus, by the river Cephisus. Her name is derived from the Greek λείριον, ‘a lily.’]

[Footnote 69: *Many a youth*.--Ver. 353. Clarke translates ‘multi juvenes,’ ‘many young fellows.’]

[Footnote 70: *Used to detain*.--Ver. 364. Clarke translates ‘Illa Deam longo prudens sermone tenebat Dum fugerent Nymphæ,’ ‘She designedly detained the Goddess with some long-winded discourse or other till the Nymphs ran away.’ He translates ‘garrula,’ in line 360, ‘the prattling hussy.’]

[Footnote 71: *Narcissus*.--Ver. 370. This name is from the Greek word ναρκᾶν, ‘to fade away,’ which was characteristic of the youth’s career, and of the duration of the flower.]

[Footnote 72: *Sulphur spread around*.--Ver. 372. These lines show, that it was the custom of the ancients to place sulphur on the ends of their torches, to make them ignite the more readily, in the same manner as the matches of the present day are tipped with that mineral.]

[Footnote 73: *Rushing from the woods*.--Ver. 388. ‘Egressaque sylvis.’ Clarke renders, ‘and bouncing out of the wood.’]

## Riley's Explanation

It appears much more reasonable to attempt the explanation of this story on the grounds of natural philosophy than of history. The poets, in their fondness for basing every subject upon fiction, probably invented the fable, to explain what to them appeared an extraordinary phenomenon. By way of embellishing their story, they tell us that Echo was the daughter of the Air and the Tongue, and that the God Pan fell in love with her; by which, probably, the simple fact is meant, that some person, represented under the name of that god, endeavored to trace the cause of this phenomenon.

If, however, we should endeavor to base the story upon purely historical grounds, we may suppose that it took its rise from some Nymph, who wandered so far into the woods as to be unable to find her way out again; and from the fact that those who went to seek her, hearing nothing but the echo of their own voices, brought back the strange but unsatisfactory intelligence that the Nymph had been changed into a voice.

## Book III, Fable VII (lines 402–510)

*Narcissus falls in love with his own shadow, which he sees in a fountain; and, pining to death, the Gods change him into a flower, which still bears his name.*

Thus had he deceived her, thus, too, other Nymphs that sprung from the water or the mountains, thus the throng of youths before {them}. Some one, therefore, who had been despised {by him}, lifting up his hands towards heaven, said, “Thus, though he should love, let him not enjoy what he loves!” Rhamnusia[74] assented to a prayer so reasonable. There was a clear spring, like silver, with its unsullied waters, which neither shepherds, nor she-goats feeding on the mountains, nor any other cattle, had touched; which neither bird nor wild beast had disturbed, nor bough falling from a tree. There was grass around it, which the neighboring water nourished, and a wood, that suffered the stream to become warm with no {rays of the} sun. Here the youth, fatigued both with the labor of hunting and the heat, lay down, attracted by the appearance of the spot, and the spring; and, while he was endeavoring to quench his thirst, another thirst grew {upon him}.

While he is drinking, being attracted with the reflection of his own form, seen {in the water}, he falls in love with a thing that has no substance; {and} he thinks that to be a body, which is {but} a shadow. He is astonished at himself, and remains unmoved with the same countenance, like a statue formed of Parian marble.[75] Lying on the ground, he gazes on his eyes {like} two stars, and fingers worthy of Bacchus, and hair worthy of Apollo, and his youthful cheeks and ivory neck, and the comeliness of his mouth, and his blushing complexion mingled with the whiteness of snow; and everything he admires, for which he himself is worthy to be admired. In his ignorance, he covets himself; and he that approves, is himself {the thing} approved. While he pursues he is pursued, and at the same moment he inflames and burns. How often does he give vain kisses to the deceitful spring; how often does he thrust his arms, catching at the neck he sees, into the middle of the water, and yet he does not catch himself in them. He knows not what he sees, but what he sees, by it is he inflamed; and the same mistake that deceives his eyes, provokes them. Why, credulous {youth}, dost thou vainly catch at the flying image? What thou art seeking is nowhere; what thou art in love with, turn but away {and} thou shalt lose it; what thou seest, the same is {but} the shadow of a reflected form; it has nothing of its own. It comes and stays with thee; with thee it will depart, if thou canst {but} depart thence.

No regard for food,[76] no regard for repose, can draw him away thence; but, lying along upon the overshadowed grass, he gazes upon the fallacious image with unsatiated eyes, and by his own sight he himself is undone. Raising himself a little {while}, extending his arms to the woods that stand around him, he says, “Was ever, O, ye woods! any one more fatally in love? For {this} ye

know, and have been a convenient shelter for many a one. And do you remember any one, who {ever} thus pined away, during so long a time, though so many ages of your life has been spent? It both pleases me and I see it; but what I see, and what pleases me, yet I cannot obtain; so great a mistake possesses one in love; and to make me grieve the more, neither a vast sea separates us, nor a {long} way, nor mountains, nor a city with its gates closed; we are kept asunder by a little water. He himself wishes to be embraced; for as often as I extend my lips to the limpid stream, so often does he struggle towards me with his face held up; you would think he might be touched. It is a very little that stands in the way of lovers. Whoever thou art, come up hither. Why, {dear} boy, the choice one, dost thou deceive me? or whither dost thou retire, when pursued? Surely, neither my form nor my age is such as thou shouldst shun; the Nymphs, too, have courted me. Thou encouragest I know not what hopes in me with that friendly look, and when I extend my arms to thee, thou willingly extendest thine; when I smile, thou smilest in return; often, too, have I observed thy tears, when I was weeping; my signs, too, thou returnest by thy nods, and, as I guess by the motion of thy beauteous mouth, thou returnest words that come not to my ears. In thee 'tis I, I {now} perceive; nor does my form deceive me. I burn with the love of myself, and both raise the flames and endure them. What shall I do? Should I be entreated, or should I entreat? What, then, shall I entreat? What I desire is in my power; plenty has made me poor. Oh! would that I could depart from my own body! a new wish, {indeed}, in a lover; I could wish that what I am in love with was away. And now grief is taking away my strength, and no long period of my life remains; and in my early days am I cut off; nor is death grievous to me, now about to get rid of my sorrows by death. I wish that he who is beloved could enjoy a longer life. Now we two, of one mind, shall die in {the extinction of} one life."

{Thus} he said, and, with his mind {but} ill at ease, he returned to the same reflection, and disturbed the water with his tears; and the form was rendered defaced by the moving of the stream; when he saw it {beginning} to disappear, he cried aloud, "Whither dost thou fly? Stay, I beseech thee! and do not in thy cruelty abandon thy lover; let it be allowed me to behold that which I may not touch, and to give nourishment to my wretched frenzy." And, while he was grieving, he tore his garment from the upper border, and beat his naked breast with his palms, white as marble. His breast, when struck, received a little redness, no otherwise than as apples are wont, which are partly white {and} partly red; or as a grape, not yet ripe, in the parti-colored clusters, is wont to assume a purple tint. Soon as he beheld this again in the water, when clear, he could not endure it any longer; but, as yellow wax with the fire, or the hoar frost of the morning, is wont to waste away with the warmth of the sun, so he, consumed by love, pined away, and wasted by degrees with a hidden flame. And now, no longer was his complexion of white mixed with red; neither his vigor nor his strength, nor {the points} which had charmed when seen so lately, nor {even} his body, which formerly Echo had been in love with, now remained. Yet, when she saw these things, although angry, and mindful {of his usage of her}, she

was grieved, and, as often as the unhappy youth said, “Alas!” she repeated, “Alas!” with re-echoing voice; and when he struck his arms with his hands, she, too, returned the like sound of a blow.

His last accents, as he looked into the water, as usual, were these: “Ah, youth, beloved in vain!” and the spot returned just as many words; and after he had said, “Farewell!” Echo, too, said, “Farewell!” He laid down his wearied head upon the green grass, {when} night closed the eyes that admired the beauty of their master; and even then, after he had been received into the infernal abodes, he used to look at himself in the Stygian waters. His Naiad sisters lamented him, and laid their hair,[77] cut off, over their brother; the Dryads, too, lamented him, {and} Echo resounded to their lamentations. And now they were preparing the funeral pile, and the shaken torches, and the bier. The body was nowhere {to be found}. Instead of his body, they found a yellow flower, with white leaves encompassing it in the middle.

[Footnote 74: *Rhamnusia*.--Ver. 406. Nemesis, the Goddess of Retribution, and the avenger of crime, was the daughter of Jupiter. She had a famous temple at Rhamnus, one of the ‘pagi,’ or boroughs of Athens. Her statue was there, carved by Phidias out of the marble which the Persians brought into Greece for the purpose of making a statue of Victory out of it, and which was thus appropriately devoted to the Goddess of Retribution. This statue wore a crown, and had wings, and holding a spear of ash in the right hand, it was seated on a stag.]

[Footnote 75: *Parian marble*.--Ver. 419. Paros was an island in the Ægean sea, one of the Cyclades; it was famous for the valuable quality of its marble, which was especially used for the purpose of making statues of the Gods.]

[Footnote 76: *Regard for food*.--Ver. 437. ‘Cereris.’ The name of the Goddess of corn is here used instead of bread itself.]

[Footnote 77: *Laid their hair*.--Ver. 506. It was the custom among the ancients for females, when lamenting the dead, not only to cut off their hair, but to lay it on the body, when extended upon the funeral pile.]

## Riley’s Explanation

If this story is based upon any historical facts, they are entirely lost to us; as all we learn from history concerning Narcissus, is the fact that he was a Thespian by birth. The Fable seems rather to be intended as a useful moral lesson, disclosing the fatal effects of self-love. His pursuit, too, of his own image, ever retiring from his embrace, strongly resembles the little reality that exists in many of those pleasures which mankind so eagerly pursue.

Pausanias, in his Bœotica, somewhat varies the story. He tells us that Narcissus having lost his sister, whom he tenderly loved, and who resembled him very much, and was his constant companion in the chase, thought, on seeing himself one day in a fountain, that it was the shade of his lost sister, and, thereupon, pined away and died of grief. According to him, the fountain was near a village called Donacon, in the country of the Thespians. Pausanias regards the account of his change into the flower which bears his name as a mere fiction, since Pamphus says that Proserpina, when carried away, long before the time of Narcissus, gathered that flower in the fields of Enna; and that the same flower was sacred to her. Persons sacrificing to the Furies, or Eumenides, used to wear chaplets made of the Narcissus, because that flower commonly grew about graves and sepulchres.

Tiresias, who predicted the untoward fate of Narcissus, was, as we are informed by Apollodorus, the son of Evenus and Chariclo, and was the most renowned soothsayer of his time. He lost his life by drinking of the fountain of Telphusa when he was overheated; or, as some suppose, through the unwholesome quality of the water. As he lived to a great age, and became blind towards the end of his life, the story, which Ovid mentions, was invented respecting him. Another version of it was, that he lost his sight, by reason of his having seen Minerva while bathing. This story was very probably based either upon the fact that he had composed a Treatise upon the Animal Functions of the Sexes, or that he had promulgated the doctrine that the stars had not only souls (a common opinion in those times), but also that they were of different sexes. He is supposed to have lived about 1200 years before the Christian era.

## Book III, Fable VIII (lines 511–733)

*Pentheus ridicules the predictions of Tiresias; and not only forbids his people to worship Bacchus, who had just entered Greece in triumph, but even commands them to capture him, and to bring him into his presence. Under the form of Acœtes, one of his companions, Bacchus suffers that indignity, and relates to Pentheus the wonders which the God had wrought. The recital enrages Pentheus still more, who thereupon goes to Mount Cithæron, to disturb the orgies then celebrating there; on which his own mother and the other Bacchantes tear him to pieces.*

This thing, when known, brought deserved fame to the prophet through the cities of Achaia;[78] and great was the reputation of the soothsayer. Yet Pentheus,[79] the son of Echion, a contemner of the Gods above, alone, of all men, despises him, and derides the predicting words of the old man, and upbraids him with his darkened state, and the misfortune of {having lost} his sight. He, shaking his temples, white with hoary hair, says: “How fortunate wouldst thou be, if thou as well couldst become deprived of this light, that thou mightst not behold the rites of Bacchus. For soon the day will come, and even now I predict that it is not far off, when the new {God} Liber, the son of Semele, shall come hither. Unless thou shalt vouchsafe him the honor of a temple, thou shalt be scattered, torn in pieces, in a thousand places, and with thy blood thou shalt pollute both the woods, and thy mother and the sisters of thy mother. {These things} will come to pass; for thou wilt not vouchsafe honor to the Divinity; and thou wilt complain that under this darkness I have seen too much.”

The son of Echion drives him away as he says such things as these. Confirmation follows his words, and the predictions of the prophet are fulfilled. Liber comes, and the fields resound with festive howlings. The crowd runs out; both matrons and new-married women mixed with the men, both high and low, are borne along to the {celebration of} rites {till then} unknown. “What madness,” says Pentheus, “has confounded your minds, O ye warlike men,[80] descendants of the Dragon? Can brass knocked against brass prevail so much with you? And the pipe with the bending horn, and these magical delusions? And shall the yells of women, and madness produced by wine, and troops of effeminate {wretches}, and empty tambourines[81] prevail over you, whom neither the warrior’s sword nor the trumpet could affright, nor troops with weapons prepared {for fight}? Am I to wonder at you, old men, who, carried over distant seas, have fixed in these abodes a {new} Tyre, and your banished household Gods, {but who} now allow them to be taken without a struggle? Or you, of more vigorous age and nearer to my own, ye youths; whom it was befitting to be brandishing arms, and not the thyrsus,[82] and to be covered with helmets, not green leaves? Do be mindful, I entreat you, of what race you are sprung, and

assume the courage of that dragon, who {though but} one, destroyed many. He died for his springs and his stream; but do you conquer for your own fame. He put the valiant to death; do you expel the feeble {foe}, and regain your country's honor. If the fates forbid Thebes to stand long, I wish that engines of war[83] and men should demolish the walls, and that fire and sword should resound. {Then} should we be wretched without {any} fault {of our own}, and our fate were to be lamented, {but} not concealed, and our tears would be free from shame. But now Thebes will be taken by an unarmed boy, whom neither wars delight, nor weapons, nor the employment of horses, but hair wet with myrrh, and effeminate chaplets, and purple, and gold interwoven with embroidered garments; whom I, indeed, (do you only stand aside) will presently compel to own that his father is assumed, and that his sacred rites are fictitious. Has Acrisius[84] courage enough to despise the vain Deity, and to shut the gates of Argos against his approach; and shall this stranger affright Pentheus with all Thebes? Go quickly, (this order he gives to his servants), go, and bring hither in chains the ringleader. Let there be no slothful delay in {executing} my commands."

His grandfather,[85] {Cadmus}, Athamas, and the rest of the company of his friends rebuke him with expostulations, and in vain try to restrain him. By their admonition he becomes more violent, and by being curbed his fury is irritated, and is on the increase, and the very restraint did him injury. So have I beheld a torrent, where nothing obstructed it in its course, run gently and with moderate noise; but wherever beams and stones in its way withheld it, it ran foaming and raging, and more violent from its obstruction. Behold! {the servants} return, all stained with blood; and when their master inquires where Bacchus is, they deny that they have seen Bacchus. "But this one," say they, "we have taken, who was his attendant and minister in his sacred rites." And {then} they deliver one, who, from the Etrurian nation, had followed the sacred rites of the Deity, with his hands bound behind his back.

Pentheus looks at him with eyes that anger has made terrible, and although he can scarcely defer the time of his punishment, he says, "O {wretch}, doomed to destruction, and about, by thy death, to set an example to others, tell me thy name, and the name of thy parents, and thy country, and why thou dost attend the sacred rites of a new fashion." He, void of fear, says, "My name is Acœtes; Mæonia[86] is my country; my parents were of humble station. My father left me no fields for the hardy oxen to till, no wool-bearing flocks, nor any herds. He himself was {but} poor, and he was wont with line, and hooks, to deceive the leaping fishes, and to take them with the rod. His trade was his {only} possession. When he gave that calling over {to me}, he said, 'Receive, as the successor and heir of my employment, those riches which I possess;' and at his death he left me nothing but the streams. This one thing alone can I call my patrimony. {But} soon, that I might not always be confined to the same rocks, I learned with a steadying right hand to guide the helm of the ship, and I made observations with my eyes of the showery

Constellation of the Olenian she-goat,[87] and Taygete,[88] and the Hyades,[89] and the Bear, and the quarters of the winds, and the harbors fit for ships. By chance, as I was making for Delos, I touched at the coast of the land of Dia,[90] and came up to the shore by {plying} the oars on the right side; and I gave a nimble leap, and lighted upon the wet sand. When the night was past, and the dawn first began to grow red, I arose and ordered {my men} to take in fresh water, and I pointed out the way which led to the stream. I myself, from a lofty eminence, looked around {to see} what the breeze promised me; and {then} I called my companions, and returned to the vessel. 'Lo! we are here,' says Opheltes, my chief mate; and having found, as he thought, a prize in the lonely fields, he was leading along the shore, a boy with {all} the beauty of a girl. He, heavy with wine and sleep, seemed to stagger, and to follow with difficulty. I examined his dress, his looks, and his gait, {and} I saw nothing there which could be taken to be mortal. I both was sensible of it, and I said to my companions, 'I am in doubt what Deity is in that body; but in that body a Deity there is. Whoever thou art, O be propitious and assist our toils; and pardon these as well.' 'Cease praying for us,' said Dictys, than whom there was not another more nimble at climbing to the main-top-yards, and at sliding down by catching hold of a rope. This Libys, this the yellow-haired Melanthus, the guardian of the prow, and this Alcimedon approved of; and Epopeus[91] as well, the cheerer of their spirits, who by his voice gave both rest and time to the oars; {and} so did all the rest; so blind is the greed for booty. 'However,' I said, 'I will not allow this ship to be damaged by this sacred freight. Here I have the greatest share of right.' and I opposed them at the entrance.

"Lycabas, the boldest of all the number, was enraged, who, expelled from a city of Etruria, was suffering exile as the punishment for a dreadful murder.[92] He, while I was resisting, seized hold of my throat with his youthful fist, and shaking me, had thrown me overboard into the sea, if I had not, although stunned, held fast by grasping a rope. The impious crew approved of the deed. Then at last Bacchus (for Bacchus it was), as though his sleep had been broken by the noise, and his sense was returning into his breast after {much} wine, said: 'What are you doing? What is this noise? Tell me, sailors, by what means have I come hither? Whither do you intend to carry me?' 'Lay aside thy fears,' said Proreus, 'and tell us what port thou wouldst wish to reach. Thou shalt stop at the land that thou desirest.' 'Direct your course then to Naxos,'[93] says Liber, 'that is my home; it shall prove a hospitable land for you.'

"In their deceit they swore by the ocean and by all the Deities, that so it should be; and bade me give sail to the painted ship. Naxos was to our right; {and} as I was {accordingly} setting sail for the right hand, every one said for himself, 'What art thou about, madman? What insanity possesses thee, Acœtes? Stand away to the left.' The greater part signified {their meaning} to me by signs; some whispered in my ear what they wanted. I was at a loss, and I said, 'Let some one else take the helm;' and I withdrew myself from the execution both of their wickedness, and of

my own calling. I was reviled by them all, and the whole crew muttered {reproaches} against me. Æthalion, among them, says, 'As if, forsooth, all our safety is centred in thee,' and he himself comes up, and takes my duty; and leaving Naxos, he steers a different course. Then the God, mocking them as if he had at last but that moment discovered their knavery, looks down upon the sea from the crooked stern; and, like one weeping, he says: 'These are not the shores, sailors, that you have promised me; this is not the land desired by me. By what act have I deserved this treatment? What honor is it to you, if you {that are} young men, deceive a {mere} boy? if you {that are} many, deceive me, {who am but} one?' I had been weeping for some time. The impious gang laughed at my tears, and beat the sea with hastening oars. Now by himself do I swear to thee (and no God is there more powerful than he), that I am relating things to thee as true, as they are beyond all belief. The ship stood still upon the ocean, no otherwise than if it was occupying a dry dock. They, wondering at it, persisted in the plying of their oars; they unfurled their sails, and endeavored to speed onward with this twofold aid. Ivy impeded the oars,[94] and twined {around them} in encircling wreaths; and clung to the sails with heavy clusters of berries. He himself, having his head encircled with bunches of grapes, brandished a lance covered with vine leaves. Around him, tigers and visionary forms of lynxes, and savage bodies of spotted panthers, were extended.

"The men leaped overboard, whether it was madness or fear that caused this; and first {of all}, Medon began to grow black with fins, with a flattened body, and to bend in the curvature of the back-bone. To him Lycabas said, 'Into what prodigy art thou changing?' and, as he spoke, the opening of his mouth was wide, his nose became crooked, and his hardened skin received scales upon it. But Libys, while he was attempting to urge on the resisting oars, saw his hands shrink into a small compass, and now to be hands no longer, {and} that now, {in fact}, they may be pronounced fins. Another, desirous to extend his arms to the twisting ropes, had no arms, and becoming crooked, with a body deprived of limbs, he leaped into the waves; the end of his tail was hooked, just as the horns of the half-moon are curved. They flounce about on every side, and bedew {the ship} with plenteous spray, and again they emerge, and once more they return beneath the waves. They sport with {all} the appearance of a dance, and toss their sportive bodies, and blow forth the sea, received within their wide nostrils. Of twenty the moment before (for so many did that ship carry), I was the only one remaining. The God encouraged me, frightened and chilled with my body all trembling, and scarcely myself, saying, 'Shake off thy fear, and make for Dia.' Arriving there, I attended upon the sacred rites of Bacchus, at the kindled altars."

"We have lent ear to a long story,"[95] says Pentheus, "that our anger might consume its strength in its tediousness. Servants! drag him headlong, and send to Stygian night his body, racked with dreadful tortures." At once the Etrurian Acœtes, dragged away, is shut up in a strong

prison; and while the cruel instruments of the death that is ordered, and the iron and the fire are being made ready, the report is that the doors opened of their own accord, and that the chains, of their own accord, slipped from off his arms, no one loosening them.

The son of Echion persists: and now he does not command others to go, but goes himself to where Cithæron,[96] chosen for the celebration of these sacred rites, was resounding with singing, and the shrill voices of the votaries of Bacchus. Just as the high-mettled steed neighs, when the warlike trumpeter gives the alarm with the sounding brass, and conceives a desire for battle, so did the sky, struck with the long-drawn howlings, excite Pentheus, and his wrath was rekindled on hearing the clamor. There was, about the middle of the mountain, the woods skirting its extremity, a plain free from trees, {and} visible on every side. Here his mother was the first to see him looking on the sacred rites with profane eyes; she first was moved by a frantic impulse, {and} she first wounded her {son}, Pentheus, by hurling her thyrsus, {and} cried out, "Ho! come, my two sisters;[97] that boar which, of enormous size, is roaming amid our fields, that boar I must strike." All the raging multitude rushes upon him alone; all collect together, and all follow him, now trembling, now uttering words less atrocious {than before}, now blaming himself, now confessing that he has offended.

However, on being wounded, he says, "Give me thy aid, Autonoë, my aunt; let the ghost of Actæon[98] influence thy feelings." She knows not what Actæon {means}, and tears away his right hand as he is praying; the other is dragged off by the violence of Ino. The wretched {man} has {now} no arms to extend to his mother; but showing his maimed body, with the limbs torn off, he says, "Look at this, my mother!" At the sight Agave howls aloud, and tosses her neck, and shakes her locks in the air; and seizing his head, torn off, with her blood-stained fingers, she cries out, "Ho! my companions, this victory is our work!"

The wind does not more speedily bear off, from a lofty tree, the leaves nipped by the cold of autumn, and now adhering with difficulty, than were the limbs of the man, torn asunder by their accursed hands. Admonished by such examples, the Ismenian matrons frequent the new worship, and offer frankincense, and reverence the sacred altars.

[Footnote 78: *Cities of Achaia*.--Ver. 511. Achaia was properly the name of a part of Peloponnesus, on the gulf of Corinth; but the name is very frequently applied to the whole of Greece.]

[Footnote 79: *Pentheus*.--Ver. 513. He was the son of Echion and Agave, the daughter of Cadmus.]

[Footnote 80: *Warlike men*.--Ver. 531. 'Mavortia.' Mavors was a name of Mars, frequently used by the poets. The Thebans were 'proles Mavortia,' as being sprung from the teeth of the dragon,

who was said to be a son of Mars.]

[Footnote 81: *Tambourines*.--Ver. 537. 'Tympana.' These instruments, among the ancients, were of various kinds. Some resembled the modern tambourine; while others presented a flat circular disk on the upper surface, and swelled out beneath, like the kettle-drum of the present day. They were covered with the hides of oxen, or of asses, and were beaten either with a stick or the hand. They were especially used in the rites of Bacchus, and of Cybele.]

[Footnote 82: *The thyrsus*.--Ver. 542. The thyrsus was a long staff, carried by Bacchus, and by the Satyrs and Bacchanalians engaged in the worship of the God of the grape. It was sometimes terminated by the apple of the pine, or fir-cone, the fir-tree being esteemed sacred to Bacchus, from the turpentine flowing therefrom and its apples being used in making wine. It is, however, frequently represented as terminating in a knot of ivy, or vine leaves, with grapes or berries arranged in a conical form. Sometimes, also, a white fillet was tied to the pole just below the head. We learn from Diodorus Siculus, and Macrobius, that Bacchus converted the thyrsi carried by himself and his followers into weapons, by concealing an iron point in the head of leaves. A wound with its point was supposed to produce madness.]

[Footnote 83: *Engines of war*.--Ver. 549. 'Tormenta.' These were the larger engines of destruction used in ancient warfare. They were so called from the verb 'torqueo,' 'to twist,' from their being formed by the twisting of hair, fibre, or strips of leather. The different sorts were called 'balistæ' and 'catapultæ.' The former were used to impel stones; the latter, darts and arrows. In sieges, the 'Aries,' or 'battering ram,' which received its name from having an iron head resembling that of a ram, was employed in destroying the lower part of the wall, while the 'balista' was overthrowing the battlements, and the 'catapulta' was employed to shoot any of the besieged who appeared between them. The 'balistæ' and 'catapultæ' were divided into the 'greater' and the 'less.' When New Carthage, the arsenal of the Carthaginians, was taken, according to Livy (b. xxvi. c. 47), there were found in it 120 large and 281 small catapultæ, and twenty-three large and fifty-two small balistæ. The various kinds of 'tormenta' are said to have been introduced about the time of Alexander the Great. If so, Ovid must here be committing an anachronism, in making Pentheus speak of 'tormenta,' who lived so many ages before that time. To commit anachronisms with impunity seems, however, to be the poet's privilege, from Ovid downwards to our Shakspere, where he makes Falstaff talk familiarly of the West Indies. We find the dictionaries giving 'tormentum' as the Latin word for 'cannon;' so that in this case we may say not that 'necessity is the mother of invention,' but rather that she is 'the parent of anachronism.']

[Footnote 84: *Acrisius*.--Ver. 559. He was a king of Argos, the son of Abas, and the father of Danaë. He refused, and probably with justice, to admit Bacchus or his rites within the gates of

his city.]

[Footnote 85: *His grandfather*.--Ver. 563. Athamas was the son of Æolus, and being the husband of Ino, was the son-in-law of Cadmus; who being the father of Agave, the mother of Pentheus, is the grandfather mentioned in the present line.]

[Footnote 86: *Mæonia*.--Ver. 583. Colonists were said to have proceeded from Lydia, or Mæonia, to the coasts of Etruria. Bacchus assumes the name of Acœtes, as corresponding to the Greek epithet ἀκοίτης, 'watchful,' or 'sleepless;' which ought to be the characteristic of the careful 'pilot,' or 'helmsman.']

[Footnote 87: *Olenian she-goat*.--Ver. 594. Amalthea, the goat that suckled Jupiter, is called Olenian, either because she was reared in Olenus, a city of Bœotia, or because she was placed as a Constellation between the arms, ὠλέναι, of the Constellation Auriga, or the Charioteer. The rising and setting of this Constellation were supposed to produce showers.]

[Footnote 88: *Taygete*.--Ver. 594. She was one of the Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas, who were placed among the Constellations.]

[Footnote 89: *Hyades*.--Ver. 594. These were the Dodonides, or nurses of Bacchus, whom Jupiter, as a mark of his favor, placed in the number of the Constellations. Their name is derived from ὕειν, 'to rain.']

[Footnote 90: *Dia*.--Ver. 596. This was another name of the Isle of Naxos. Gierig thinks that the reading here is neither 'Diæ' nor 'Chiæ,' which are the two common readings; as the situation of neither the Isle of Naxos nor that of Chios, would suit the course of the ship, as stated in the text. He thinks that the Isle of Ceos, or Cea, is meant, which Ptolemy calls Κια, and which he thinks ought here to be written 'Ciæ.']

[Footnote 91: *Epopeus*.--Ver. 619. He was the κελεύστης, 'pausarius,' or keeper of time for the rowers.]

[Footnote 92: *A dreadful murder*.--Ver. 626. They seem to have been composed of much the same kind of lawless materials that formed the daring crews of the buccanier Morgan and Captain Kydd in more recent times.]

[Footnote 93: *Naxos*.--Ver. 636. This was the most famous island of the group of the Cyclades.]

[Footnote 94: *Ivy impeded the oars*.--Ver. 664. Hyginus tells us, that Bacchus changed the oars into thyrsi, the sails into clusters of grapes, and the rigging into ivy branches. In the Homeric

hymn on this subject we find the ship flowing with wine, vines growing on the sails, ivy twining round the mast, and the benches wreathed with chaplets.]

[Footnote 95: *To a long story*.--Ver. 692. Clarke renders this line, 'We have lent our ears to a long tale of a tub.']

[Footnote 96: *Cithæron*.--Ver. 702. This was a mountain of Bœotia, famous for the orgies of Bacchus there celebrated.]

[Footnote 97: *My two sisters*.--Ver. 713. These were Ino and Autonoë.]

[Footnote 98: *Ghost of Actæon*.--Ver. 720. He appeals to Autonoë, the mother of Actæon, to remember the sad fate of her own son, and to show him some mercy; but in vain: for, as one commentator on the passage says, 'Drunkenness had taken away both her reason and her memory.']

## Riley's Explanation

Cicero mentions two Deities of the name of Bacchus; while other authors speak of several of that name. The first was the son of Jupiter and Proserpina; the second was the son of the Nile, and the founder of the city of Nysa, in Arabia; Caprius was the father of the third. The fourth was the son of the Moon and Jupiter, in honor of whom the Orphic ceremonies were performed. The fifth was the son of Nisus and Thione, and the instituter of the Trieterica. Diodorus Siculus mentions but three of the name of Bacchus; namely, the Indian, surnamed the bearded Bacchus, who conquered India; the son of Jupiter and Ceres, who was represented with horns; and the son of Jupiter and Semele, who was called the Theban Bacchus.

The most reasonable opinion seems to be that of Herodotus and Plutarch, who inform us, that the true Bacchus, and the most ancient of them all, was born in Egypt, and was originally called Osiris. The worship of that Divinity passed from Egypt to Greece, where it received great alterations; and, according to Diodorus Siculus, it was Orpheus who introduced it, and made those innovations. In gratitude to the family of Cadmus, from which he had received many favors, he dedicated to Bacchus, the grandson of Cadmus, those mysteries which had been instituted in honor of Osiris, whose worship was then but little known in Greece. Diodorus Siculus says, that as Semele was delivered of Bacchus in the seventh month, it was reported that Jupiter shut him up in his thigh, to carry him there the remaining time of gestation. This Fable was probably founded on the meaning of an equivocal word. The Greek word μηρὸς signifies either 'a thigh,' or 'the hollow of a mountain.' Thus the Greeks, instead of saying that Bacchus had been nursed on Mount Nysa, in Arabia, according to the Egyptian version of the story, published that he had been carried in the thigh of Jupiter.

As Bacchus applied himself to the cultivation of the vine, and taught his subjects several profitable and necessary arts, he was honored as a Divinity; and having won the esteem of many neighboring countries, his worship soon spread. Among his several festivals there was one called the Trieterica, which was celebrated every three years. In that feast the Bacchantes carried the figure of the God in a chariot drawn by two tigers, or panthers; and, crowned with vine leaves, and holding thyrsi in their hands, they ran in a frantic manner around the chariot, filling the air with the noise of tambourines and brazen instruments, shouting 'Evoë. Bacche!' and calling the God by his several names of Bromius, Lyæus, Evan, Lenæus, and Sabazius. To this ceremonial, received from the Egyptians, the Greeks added other ceremonies replete with abominable licentiousness, and repulsive to common decency. These were often suppressed by public enactment, but were as often re-established by the votaries of lewdness and immodesty, and such as found in these festivals a pretext and opportunity for the commission of the most horrible offences.

The story of the unfortunate fate of Pentheus is supposed by the ancient writers to have been strictly true. Pentheus, the son of Echion and Agave, the daughter of Cadmus, having succeeded his grandfather in his kingdom, is supposed, like him, to have opposed those abuses that had crept into the mysteries of Bacchus, and went to Mount Cithæron for the purpose of chastising the Bacchantes, who were celebrating his festival; whereupon, in their frantic madness, the worshippers, among whom were his mother and his aunt, tore him in pieces. Pausanias, however, says that Pentheus really was a wicked prince; and he somewhat varies his story, as he tells us that having got into a tree to overlook the secret ceremonies of the orgies, Pentheus was discovered by the Bacchantes, who punished his curiosity by putting him to death. The story of the transformation of the mariners is supposed by Bochart to have been founded on the adventure of certain merchants from the coast of Etruria, whose vessel had the figure of a dolphin at the prow, or rather of the fish called 'tursio,' probably the porpoise, or sea-hog. They were probably shipwrecked near the Isle of Naxos, which was sacred to Bacchus, whose mysteries they had perhaps neglected, or even despised. On this slender ground, perhaps, the report spread, that the God himself had destroyed them, as a punishment for their impiety.

## Book IV, Fable I (lines 1–166)

*The daughters of Minyas, instead of celebrating the festival of Bacchus, apply themselves to other pursuits during the ceremonies; and among several narratives which they relate to pass away the time, they divert themselves with the story of the adventures of Pyramus and Thisbe. These lovers having made an appointment to meet without the walls of Babylon, Thisbe arrives first; but at the sight of a lioness, she runs to hide herself in a cave, and in her alarm, drops her veil. Pyramus, arriving soon after, finds the veil of his mistress stained with blood; and believing her to be dead, kills himself with his own sword. Thisbe returns from the cave; and finding Pyramus weltering in his blood, she plunges the same fatal weapon into her own breast.*

But Alcithoë, the daughter of Minyas,[1] does not think that the rites[2] of the God ought to be received; but still, in her rashness, denies that Bacchus is the progeny of Jupiter; and she has her sisters[3] as partners in her impiety.

The priest had ordered both mistresses and maids, laying aside their employments, to have their breasts covered with skins, and to loosen the fillets of their hair, and {to put} garlands on their locks, and to take the verdant thyrsi in their hands; and had prophesied that severe would be the resentment of the Deity, {if} affronted. Both matrons and new-married women obey, and lay aside their webs and work-baskets,[4] and their tasks unfinished; and offer frankincense, and invoke both Bacchus and Bromius,[5] and Lyæus,[6] and the son of the Flames, and the Twice-Born, and the only one that had two mothers.[7] To these is added {the name of} Nyseus, and the unshorn Thyoneus,[8] and with Lenæus,[9] the planter of the genial grape, and Nyctelius,[10] and father Eleleus, and Iacchus,[11] and Evan,[12] and a great many other names, which thou, Liber, hast besides, throughout the nations of Greece. For thine is youth everlasting; thou art a boy to all time, thou art beheld {as} the most beauteous {of all} in high heaven; thou hast the features of a virgin, when thou standest without thy horns. By thee the East was conquered, as far as where swarthy India is bounded by the remote Ganges. Thou {God}, worthy of our veneration, didst smite Pentheus, and the axe-bearing Lycurgus,[13] sacrilegious {mortals}; thou didst hurl the bodies of the Etrurians into the sea. Thou controllest the neck of the lynxes yoked to thy chariot, graced with the painted reins. The Bacchanals and the Satyrs follow {thee}; the drunken old man, too, {Silenus}, who supports his reeling limbs with a staff, and sticks by no means very fast to his bending ass. And wherever thou goest, the shouts of youths, and together the voices of women, and tambourines beaten with the hands, and hollow cymbals resound, and the box-wood {pipe}, with its long bore. The Ismenian matrons ask thee to show thyself mild and propitious, and celebrate thy sacred rites as prescribed.

The daughters of Minyas alone, within doors, interrupting the festival with unseasonable labor, [14] are either carding wool, or twirling the threads with their fingers, or are plying at the web, and keeping the handmaids to their work. One of them, {as she is} drawing the thread with her smooth thumb, says, “While others are idling, and thronging to {these} fanciful rites, let us, whom Pallas, a better Deity, occupies, alleviate the useful toil of our hands with varying discourse; and let us relate by turns to our disengaged ears, for the general {amusement}, something each in our turn, that will not permit the time to seem long.” They approve of what she says, and her sisters bid her to be the first to tell her story.

She considers which of many she shall tell (for she knows many a one), and she is in doubt whether she shall tell of thee, Babylonian Dercetis,[15] whom the people of Palestine[16] believe to inhabit the pools, with thy changed form, scales covering thy limbs; or rather how her daughter, taking wings, passed her latter years in whitened turrets; or how a Naiad,[17] by charms and too potent herbs, changed the bodies of the young men into silent fishes, until she suffered the same herself. Or how the tree which bore white fruit {formerly}, now bears it of purple hue, from the contact of blood. This {story} pleases her; this, because it was no common tale, she began in manner such as this, while the wool followed the thread:--

“Pyramus and Thisbe, the one the most beauteous of youths,[18] the other preferred before {all} the damsels that the East contained, lived in adjoining houses; where Semiramis is said to have surrounded her lofty city[19] with walls of brick.[20] The nearness caused their first acquaintance, and their first advances {in love}; with time their affection increased. They would have united themselves, too, by the tie of marriage, but their fathers forbade it. A thing which they could not forbid, they were both inflamed, with minds equally captivated. There is no one acquainted with it; by nods and signs, they hold converse. And the more the fire is smothered, the more, when {so} smothered, does it burn. The party-wall, common to the two houses, was cleft by a small chink, which it had got formerly, when it was built. This defect, remarked by no one for so many ages, you lovers (what does not love perceive?) first found one, and you made it a passage for your voices, and the accents of love used to pass through it in safety, with the gentlest murmur. Oftentimes, after they had taken their stations, Thisbe on one side, {and} Pyramus on the other, and the breath of their mouths had been {mutually} caught by turns, they used to say, ‘Envious wall, why dost thou stand in the way of lovers? what great matter were it, for thee to suffer us to be joined with our entire bodies? Or if that is too much, that, at least, thou shouldst open, for the exchange of kisses. Nor are we ungrateful; we confess that we are indebted to thee, that a passage has been given for our words to our loving ears.’ Having said this much, in vain, on their respective sides, about night they said, ‘Farewell’; and gave those kisses each on their own side, which did not reach the other side.

“The following morning had removed the fires of the night, and the Sun, with its rays, had dried the grass wet with rime, {when} they met together at the wonted spot. Then, first complaining much in low murmurs, they determine, in the silent night, to try to deceive their keepers, and to steal out of doors; and when they have left the house, to quit the buildings of the city as well: but that they may not have to wander, roaming in the open fields, to meet at the tomb of Ninus,[21] and to conceal themselves beneath the shade of a tree. There was there a lofty mulberry tree, very full of snow-white fruit, quite close to a cold spring. The arrangement suits them; and the light, seeming to depart {but} slowly, is buried in the waters, and from the same waters the night arises. The clever Thisbe, turning the hinge, gets out in the dark, and deceives her {attendants}, and, having covered her face, arrives at the tomb, and sits down under the tree agreed upon; love made her bold. Lo! a lioness approaches, having her foaming jaws besmeared with the recent slaughter of oxen, about to quench her thirst with the water of the neighboring spring. The Babylonian Thisbe sees her at a distance, by the rays of the moon, and with a trembling foot she flies to a dark cave; and, while she flies, her veil falling from her back, she leaves it behind. When the savage lioness has quenched her thirst with plenteous water, as she is returning into the woods, she tears the thin covering, found by chance without Thisbe herself, with her blood-stained mouth.

“Pyramus, going out later {than Thisbe}, saw the evident footmarks of a wild beast, in the deep dust, and grew pale all over his face. But, as soon as he found her veil, as well, dyed with blood, he said: ‘One night will be the ruin of two lovers, of whom she was the most deserving of a long life. My soul is guilty; ’tis I that have destroyed thee, much to be lamented; who bade thee to come by night to places full of terror, and came not hither first. O, whatever lions are lurking beneath this rock, tear my body in pieces, and devour my accursed entrails with ruthless jaws. But it is the part of a coward to wish for death.’ He takes up the veil of Thisbe, and he takes it with himself to the shade of the tree agreed on, and, after he has bestowed tears on the well-known garment, he gives kisses {to the same}, and he says, ‘Receive, now, a draught of my blood as well!’ and then plunges the sword, with which he is girt, into his bowels; and without delay, as he is dying, he draws it out of the warm wound. As he falls on his back upon the ground, the blood spurts forth on high, not otherwise than as when a pipe is burst on the lead decaying,[22] and shoots out afar the liquid water from the hissing flaw, and cleaves the air with its jet. The fruit of the tree, by the sprinkling of the blood, are changed to a dark tint, and the root, soaked with the gore, tints the hanging mulberries with a purple hue. Behold! not yet having banished her fear, {Thisbe} returns, that she may not disappoint her lover, and seeks for the youth both with her eyes and her affection, and longs to tell him how great dangers she has escaped. And when she observes the spot, and the altered appearance of the tree, she doubts if it is the same, so uncertain does the color of the fruit make her. While she is in doubt, she sees palpitating limbs throbbing upon the bloody ground; she draws back her foot, and having her face paler

than box-wood,[23] she shudders like the sea, which trembles[24] when its surface is skimmed by a gentle breeze. But, after pausing a time, she had recognized her own lover, she smote her arms, undeserving {of such usage}, and tearing her hair, and embracing the much-loved body, she filled the gashes with her tears, and mingled her {tokens of} sorrow with his blood; and imprinting kisses on his cold features, she exclaimed, 'Pyramus! what disaster has taken thee away from me? Pyramus! answer me; 'tis thy own Thisbe, dearest, that calls thee; hear me, and raise thy prostrate features.'

"At the name of Thisbe, Pyramus raised his eyes, now heavy with death, and, after he had seen her, he closed them again. After she had perceived her own garment, and beheld, too, the ivory {sheath}[25] without its sword, she said, 'Tis thy own hand, and love, that has destroyed thee, ill-fated {youth}! I, too, have a hand bold {enough} for this one purpose; I have love as well; this shall give me strength for the wound. I will follow thee in thy death, and I shall be called the most unhappy cause and companion of thy fate, and thou who, alas! couldst be torn from me by death alone, shalt not be able, even by death, to be torn from me. And you, O most wretched parents of mine and his, be but prevailed upon, in this one thing, by the entreaties of us both, that you will not deny those whom their constant love {and} whom their last moments have joined, to be buried in the same tomb. But thou, O tree, which now with thy boughs dost overshadow the luckless body of {but} one, art fated soon to cover {those} of two. Retain a token of {this our} fate, and ever bear fruit black and suited for mourning, as a memorial of the blood of us two.' {Thus} she said; and having fixed the point under the lower part of her breast, she fell upon the sword, which still was reeking with his blood.

"Her prayers, however, moved the Gods, {and} moved their parents. For the color of the fruit, when it has fully ripened, is black;[26] and what was left of them, from the funeral pile, reposed in the same urn."

[Footnote 1: *Minyas*.--Ver. 1. Alcithoë was the daughter of Minyas, who, according to some, was the son of Orchomenus, according to others, his father. Pausanias says that the Bœotians, over whom he reigned, were called 'Minyæ' from him; but he makes no allusion to the females who are here mentioned by Ovid.]

[Footnote 2: *Rites*.--Ver. 1. 'Orgia:' this was the original name of the Dionysia, or festival of Bacchus; but in time the word came to be applied to any occasion of festivity.]

[Footnote 3: *Her sisters*.--Ver. 3. The names of the sisters of Alcithoë, according to Plutarch, were Aristippe and Leucippe. The names of the three, according to Ælian, were Alcathoë, Leucippe, and Aristippe, who is sometimes called Arsinoë. The latter author says, that the truth of the case was, that they were decent women, fond of their husbands and families, who

preferred staying at home, and attending to their domestic concerns, to running after the new rites; on which it was said, by their enemies, that Bacchus had punished them.]

[Footnote 4: *Work-baskets*.--Ver. 10. The 'calathus,' which was called by the Greeks κάλαθος, καλαθίσκος, and τάλαρος, generally signifies the basket in which women placed their work, and especially the materials used for spinning. They were generally made of osiers and reeds, but sometimes of more valuable materials, such as silver, perhaps in filagree work. 'Calathi' were also used for carrying fruits and flowers. Virgil (Ecl. v. l. 71) speaks of cups for holding wine, under the name of 'Calathi.']

[Footnote 5: *Bromius*.--Ver. 11. Bacchus was called Bromius, from βρέμω, 'to cry out,' or 'shout,' from the yells and noise made by his worshippers, whose peculiar cries were, Εὐοῖ Βάκχε, ὦ Ἰακχε, Ἰώ Βάκχε, Εὐοῖ σαβοῖ. 'Evoë, Bacche! O, Iacche! Io, Bacche! Evoë sabæ!']

[Footnote 6: *Lyæus*.--Ver. 11. Bacchus was called Lyæus, from the Greek word, λύειν, 'to loosen,' or 'relax,' because wine dispels care.]

[Footnote 7: *That had two mothers*.--Ver. 12. The word 'bimater' seems to have been fancied by Ovid as an appropriate epithet for Bacchus, Jupiter having undertaken the duties of a mother for him, in the latter months of gestation.]

[Footnote 8: *Thyoneus*.--Ver. 13. Bacchus was called Thyoneus, either from Semele, his mother, one of whose names was Thyone, or from the Greek, θύειν, 'to be frantic,' from which origin the Bacchanals also received their name of Thyades.]

[Footnote 9: *Lenæus*.--Ver. 14. From the Greek word λῆνος, 'a wine-press.']

[Footnote 10: *Nyctelius*.--Ver. 15. From the Greek word νὺξ, 'night,' because his orgies were celebrated by night. Eleleus is from the shout, or 'huzza' of the Greeks, which was ελελεῦ.]

[Footnote 11: *Iacchus*.--Ver. 15. From the Greek ἰαχὴ, 'clamor,' or 'noise.']

[Footnote 12: *Evan*.--Ver. 15. From the exclamation, Εὐοῖ, or 'Evoë' which the Bacchanals used in performing his orgies.]

[Footnote 13: *Lycurgus*.--Ver. 22. He was a king of Thrace, who having slighted the worship of Bacchus, was afflicted with madness, and hewed off his own legs with a hatchet, and, according to Apollodorus, mistaking his own son Dryas for a vine, destroyed him with the same weapon.]

[Footnote 14: *Unseasonable labor*.--Ver. 32. 'Minerva;' the name of the Goddess Minerva is here used for the exercise of the art of spinning, of which she was the patroness. The term 'intempestiva' is appropriately applied, as the arts of industry and frugality, which were first

invented by Minerva, but ill accorded with the idle and vicious mode of celebrating the festival of Bacchus.]

[Footnote 15: *Dercetis*.--Ver. 45. Lucian, speaking of Dercetis, or Derceto, says, 'I have seen in Phœnicia a statue of this goddess, of a very singular kind. From the middle upwards, it represents a woman, but below it terminates in a fish. The statue of her, which is shown at Hieropolis, represents her wholly as a woman.' He further says, that the temple of this last city was thought by some to have been built by Semiramis, who consecrated it not to Juno, as is generally believed, but to her own mother, Derceto. Atergatis was another name of this Goddess. She was said, by an illicit amour, to have been the mother of Semiramis, and in despair, to have thrown herself into a lake near Ascalon, on which she was changed into a fish.]

[Footnote 16: *Palestine*.--Ver. 46. Palæstina, or Philistia, in which Ascalon was situate, was a part of Syria, lying in its south-western extremity.]

[Footnote 17: *How a Naiad*.--Ver. 49. The Naiad here mentioned is supposed to have been a Nymph of the Island of the Sun, called also Nosola, between Taprobana (the modern Ceylon) and the coast of Carmania (perhaps Coromandel), who was in the habit of changing such youths as fell into her hands into fishes. As a reward for her cruelty, she herself was changed into a fish by the Sun.]

[Footnote 18: *Most beauteous of youths*.--Ver. 55. Clarke translates 'juvenum pulcherrimus alter,' 'one of the most handsome of all the young fellows.']

[Footnote 19: *Her lofty city*.--Ver. 57. The magnificence of ancient Babylon has been remarked by many ancient writers, from Herodotus downwards. Its walls are said to have been 60 miles in compass, 87 feet in thickness, and 350 feet in height.]

[Footnote 20: *Walls of brick*.--Ver. 58. The walls were built by Semiramis of bricks dried in the sun, cemented together with layers of bitumen.]

[Footnote 21: *The tomb of Ninus*.--Ver. 88. According to Diodorus Siculus, the sepulchre of Ninus, the first king of Babylon, was ten stadia in length, and nine in depth; it had the appearance of a vast citadel, and was at a considerable distance from the city of Babylon. Commentators have expressed some surprise that Ovid here uses the word 'busta,' for 'tomb,' as the place of meeting for these chaste lovers, as the prostitutes of Rome used to haunt the 'busta,' or 'tombs;' whence they obtained the epithet of 'bustuariæ.']

[Footnote 22: *The lead decaying*.--Ver. 122. 'Fistula' here means 'a water-pipe.' Vitruvius speaks of three methods of conveying water; by channels of masonry, earthen pipes, and leaden pipes. The latter were smaller, and more generally used; to them reference is here made. They were

formed by bending plates of lead into a form, not cylindrical, but the section of which was oblong, and tapering towards the top like a pear. The description here given, though somewhat homely, is extremely natural, and, as frequent experience shows us, depicts the results when the soldering of a water-pipe has become decayed.]

[Footnote 23: *Paler than box-wood.*--Ver. 134. From the light color of boxwood, the words 'buxo pallidiora,' 'paler than boxwood,' became a proverbial expression among the Romans.]

[Footnote 24: *The sea which trembles.*--Ver. 136. The ripple, or shudder, which runs along the surface of the sea, when a breath of wind is stirring in a calm, is very beautifully described here, and is worthy of notice.]

[Footnote 25: *The ivory sheath.*--Ver. 148. The 'vagina,' or 'sheath' of the sword, was often highly decorated; and we learn from Homer and Virgil, as well as Ovid, that ivory was much used for that purpose. The sheath was worn by the Greeks and Romans on the left side of the body, so as to enable them to draw the sword from it, by passing the right hand in front of the body, to take hold of the hilt, with the thumb next to the blade.]

[Footnote 26: *Is black.*--Ver. 165. He thus accounts for the deep purple hue of the mulberry which, before the event mentioned here, he says was white.]

### Riley's Explanation

It is pretty clear, as we have already seen, that the establishment of the worship of Bacchus in Greece met with great opposition, and that his priests and devotees published several miracles and prodigies, the more easily to influence the minds of their fellow-men. Thus, the daughters of Minyas are said to have been changed into bats, solely because they neglected to join in the orgies of that God; when, probably, the fact was, that they were either secretly despatched, or were forced to fly for their lives; and their absence was accounted for to the ignorant and credulous, by the invention of this Fable. The story of Dercetis, as related by Diodorus Siculus, Pliny, and Herodotus, is, that having offended Venus, that Goddess caused her to fall in love with a young man, by whom she had a daughter. In despair at her misfortune, she killed her lover, and exposed her child, and afterwards drowned herself. The Syrians, lamenting her fate, built a temple near where she was drowned, and honored her as a Goddess. They stated that she was turned into a fish, and they there represented her under the figure of a woman down to the waist, and of a fish thence downwards. They also abstained from eating fish; though they offered them to her in sacrifice, and suspended gilded ones in her temple. Selden, in his Treatise on the Syrian Gods, suggests that the story of Dercetis, or Atergatis, was founded on the figure and worship of Dagon, the God of the Philistines, who was represented under the figure of a fish; and that the name of Atergatis is a corruption of 'Adir Dagon,' 'a great fish,' which is not at all

improbable. The same author supposes that Dercetis was originally the same Deity with Venus, Astarte, Minerva, Juno, Isis, and the Moon; and that she was worshipped under the name of Mylitta by the Assyrians, and as Alilac by the Arabians. Lucian tells us, that Dercetis was reported to have been the mother of Semiramis.

Ovid and Hyginus are the only authors that make mention of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, and both agree in making Babylon the scene of it. It seems to be rather intended as a moral tale, than to have been built upon any actual circumstance. It affords a lesson to youth not to enter rashly into engagements: and to parents not to pursue, too rigorously, the gratification of their own resentment, but rather to consult the inclination of their children, when not likely to be productive of unhappiness at a future period.

The reader cannot fail to call to mind the admirable travesty of this story by Shakspere, in the ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream.’

## Book IV, Fable II (lines 167–233)

*The Sun discovers to Vulcan the intrigue between Mars and Venus, and then, himself, falls in love with Leucothoë. Venus, in revenge for the discovery, resolves to make his amours unfortunate.*

Here she ended; and there was {but} a short time betwixt, and {then} Leuconoë began[27] to speak. Her sisters held their peace. “Love has captivated even this Sun, who rules all things by his æthereal light. I will relate the loves of the Sun. This God is supposed to have been the first to see the adultery of Venus with Mars; this God is the first to see everything. He was grieved at what was done, and showed to the husband, the son of Juno,[28] the wrong done to his bed, and the place of the intrigue. Both his senses, and the work which his skilful right hand was {then} holding, quitted him {on the instant}. Immediately, he files out some slender chains of brass, and nets, and meshes, which can escape the eye. The finest threads cannot surpass that work, nor yet the cobweb that hangs from the top of the beam. He makes it so, too, as to yield to a slight touch, and a gentle movement, and skilfully arranges it drawn around the bed. When the wife and the gallant come into the same bed, being both caught through the artifice of the husband, and chains prepared by this new contrivance, they are held fast in the {very} midst of their embraces.

“The Lemnian {God} immediately threw open the folding doors[29] of ivory, and admitted the Deities. {There} they lay disgracefully bound. And yet many a one of the Gods, not the serious ones, could fain wish thus to become disgraced. The Gods of heaven laughed, and for a long time was this the most noted story in all heaven. The Cytherean[30] goddess exacts satisfaction of the Sun, in remembrance of this betrayal; and, in her turn, disturbs him with the like passion, who had disturbed her secret amours. What now, son of Hyperion,[31] does thy beauty, thy heat, and thy radiant light avail thee? For thou, who dost burn all lands with thy flames, art {now} burnt with a new flame; and thou, who oughtst to be looking at everything, art gazing on Leucothoë, and on one maiden art fixing those eyes which thou oughtst {to be fixing} on the universe. At one time thou art rising earlier in the Eastern sky; at another thou art setting late in the waves; and in taking time to gaze {on her}, thou art lengthening the hours of mid-winter. Sometimes thou art eclipsed, and the trouble of thy mind affects thy light, and, darkened, thou fillest with terror the breasts of mortals. Nor art thou pale, because the form of the moon, nearer to the earth, stands in thy way. It is that passion which occasions this complexion. Thou lovest her alone, neither does Clymene, nor Rhodos,[32] nor the most beauteous mother[33] of the Ææan Circe engage thee, nor {yet} Clytie, who, though despised, was longing for thy embraces; at that very time thou wast suffering these grievous pangs. Leucothoë occasioned the forgetting of many

a damsel; she, whom Eurynome, the most beauteous of the perfume-bearing[34] nation produced.[35] But after her daughter grew up, as much as the mother excelled all {other Nymphs}, so much did the daughter {excel} the mother. Her father, Orchamus, ruled over the Achæmenian[36] cities, and he is reckoned the seventh in descent from the ancient Belus.[37]

"The pastures of the horses of the Sun are under the Western sky; instead of grass, they have ambrosia.[38] That nourishes their limbs wearied with their daily service, and refits them for labor. And while the coursers are there eating their heavenly food, and night is taking her turn; the God enters the beloved chamber, changed into the shape of her mother Eurynome, and beholds Leucothoë among twice six handmaids, near the threshold, drawing out the smooth threads with her twirling spindle. When, therefore, as though her mother, he has given kisses to her dear daughter, he says, "There is a secret matter, {which I have to mention}; maids, withdraw, and take not from a mother the privilege of speaking in private {with her daughter}." They obey; and the God being left in the chamber without any witness, he says, 'I am he, who measures out the long year, who beholds all things, {and} through whom the earth sees all things; the eye, {in fact}, of the universe. Believe me, thou art pleasing to me.' She is affrighted; and in her alarm, both her distaff and her spindle fall from her relaxed fingers. Her very fear becomes her; and, he, no longer delaying, returns to his true shape, and his wonted beauty. But the maiden, although startled at the unexpected sight, overcome by the beauty of the God,[39] {and} dismissing {all} complaints, submits to his embrace.

[Footnote 27: *Leuconoë began*.--Ver. 168. It is worthy of remark, how strongly the affecting tale of Pyramus and Thisbe contrasts with the loose story of the loves of Mars and Venus.]

[Footnote 28: *The son of Juno*.--Ver. 173. Vulcan is called 'Junonigena,' because, according to some, he was the son of Juno alone. Other writers, however, say that he was the only son of Jupiter and Juno.]

[Footnote 29: *The folding doors*.--Ver. 185. The plural word 'valvæ' is often used to signify a door, or entrance, because among the ancients each doorway generally contained two doors folding together. The internal doors even of private houses were bivalve; hence, as in the present case, we often read of the folding doors of a bed-chamber. Each of these doors or valves was usually wide enough to permit persons to pass each other in egress and ingress without opening the other door as well. Sometimes each valve was double, folding like our window-shutters.]

[Footnote 30: *Cytherean*.--Ver. 190. Cythera was an island on the southern coast of Laconia; where Venus was supposed to have landed, after she had risen from the sea. It was dedicated to her worship.]

[Footnote 31: *Hyperion*.--Ver. 192. He was the son of Cœlus, or Uranus, and the father of the Sun. The name of Hyperion is, however, often given by the poets to the Sun himself.]

[Footnote 32: *Rhodos*.--Ver. 204. She was a damsel of the Isle of Rhodes, the daughter of Neptune, and, according to some, of Venus. She was greatly beloved by Apollo, to whom she bore seven children.]

[Footnote 33: *Beauteous mother*.--Ver. 205. This was Persa, the daughter of Oceanus, and the mother of the enchantress Circe, who is here called 'Ææa,' from Ææa, a city and peninsula of Colchis. Circe is referred to more at length in the 14th Book of the Metamorphoses.]

[Footnote 34: *Perfume-bearing*.--Ver. 209. Being born in Arabia, the producer of all kinds of spices and perfumes, which were much in request among the ancients, for the purposes of sacrifice.]

[Footnote 35: *Produced*.--Ver. 210. Eurynome was the wife of Orchamus, and was the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys.]

[Footnote 36: *Achæmenian*.--Ver. 212. Persia is called Achæmenian, from Achæmenes, one of its former kings.]

[Footnote 37: *Ancient Belus*.--Ver. 213. The order of descent is thus reckoned from Belus; Abas, Acrisius, Danaë, Perseus, Bachæmon, Achæmenes, and Orchamus.]

[Footnote 38: *Ambrosia*.--Ver. 215. Ambrosia was said to be the food of the Deities, and nectar their drink.]

[Footnote 39: *Beauty of the God*.--Ver. 233. Clarke translates, 'Virgo victa nitore Dei.' 'The young lady--charmed with the spruceness of the God.']

## Riley's Explanation

Plutarch, in his Treatise 'How to read the Poets,' suggests a curious explanation of the discovery by the Sun of the intrigue of Mars and Venus. He says that such persons as are born under the conjunction of the planets Mars and Venus, are naturally of an amorous temperament; but that if the Sun does not happen then to be at a distance, their indiscretions will be very soon discovered.

Palæphatus gives a historical solution to the story. He says that Helius, the son of Vulcan, king of Egypt, resolving to cause his father's laws against adultery to be strictly observed, and having been informed that a lady of the court had an intrigue with one of the courtiers, entered her apartment in the night, and obtaining ocular proof of the courtier's guilt, caused him to be

severely punished. He also tells us that the similarity of the name gave birth to the Fable which Homer was the first to relate, with a small variation, and which is here copied by Ovid. Libanius, deploring the burning of the Temple of Apollo near Antioch, complains of the ingratitude of Vulcan to that God, who had formerly discovered to him the infidelity of his wife; a subject upon which St. Chrysostom seems to think that the rhetorician would have done better to have been silent.

## Book IV, Fable III (lines 234–270)

*Clytie, in a fit of revenge, discovers the adventure of Leucothoë to her father, who orders her to be buried alive. The Sun, grieved at her misfortune, changed her into the frankincense tree; he also despises the informer, who pines away for love of him, and is at last changed into the sunflower.*

Clytie envied her, (for the love of the Sun[40] for her had not been moderate), and, urged on by resentment at a rival, she published the intrigue, and, when spread abroad, brought it to the notice of her father. He, fierce and unrelenting, cruelly buried her alive deep in the ground, as she entreated and stretched out her hands towards the light of the Sun, and cried, "'Twas he that offered violence to me against my will;" and upon her he placed a heap of heavy sand. The son of Hyperion scattered it with his rays, and gave a passage to thee, by which thou mightst be able to put forth thy buried features.

But thou, Nymph, couldst not now raise thy head smothered with the weight of the earth; and {there} thou didst lie, a lifeless body. The governor of the winged steeds is said to have beheld nothing more afflicting than that, since the lightnings that caused the death of Phaëton. He, indeed, endeavors, if he can, to recall her cold limbs to an enlivening heat, by the strength of his rays. But, since fate opposes attempts so great, he sprinkles both her body and the place with odoriferous nectar, and having first uttered many a complaint he says, "Still shalt thou reach the skies."[41] Immediately, the body, steeped in the heavenly nectar, dissolves, and moistens the earth with its odoriferous juices; and a shoot of frankincense having taken root by degrees through the clods, rises up and bursts the hillock with its top.

But the author of light came no more to Clytie (although love might have excused her grief, and her grief the betrayal); and he put an end to his intercourse with her. From that time she, who had made so mad a use of her passion, pined away, loathing the {other} Nymphs; and in the open air, night and day, she sat on the bare ground, with her hair dishevelled and unadorned. And for nine days, without water or food, she subsisted in her fast, merely on dew and her own tears; and she did not raise herself from the ground. She only used to look towards the face of the God as he moved along, and to turn her own features towards him. They say that her limbs became rooted fast in the ground; and a livid paleness turned part of her color into {that of} a bloodless plant. There is a redness in some part; and a flower, very like a violet,[42] conceals her face. Though she is held fast by a root, she turns towards the Sun, and {though} changed, she {still} retains her passion.

[Footnote 40: *For the love of the Sun*.--Ver. 234. This remark is added, to show that the God had not been sufficiently cautious in his courtship of her sister to conceal it from the observation of Clytie.]

[Footnote 41: *Reach the skies*.--Ver. 251. That is to say, 'You shall arise from the earth as a tree bearing frankincense: the gums of which, burnt in sacrifice to the Gods, shall reach the heavens with their sweet odors.' Persia and Arabia have been celebrated by the poets, ancient and modern, for their great fertility in frankincense and other aromatic plants.]

[Footnote 42: *Like a violet*.--Ver. 268. This cannot mean the large yellow plant which is called the sunflower. The small aromatic flower which we call heliotrope, with its violet hue and delightful perfume, more nearly answers the description. The larger flower probably derived its name from the resemblance which it bears to the sun, surrounded with rays, as depicted by the ancient painters.]

## Riley's Explanation

No ascertained historical fact can be found as the basis of the story of Leucothoë being buried alive by her father Orchamus, or of her rival Clytie being metamorphosed into a sunflower. The story seems to have been most probably simply founded on principles of natural philosophy. Leucothoë, it is not unreasonable to suppose, may have been styled the daughter of Orchamus, king of Persia, for no other reason but because that Prince was the first to introduce the frankincense tree, which was called Leucothoë, into his kingdom; and it was added that she fell in love with Apollo, because the tree produces an aromatic drug much used in physic, of which that God was fabled to have been the inventor. The jealousy of Clytie was, perhaps, founded upon a fact, stated by some naturalists, that the sunflower is a plant which kills the frankincense tree, when growing near it. Pliny, however, who ascribes several properties to the sunflower, does not mention this among them.

Orchamus is nowhere mentioned by the ancient writers, except in the present instance.

## Book IV, Fable IV (lines 271–284)

*Daphnis is turned into a stone. Scython is changed from a man into a woman. Celmus is changed into adamant. Crocus and Smilax are made into flowers. The Curetes are produced from a shower.*

{Thus} she spoke; and the wondrous deed charms their ears. Some deny that it was possible to be done, some say that real Gods can do all things; but Bacchus is not one of them. When her sisters have become silent, Alcithoë is called upon; who running with her shuttle through the warp of the hanging web, says, “I keep silence upon the well-known amours of Daphnis, the shepherd of Ida,[43] whom the resentment of the Nymph, his paramour, turned into a stone. Such mighty grief inflames those who are in love. Nor do I relate how once Scython, the law of nature being altered, was of both sexes first a man, then a woman. Thee too, I pass by, O Celmus, now adamant, formerly most attached to Jupiter {when} little; and the Curetes,[44] sprung from a plenteous shower of rain; Crocus, too, changed, together with Smilax,[45] into little flowers; and I will entertain your minds with a pleasing novelty.”

[Footnote 43: *Shepherd of Ida*.--Ver. 277. This may mean either Daphnis of Crete, or of Phrygia; for in both those countries there was a mountain named Ida.]

[Footnote 44: *The Curetes*.--Ver. 282. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the Curetes were the ancient inhabitants of Crete. We may here remark, that the story of their springing from the earth after a shower of rain, seems to have no other foundation than the fact of their having been of the race of the Titans; that is, they were descended from Uranus, or Cœlus and Tita, by which names were meant the heaven and the earth.]

[Footnote 45: *Smilax*.--Ver. 283. The dictionary meanings given for this word are--1. Withwind, a kind of herb. 2. The yew tree. 3. A kind of oak. The Nymph was probably supposed to have been changed into the first.]

### Riley’s Explanation

Most probably, the story of the shepherd Daphnis being turned into a stone, was no other than an allegorical method of expressing the insensibility of an individual. Thalia was the name of the Nymph who was thus affronted by Daphnis.

The story of Scython changing his sex, is perhaps based upon the fact, that the country of Thrace, which took the name of Thracia from a famous sorceress, was before called Scython; and that as it lost a name of the masculine gender for one of the feminine, in after times it became reported that Scython had changed sexes.

Pliny tells us that Celmus was a young man of remarkable wisdom and moderation, and that the passions making no impression on him, he was changed into adamant. Some, however, assert that he was foster-father to Jupiter, by whom he was enclosed in an impenetrable tower, for revealing the immortality of the Gods.

According to one account, Crocus and Smilax were a constant and happy married couple, who for their chaste and innocent life were said to have been changed into flowers; but another story is, that Crocus was a youth beloved by Smilax, and that on his rejecting the Nymph's advances, they were both turned into flowers.

The story of the Curetes being sprung from rain, is possibly founded on the report that they were descended from Uranus and Tita, the Heaven and the Earth. Some suppose them to have been the original inhabitants of the isle of Crete; and they are said to have watched over the infancy of Jupiter, by whom they were afterwards slain, for having concealed Epaphus from his wrath.

## Book IV, Fable V (lines 285–388)

*The Naiad Salmacis falls in love with the youth Hermaphroditus, who rejects her advances. While he is bathing, she leaps into the water, and seizing the youth in her arms, they become one body, retaining their different sexes.*

Learn how Salmacis became infamous, {and} why it enervates, with its enfeebling waters, and softens the limbs bathed {in it}. The cause is unknown; {but} the properties of the fountain are very well known. The Naiads nursed a boy, born to Mercury of the Cytherean Goddess in the caves of Ida; whose face was such that therein both mother and father could be discerned; he likewise took his name from them. As soon as he had completed thrice five years, he forsook his native mountains, and leaving Ida, the place of his nursing, he loved to wander over unknown spots, {and} to see unknown rivers, his curiosity lessening the fatigue. He went, too, to the Lycian[46] cities, and the Carians, that border upon Lycia. Here he sees a pool of water, clear to the {very} ground at the bottom; here there are no fenny reeds, no barren sedge, no rushes with their sharp points. The water is translucent; but the edges of the pool are enclosed with green turf, and with grass ever verdant. A Nymph dwells {there}; but one neither skilled in hunting, nor accustomed to bend the bow, nor to contend in speed; the only one, too, of {all} the Naiads not known to the swift Diana. The report is, that her sisters often said to her, “Salmacis, do take either the javelin, or the painted quiver, and unite thy leisure with the toils of the chase.” She takes neither the javelin, nor the painted quiver, nor does she unite her leisure with the toils of the chase. But sometimes she is bathing her beauteous limbs in her own spring; {and} often is she straitening her hair with a comb of Citorian boxwood,[47] and consulting the waters, into which she looks, what is befitting her. At other times, covering her body with a transparent garment, she reposes either on the soft leaves or on the soft grass. Ofttimes is she gathering flowers. And then, too, by chance was she gathering them when she beheld the youth, and wished to possess him, {thus} seen.

But though she hastened to approach {the youth}, still she did not approach him before she had put herself in order, and before she had surveyed her garments, and put on her {best} looks, and deserved to be thought beautiful. Then thus did she begin to speak: “O youth, most worthy to be thought to be a God! if thou art a God, thou mayst {well} be Cupid; but, if thou art a mortal, happy are they who begot thee, and blessed is thy brother, and fortunate indeed thy sister, if thou hast one, and the nurse {as well} who gave thee the breast. But far, far more fortunate than all these {is she}; if thou hast any wife, if thou shouldst vouchsafe any one {the honor of} marriage. And if any one is thy {wife, then} let my pleasure be stolen; but, if thou hast none, let me be {thy wife}, and let us unite in one tie.” After these things {said}, the Naiad is silent; a

blush tinges the face of the youth: he knows not what love is, but even to blush becomes him. Such is the color of apples, hanging on a tree exposed to the sun, or of painted ivory, or of the moon blushing beneath her brightness when the aiding {cymbals}[48] {of} brass are resounding in vain. Upon the Nymph desiring, without ceasing, such kisses at least as he might give to his sister, and now laying her hands upon his neck, white as ivory, he says, “Wilt thou desist, or am I to fly, and to leave this place, together with thee?”

Salmacis is affrighted, and says, “I freely give up this spot to thee, stranger,” and, with a retiring step, she pretends to go away. But then looking back, and hid in a covert of shrubs, she lies concealed, and puts her bended knees down to the ground. But he, just like a boy, and as though unobserved on the retired sward, goes here and there, and in the sportive waves dips the soles of his feet, and {then} his feet as far as his ankles. Nor is there any delay; being charmed with the temperature of the pleasant waters, he throws off his soft garments from his tender body. Then, indeed, Salmacis is astonished, and burns with desire for his naked beauty. The eyes, too, of the Nymph are on fire, no otherwise than as when the Sun,[49] most brilliant with his clear orb, is reflected from the opposite image of a mirror. With difficulty does she endure delay; hardly does she now defer her joy. Now she longs to embrace him; and now, distracted, she can hardly contain herself. He, clapping his body with his hollow palms, swiftly leaps into the stream, and throwing out his arms alternately, shines in the limpid water, as if any one were to cover statues of ivory, or white lilies, with clear glass.

“I have gained my point,” says the Naiad; “see, he is mine!” and, all her garments thrown aside, she plunges in the midst of the waters, and seizes him resisting her, and snatches reluctant kisses, and thrusts down her hands, and touches his breast against his will, and clings about the youth, now one way, and now another. Finally, as he is struggling against her, and desiring to escape, she entwines herself about him, like a serpent which the royal bird takes up and is bearing aloft; and as it hangs, it holds fast his head and feet, and enfolds his spreading wings with its tail. Or, as the ivy is wont to wind itself along the tall trunks {of trees}; and as the polypus[50] holds fast its enemy, caught beneath the waves, by letting down his suckers on all sides; {so} does the descendant of Atlas[51] {still} persist, and deny the Nymph the hoped-for joy. She presses him hard; and clinging to him with every limb, as she holds fast, she says, “Struggle as thou mayst, perverse one, still thou shalt not escape. So ordain it, ye Gods, and let no time separate him from me, nor me from him.” Her prayers find propitious Deities, for the mingled bodies of the two are united,[52] and one human shape is put upon them; just as if any one should see branches beneath a common bark join in growing, and spring up together. So, when their bodies meet together in the firm embrace, they are no more two, and their form is twofold, so that they can neither be styled woman nor boy; they seem {to be} neither and both.

Therefore, when Hermaphroditus sees that the limpid waters, into which he had descended as a man, have made him but half a male, and that his limbs are softened in them, holding up his hands, he says, but now no longer with the voice of a male, “O, both father and mother, grant this favor to your son, who has the name of you both, that whoever enters these streams a man, may go out thence {but} half a man, and that he may suddenly become effeminate in the waters when touched.” Both parents, moved, give their assent to the words of their two-shaped son, and taint the fountain with drugs of ambiguous quality.

[Footnote 46: *Lycian*.--Ver. 296. Lycia was a province of Asia Minor, on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Caria was another province, adjoining to Lycia.]

[Footnote 47: *Citorian boxwood*.--Ver. 311. Citorus, or Cythorus, was a mountain of Paphlagonia, famous for the excellence of the wood of the box trees that grow there. The Greeks and Romans made their combs of it. The Egyptians used them made of ivory and wood, and toothed on one side only; those of the Greeks had teeth on both sides. Great care was usually taken of the hair; to go with it uncombed was a sign of affliction.]

[Footnote 48: *The aiding cymbals*.--Ver. 333. The witches and magicians, in ancient times, and especially those of Thessaly, professed to be able, with their charms and incantations, to bring the moon down from heaven. The truth of these assertions being commonly believed, at the period of an eclipse it was supposed by the multitude that the moon was being subjected to the spells of these magicians, and that she was struggling (laborabat) against them, on which the sound of drums, trumpets, and cymbals was resorted to, to distract the attention of the moon, and to drown the charms repeated by the enchanters, for which reason, the instruments employed for the purpose were styled ‘auxiliares.’]

[Footnote 49: *As when the Sun*.--Ver. 349. Bailey gives this explanation of the passage,-- ‘The eyes of the Nymph seemed to sparkle and shine, just as the rays of the sun in a clear sky when a looking-glass is placed against them, for then they seem most splendid, and contract the fire.’ From the mention of the eyes of the Nymph burning ‘flagrant,’ we might be almost justified in concluding that ‘speculum’ means here not a mirror, but a burning-glass. The ‘specula,’ or looking-glasses, of the ancients were usually made of metal, either a composition of tin and copper, or silver; but in later times, alloy was mixed with the silver. Pliny mentions the obsidian stone, or, as it is now called, the Icelandic agate, as being used for this purpose. Nero is said to have used emeralds for mirrors. Pliny the Elder says that mirrors were made in the glass-houses of Sidon, which consisted of glass plates, with leaves of metal at the back; they were probably of an inferior character. Those of copper and tin were made chiefly at Brundisium. The white metal formed from this mixture soon becoming dim, a sponge with powdered pumice stone was usually fastened to the mirrors made of that composition. They were generally small, of a round

or oval shape, and having a handle; and female slaves usually held them, while their mistresses were performing the duties of the toilet. Sometimes they were fastened to the walls, and they were occasionally of the length of a person's body. Venus was supposed often to use the mirror; but Minerva repudiated the use of it.]

[Footnote 50: *Polypus*.--Ver. 366. This is a fish which entangles its prey, mostly consisting of shell fish, in its great number of feet or feelers. Ovid here calls them 'flagella;' but in the Halieuticon he styles them 'brachia' and 'crines.' Pliny the Elder calls them 'crines' and 'cirri.']

[Footnote 51: *Descendant of Atlas*.--Ver. 368. Hermaphroditus was the great-grandson of Atlas; as the latter was the father of Maia, the mother of Mercury, who begot Hermaphroditus.]

[Footnote 52: *The two are united*.--Ver. 374. Clarke translates, 'nam mixta duorum corpora junguntur,' 'for the bodies of both, being jumbled together, are united.']

## Riley's Explanation

The only probable solution of this story seems to have been the fact that there was in Caria, near the town of Halicarnassus, as we read in Vitruvius, a fountain which was instrumental in civilizing certain barbarians who had been driven from that neighborhood by the Argive colony established there. These men being obliged to repair to the fountain for water, and meeting the Greek colonists there, their intercourse not only polished them, but in course of time corrupted them, by the introduction of the luxurious manners of Greece. Hence the fountain had the reputation of changing men into women.

Possibly the water of that fountain, by some peculiar chemical quality, made those who drank of it become soft and effeminate, as waters are to be occasionally found with extraordinary qualities. Lylius Gyraldus suggests, that several disgraceful adventures happened near this fountain (which was enclosed by walls), which in time gave it a bad name.

## Book IV, Fable VI (lines 389–415)

*Bacchus, to punish the daughters of Minyas for their contempt of his worship, changes them into bats, and their work into ivy and vine leaves.*

There was {now} an end of their stories; and still do the daughters of Minyas go on with their work, and despise the God, and desecrate his festival; when, on a sudden, tambourines unseen resound with their jarring noise; the pipe, too, with the crooked horn, and the tinkling brass, re-echo; myrrh and saffron shed their fragrant odors; and, a thing past all belief, their webs begin to grow green, and the cloth hanging {in the loom} to put forth foliage like ivy. Part changes into vines, and what were threads before, are {now} turned into vine shoots. Vine branches spring from the warp, and the purple lends its splendor to the tinted grapes.

And now the day was past, and the time came on, which you could neither call darkness nor light, but yet the {very} commencement of the dubious night along with the light. The house seemed suddenly to shake, and unctuous torches to burn, and the building to shine with glowing fires, and the fictitious phantoms of savage wild beasts to howl. Presently, the sisters are hiding themselves throughout the smoking house, and in different places are avoiding the fires and the light. While they are seeking a hiding-place, a membrane is stretched over their small limbs, and covers their arms with light wings; nor does the darkness suffer them to know by what means they have lost their former shape. No feathers bear them up; yet they support themselves on pellucid wings; and, endeavoring to speak, they utter a voice very diminutive {even} in proportion to their bodies, and express their low complaints with a squeaking sound. They frequent houses, not woods; and, abhorring the light, they fly {abroad} by night. And from the late evening do they derive their name.[53]

[Footnote 53: *Derive their name.*--Ver. 415. In Greek they are called νυκτερίδες, from νυξ, ‘night;’ and in Latin, ‘vespertiliones,’ from ‘vesper,’ ‘evening,’ on account of their habits.]

## Book IV, Fable VII (lines 416–562)

*Tisiphone, being sent by Juno to the Palace of Athamas, causes him to become mad; on which he dashes his son Learchus to pieces against a wall. He then pursues his wife Ino, who throws herself headlong from the top of a rock into the sea, with her other son Melicerta in her arms: when Neptune, at the intercession of Venus, changes them into Sea Deities. The attendants of Ino, who have followed her in her flight, are changed, some into stone, and others into birds, as they are about to throw themselves into the sea after their mistress.*

But then the Divine power of Bacchus is famed throughout all Thebes; and his aunt is everywhere telling of the great might of the new Divinity; she alone,[54] out of so many sisters, is free from sorrow, except that which her sisters have occasioned. Juno beholds her, having her soul elevated with her {children}, and her alliance with Athamas, and the God her foster-child. She cannot brook this, and says to herself, "Was the child of a concubine able to transform the Mæonian sailors, and to overwhelm them in the sea, and to give the entrails of the son to be torn to pieces by his mother, and to cover the three daughters of Minyas with newly formed wings? Shall Juno be able to do nothing but lament these griefs unrevenged? And is that sufficient for me? Is this my only power? He himself instructs me what to do. It is right to be taught even by an enemy. And what madness can do, he shows enough, and more than enough, by the slaughter of Pentheus. Why should not Ino, {too}, be goaded by madness, and submit to an example kindred to those of her sisters?"

There is a shelving path, shaded with dismal yew, which leads through profound silence to the infernal abodes. {Here} languid Styx exhales vapors; and the new-made ghosts descend this way, and phantoms when they have enjoyed[55] funeral rites. Horror and winter possess these dreary regions far and wide, and the ghosts newly arrived know not where the way is that leads to the Stygian city, {or} where is the dismal palace of the black Pluto. The wide city has a thousand passages, and gates open on every side. And as the sea {receives} the rivers for the whole earth, so does that spot[56] receive all the souls; nor is it {too} little for any {amount of} people, nor does it perceive the crowd to increase. The shades wander about, bloodless, without body and bones; and some throng the place of judgment; some the abode of the infernal prince. Some pursue various callings, in imitation of their former life; their own punishment confines others.

Juno, the daughter of Saturn, leaving her celestial habitation, submits to go thither, so much does she give way to hatred and to anger. Soon as she has entered there, and the threshold groans, pressed by her sacred body, Cerberus raises his threefold mouth, and utters triple barkings at the same moment. She summons the Sisters,[57] begotten of Night, terrible and

implacable Goddesses. They are sitting before the doors of the prison shut close with adamant, and are combing black vipers from their hair. Soon as they recognize her amid the shades of darkness, {these} Deities arise. This place is called “the accursed.” Tityus[58] is giving his entrails to be mangled, and is stretched over nine acres. By thee, Tantalus,[59] no waters are reached, and the tree which overhangs thee, starts away. Sisyphus,[60] thou art either catching or thou art pushing on the stone destined to fall again. Ixion[61] is whirled round, and both follows and flies from himself. The granddaughters, too, of Belus, who dared to plot the destruction of their cousins, are everlastingly taking up the water which they lose. After the daughter of Saturn has beheld all these with a stern look, and Ixion before all; again, after him, looking upon Sisyphus, she says,

“Why does he alone, of {all} the brothers, suffer eternal punishment? and why does a rich palace contain the proud Athamas, who, with his wife, has ever despised me?” And {then} she explains the cause of her hatred and of her coming, and what it is she desires. What she desires is, that the palace of Cadmus shall not stand, and that the Sister {Furies} shall involve Athamas in crime. She mingles together promises, commands, and entreaties, and solicits the Goddesses. When Juno has thus spoken, Tisiphone, with her locks dishevelled as they are, shakes them, and throws back from her face the snakes crawling over it; and thus she says: “There is no need of a long preamble; whatever thou commandest, consider it as done: leave these hateful realms, and betake thyself to the air of a better heaven.”

Juno returns, overjoyed; and, preparing to enter heaven, Iris,[62] the daughter of Thaumas, purifies her by sprinkling water. Nor is there any delay; the persecuting Tisiphone[63] takes a torch reeking with gore, and puts on a cloak red with fluid blood, and is girt with twisted snakes, and {then} goes forth from her abode. Mourning attends her as she goes, and Fright, and Terror, and Madness with quivering features. She {now} reaches the threshold; the Æolian door-posts are said to have shaken, and paleness tints the maple door; the Sun, too, flies from the place. His wife is terrified at these prodigies; Athamas, {too}, is alarmed, and they are {both} preparing to leave the house. The baneful Erinnys stands in the way, and blocks up the passage; and extending her arms twisted round with folds of vipers, she shakes her locks; the snakes {thus} moved, emit a sound. Some lying about her shoulders, some gliding around her temples, send forth hissings and vomit forth corruption, and dart forth their tongues. Then she tears away two snakes from the middle of her hair, which, with pestilential hand, she throws against them. But these creep along the breasts of Ino and Athamas, and inspire them with direful intent. Nor do they inflict any wounds upon their limbs; it is the mind that feels the direful stroke. She had brought, too, with her a monstrous composition of liquid poison, the foam of the mouth of Cerberus, and the venom of Echidna;[64] and purposeless aberrations, and the forgetfulness of a darkened understanding, and crime, and tears, and rage, and the love of murder. All these were

blended together; and, mingled with fresh blood she had boiled them in a hollow vessel of brass, stirred about with {a stalk of} green hemlock. And while they are trembling, she throws the maddening poison into the breasts of them both, and moves their inmost vitals. Then repeatedly waving her torch in the same circle, she swiftly follows up the flames {thus} excited with {fresh} flames. Thus triumphant, and having executed her commands, she returns to the empty realms of the great Pluto; and she ungirds the snakes which she had put on. Immediately the son of Æolus, filled with rage, cries out, in the midst of his palace, "Ho! companions, spread your nets in this wood; for here a lioness was just now beheld by me with two young ones." And, in his madness, he follows the footsteps of his wife, as though of a wild beast; and he snatches Learchus, smiling and stretching forth his little arms from the bosom of his mother, and three or four times he whirls him round in the air like a sling, and, frenzied, he dashes in pieces[65] the bones of the infant against the hard stones. Then, at last, the mother being roused (whether it was grief that caused it, or whether the power of the poison spread {over her}), yells aloud, and runs away distracted, with dishevelled hair; and carrying thee, Melicerta, a little {child}, in her bare arms, she cries aloud "Evoë, Bacche." At the name of Bacchus, Juno smiles, and says, "May thy foster-child[66] do thee this service."

There is a rock[67] that hangs over the sea; the lowest part is worn hollow by the waves, and defends the waters covered {thereby} from the rain. The summit is rugged, and stretches out its brow over the open sea. This Ino climbs (madness gives her strength), and, restrained by no fear, she casts herself and her burden[68] into the deep; the water, struck {by her fall}, is white with foam. But Venus, pitying the misfortunes of her guiltless granddaughter,[69] in soothing words thus addresses her uncle: "O Neptune, thou God of the waters, to whom fell a power next after the {empire of} heaven, great things indeed do I request; but do thou take compassion on my kindred, whom thou seest being tossed upon the boundless Ionian sea;[70] and add them to thy Deities. I have {surely} some interest with the sea, if, indeed, I once was foam formed in the hollowed deep, and my Grecian name is derived[71] from that." Neptune yields to her request; and takes away from them {all} that is mortal, and gives them a venerable majesty; and alters both their name and their shape, and calls Palæmon a Divinity,[72] together with his mother Leucothoë.

Her Sidonian attendants,[73] so far as they could, tracing the prints of their feet, saw the last of them on the edge of the rock; and thinking that there was no doubt of their death, they lamented the house of Cadmus, with their hands tearing their hair and their garments; and they threw the odium on the Goddess, as being unjust and too severe against the concubine. Juno could not endure their reproaches, and said, "I will make you yourselves tremendous memorials of my displeasure." Confirmation followed her words. For the one who had been especially attached, said, "I will follow the queen into the sea;" and about to give the leap, she could not be moved

any way, and adhering to the rock, {there} she stuck fast. Another, while she was attempting to beat her breast with the accustomed blows, perceived in the attempt that her arms had become stiff. One, as by chance she had extended her hands over the waters of the sea, becoming a rock, held out her hands in those same waters. You might see the fingers of another suddenly hardened in her hair, as she was tearing her locks seized on the top of her head. In whatever posture each was found {at the beginning of the change}, in the same she remained. Some became birds; which, sprung from Ismenus, skim along the surface of the waves in those seas, with the wings which they have assumed.

[Footnote 54: *She alone*.--Ver. 419. This was Ino, whose only sorrows hitherto had been caused by the calamities which befell her sisters and their offspring: Semele having died a shocking death, Autonoë having seen her son Actæon changed into a stag, and then devoured by his dogs, and Agave having assisted in tearing to pieces her own son Pentheus.]

[Footnote 55: *When they have enjoyed*.--Ver. 435. The spirits whose bodies had not received the rites of burial, we learn from Homer and Virgil, were not allowed to pass the river Styx, but wandered on its banks for a hundred years.]

[Footnote 56: *So does that spot*.--Ver. 441. That is to say, whatever number of ghosts arrives there, it receives them all with ease, and is not sensible of the increase of number; either because the place itself is of such immense extent, or because the souls of the dead do not occupy space.]

[Footnote 57: *The Sisters*.--Ver. 450. These were the Furies, fabled to be the daughters of Night and Acheron. They were three in number, Tisiphone, Alecto, and Megæra, and were supposed to be the avengers of crime and wickedness.]

[Footnote 58: *Tityus*.--Ver. 456. Tityus was the son of Jupiter and Elara. On account of his enormous size, the poets sometimes style him a son of the earth. Attempting to commit violence upon Latona, he was slain by the arrows of Apollo, and precipitated to the infernal regions, where he was condemned to have his liver constantly devoured by a vulture, and then renewed, to perpetuate his torments.]

[Footnote 59: *Tantalus*.--Ver. 457. He was the son of Jupiter, by the Nymph Plote. The crime for which he was punished is differently related by the poets. Some say, that he divulged the secrets of the Gods, that had been entrusted to him; while others relate, that at an entertainment which he gave to the Deities, he caused his own son, Pelops, to be served up, on which Ceres inadvertently ate his shoulder. He was doomed to suffer intense hunger and thirst, amid provisions of all kinds within his reach, which perpetually receded from him.]

[Footnote 60: *Sisyphus*.--Ver. 459. Sisyphus, the son of Æolus, was a daring robber, who infested Attica. He was slain by Theseus; and being sent to the infernal regions, was condemned to the punishment of rolling a great stone to the top of a mountain, which it had no sooner reached than it fell down again, and renewed his labor.]

[Footnote 61: *Ixion*.--Ver. 461. Being advanced by Jupiter to heaven, he presumed to make an attempt on Juno. Jupiter, to deceive him, formed a cloud in her shape, on which Ixion begot the Centaurs. He was cast into Tartarus, and was there fastened to a wheel, which turned round incessantly.]

[Footnote 62: *Iris*.--Ver. 480. Iris was the daughter of Thaumas and Electra, and the messenger of Juno. She was the Goddess of the Rainbow.]

[Footnote 63: *Tisiphone*.--Ver. 481. Clarke translates 'Tisiphone importuna,' 'the plaguy Tisiphone.']

[Footnote 64: *Echidna*.--Ver. 501. This word properly means, 'a female viper;' but it here refers to the Hydra, or dragon of the marsh of Lerna, which Hercules slew. It was fabled to be partly a woman, and partly a serpent, and to have been begotten by Typhon. According to some accounts, this monster had seven heads.]

[Footnote 65: *Dashes in pieces*.--Ver. 519. Euripides and Hyginus relate, that Athamas slew his son while hunting; and Apollodorus says, that he mistook him for a stag.]

[Footnote 66: *Thy foster-child*.--Ver. 524. Bacchus was the foster-child of Ino, who was the sister of his mother Semele. The remaining portion of the story of Ino and Melicerta is again related by Ovid in the sixth book of the Fasti.]

[Footnote 67: *There is a rock*.--Ver. 525. Pausanias calls this the Molarian rock, and says, that it was one of the Scironian rocks, near Megara, in Attica. It was a branch of the Geranian mountain.]

[Footnote 68: *And her burden*.--Ver. 530. This was her son Melicerta, who, according to Pausanias, was received by dolphins, and was landed by them on the isthmus of Corinth.]

[Footnote 69: *Guiltless granddaughter*.--Ver. 531. Venus was the grandmother of Ino, inasmuch as Hermione, or Harmonia, the wife of Cadmus, was the daughter of Mars and Venus.]

[Footnote 70: *Boundless Ionian sea*.--Ver. 535. The Ionian sea must be merely mentioned here as a general name for the broad expanse of waters, of which the Saronic gulf, into which the Molarian rock projected, formed part. Ovid may, however, mean to say that Ino threw herself

from some rock in the Ionian sea, and not from the Molarian rock; following, probably, the account of some other writer, whose works are lost.]

[Footnote 71: *Grecian name is derived*.--Ver. 538. Venus was called Aphrodite, by the Greeks, from ἄφρος, 'the foam of the sea,' from which she was said to have sprung.]

[Footnote 72: *A Divinity*.--Ver. 542. Ino and Melicerta were worshipped as Divinities both in Greece and at Rome.]

[Footnote 73: *Sidonian attendants*.--Ver. 543. The Theban matrons are meant, who had married the companions of Cadmus that accompanied him from Phœnices.]

## Riley's Explanation

The story of Ino, Athamas, and Melicerta appears to have been based upon historical facts, as we are informed by Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Pausanias.

Athamas, the son of Æolus, and great-grandson of Deucalion, having, on the death of Themisto, his first wife, married Ino, the daughter of Cadmus, divorced her soon afterwards, to marry Nephele, by whom he had Helle and Phryxus. She having been divorced in her turn, he took Ino back again, and by her had Learchus and Melicerta. Ino, not being able to endure the presence of the children of Nephele, endeavored to destroy them. The city of Thebes being at that time afflicted with famine, which was said to have been caused by Ino, who ordered the seed to be parched before it was sown, Athamas ordered the oracle of Delphi to be consulted. The priests, either having been bribed, or the messengers having been corrupted, word was brought, that, to remove this affliction, the children of Nephele must be sacrificed.

Phryxus being warned of the designs of his stepmother, embarked in a ship, with his sister Helle, and sailed for Colchis, where he met with a kind reception from his kinsman Æetes. The young princess, however, either becoming sea-sick, and leaning over the bulwarks of the vessel, fell overboard and was drowned, or died a natural death in the passage of the Hellespont, to which she gave its name from that circumstance. Athamas, having discovered the deceitful conduct of Ino, in his rage killed her son Learchus, and sought her, for the purpose of sacrificing her to his vengeance. To avoid his fury, she fled with her son Melicerta, and, being pursued, threw herself from a rock into the sea. To console her relatives, the story was probably invented, that the Gods had changed Ino and Melicerta into Sea Deities, under the names of Leucothoë and Palæmon. Melicerta was afterwards worshipped in the Isle of Tenedos, where children were offered to him in sacrifice. In his honor, Glaucus established the Isthmian games, which were celebrated for many ages at Corinth; and, being interrupted for a time, were revived by Theseus, in honor of Neptune. Leucothoë was also worshipped at Rome, and the Roman women used to offer up their

vows to her for their brothers' children, not daring to supplicate the Goddess for their own, because she had been unfortunate in hers. This Ovid tells us in the Sixth Book of the Fasti. The Romans gave the name of Matuta to Ino, and Melicerta, or Palæmon, was called Portunus.

The circumstance mentioned by Ovid, that some of Ino's attendants were changed into birds, and others into rocks, is, perhaps, only a poetical method of saying that some of her attendants escaped, while others perished with her.

## Book IV, Fable VIII (lines 563–603)

*The misfortunes of his family oblige Cadmus to leave Thebes, and to retire with his wife Hermione to Illyria, where they are changed into serpents.*

The son of Agenor knows not that his daughter and his little grandson are {now} Deities of the sea. Forced by sorrow, and a succession of calamities, and the prodigies which, many in number, he had beheld, the founder flies from his city, as though the {ill}-luck of the spot, and not his own, pressed {hard} upon him, and driven, in a long series of wandering, he reaches the coast of Illyria, with his exiled wife. And now, loaded with woes and with years, while they are reflecting on the first disasters of their house, and in their discourse are recounting their misfortunes, Cadmus says, “Was that dragon a sacred one, that was pierced by my spear, at the time when, setting out from Sidon, I sowed the teeth of the dragon in the ground, a seed {till then} unknown? If the care of the Gods avenges this with resentment so unerring, I pray that I myself, as a serpent, may be lengthened out into an extended belly.” {Thus} he says; and, as a serpent, he is lengthened out into an extended belly, and perceives scales growing on his hardened skin, and his black body become speckled with azure spots; and he falls flat on his breast, and his legs, joined into one, taper out by degrees into a thin round point. His arms are still remaining; those arms which remain he stretches out; and, as the tears are flowing down his face, still that of a man, he says, “Come hither, wife, come hither, most unhappy one, and, while something of me yet remains, touch me; and take my hand, while it is {still} a hand, {and} while I am not a serpent all over.” He, indeed, desires to say more, but, on a sudden, his tongue is divided into two parts. Nor are words in his power when he offers {to speak}; and as often as he attempts to utter any complaints, he makes a hissing: this is the voice that Nature leaves him. His wife, smiting her naked breast with her hand, cries aloud, “Stay, Cadmus! and deliver thyself, unhappy one, from this monstrous form. Cadmus, what means this? Where are thy feet? where are both thy shoulders and thy hands? where is thy color and thy form, and, while I speak, {where} all else {besides}? Why do ye not, celestial Gods, turn me as well into a similar serpent?” {Thus} she spoke; he licked the face of his wife, and crept into her dear bosom, as though he recognized her; and gave her embraces, and reached her well-known neck.

Whoever is by, (some attendants are present), is alarmed; but the crested snakes soothe them with their slippery necks, and suddenly they are two {serpents}, and in joined folds they creep along, until they enter the covert of an adjacent grove. Now, too, do they neither shun mankind, nor hurt them with wounds, and the gentle serpents keep in mind what once they were.

## Riley's Explanation

After Cadmus had reigned at Thebes many years, a conspiracy was formed against him. Being driven from the throne, and his grandson Pentheus assuming the crown, he and his wife Hermione retired into Illyria, where, as Apollodorus says, he commanded the Illyrian army, and at length was chosen king: on his death, the story here related by Ovid was invented. It is possible that it may have been based on the following grounds:--

The Phœnicians were anciently called 'Achivi,' which name they still retained after their establishment in Greece. 'Chiva' being also the Hebrew, and perhaps Phœnician word for 'a serpent,' the Greeks, probably in reference to the Phœnician origin of Cadmus, reported after his death, that he and his wife were serpents; and in time, that transformation may have been stated to have happened at the end of his life. According to Aulus Gellius, the ancient inhabitants of Illyria had two eyelids to each eye, and with their looks, when angered, they were able to kill those whom they beheld stedfastly. The Greeks hence called them serpents and basilisks; and, it is not unlikely, that when Cadmus retired among them, they said that he had become one of the Illyrians, otherwise a dragon, or a serpent. All the ancient writers who mention his history agree that Cadmus really did retire into Illyria, where he first assisted the Enchelians in their war against the Illyrians. The latter were defeated, and, to obtain a peace from the Enchelians, they gave the crown to Cadmus; to which, on his death, his son Illyrus succeeded. The historian Christodorus, quoted by Pausanias, says that he built the city of Nygnis, in the country of the Enchelians.

Some writers have supposed, upon the authority of Euhemerus as quoted by Eusebius that Cadmus was not the son of Agenor, but was one of his officers, who eloped thence with Hermione, a singing girl. Others suppose that Cadmus is not really a proper name, but that it signifies a 'leader,' or 'conductor;' and that he received the name from leading a colony into Greece. Bochart says that he was called Cadmus, because he came from the eastern part of Phœnicia, which is called in Scripture 'Cadmonia,' or 'oriental;' and that Hermione probably received her name from Mount Hermon.

## Book IV, Fable IX (lines 604–662)

*Perseus, the son of Jupiter and Danaë, having killed Medusa, carries her head into Africa, where the blood that runs from it produces serpents. Atlas, king of that country, terrified at the remembrance of an oracle, which had foretold that his golden fruit should be taken by one of the sons of Jupiter, not only orders him to depart, but even resorts to violence to drive him away, on which Perseus shows him the Gorgon's head, and changes him into a mountain.*

But yet their grandson, {Bacchus} gave them both a great consolation, under this change of form; whom India, subdued {by him}, worshipped {as a} God, {and} whom Achaia honored with erected temples. Acrisius the son of Abas,[74] descended of the same race,[75] alone remained, to drive him from the walls of the Argive city, and to bear arms against the God, and to believe him not to be the offspring of Jove. Neither did he think Perseus to be the offspring of Jupiter, whom Danaë had conceived in a shower of gold; but soon (so great is the power of truth) Acrisius was sorry, both that he had insulted the God, and that he had not acknowledged his grandson. The one was now placed in heaven, while the other, bearing the memorable spoil of the viperous monster, cut the yielding air with hissing wings; and while the conqueror was hovering over the Libyan sands, bloody drops, from the Gorgon's head, fell down, upon receiving {which, the} ground quickened them into various serpents. For this cause, that region is filled and infested with snakes.

Carried thence, by the fitful winds, through boundless space, he is borne now here, now there, just like a watery cloud, and, from the lofty sky, looks down upon the earth, removed afar; and he flies over the whole world. Three times he saw the cold Bears, thrice did he see the claws of the Crab; ofttimes he was borne to the West, many a time to the East. And now, the day declining, afraid to trust himself to the night, he stopped in the Western part of the world, in the kingdom of Atlas; and {there} he sought a little rest, until Lucifer should usher forth the fires of Aurora, Aurora, the chariot of the day. Here was Atlas, the son of Iapetus, surpassing all men in the vastness of his body. Under this king was the extremity of the earth, and the sea which holds its waters under the panting horses of the Sun, and receives the wearied chariot. For him, a thousand flocks, and as many herds, wandered over the pastures, and no neighboring places disturbed the land. Leaves of the trees, shining with radiant gold, covered branches of gold, {and} apples of gold. "My friend," said Perseus to him, "if the glory of a noble race influences thee, Jupiter is the author of my descent; or if thou art an admirer of exploits, thou wilt admire mine. I beg of thee hospitality, and a resting place." The other was mindful of an ancient oracle. The Parnassian Themis had given this response: "A time will come, Atlas, when thy tree shall be stripped of its gold, and a son of Jove shall have the honor of the prize." Dreading this, Atlas had

enclosed his orchard with solid walls, and had given it to be kept by a huge dragon;[76] and expelled all strangers from his territories. {To Perseus}, too, he says, “Far hence begone, lest the glory of the exploits, to which thou falsely pretendest, and Jupiter as well, be far from protecting thee.” He adds violence as well to his threats, and tries to drive him from his doors, as he hesitates and mingles resolute words with persuasive ones. Inferior in strength (for who could be a match for Atlas in strength?), he says “Since my friendship is of so little value to thee, accept {this} present;” and then, turning his face away, he exposes on the left side the horrible features of Medusa. Atlas, great as he is, becomes a mountain. Now his beard and his hair are changed into woods; his shoulders and his hands become mountain ridges, and what was formerly his head, is the summit on the top of the mountain. His bones become stones; then, enlarged on every side, he grows to an immense height (so you willed it, ye Gods), and the whole heaven, with so many stars, rests upon him.

[Footnote 74: *Son of Abas*.--Ver. 608. Acrisius was the son of Abas, king of Argos. He was the father of Danaë, by whom Jupiter was the father of Perseus.]

[Footnote 75: *Of the same race*.--Ver. 607. Some suppose that by this it is meant that as Belus, the father of Abas, and grandfather of Acrisius, was the son of Jupiter, who was also the father of Bacchus, the latter and Acrisius were consequently related.]

[Footnote 76: *A huge dragon*.--Ver. 647. The name of the dragon was Ladon.]

## Riley's Explanation

The story of the seduction of Danaë, the mother of Perseus, by Jupiter, in the form of a shower of gold, has been thus explained by some of the ancient writers. Acrisius, hearing of a prediction that Danaë, his daughter, should bring forth a child that would kill him, caused her to be shut in a tower with brazen gates, or, according to some, in a subterraneous chamber, covered with plates of that metal; which place, according to Pausanias, remained till the time of Perilaus, the king of Argos, by whom it was destroyed. The precautions of Acrisius were, however, made unavailing by his brother Prœtus; who, falling in love with his niece, corrupted the guards with gold, and gained admission into the tower. Danaë, being delivered of Perseus, her father caused them to be exposed in a boat to the mercy of the waves. Being cast on shore near Seriphus, the king, Polydectes, gave them a hospitable reception, and took care of the education of Perseus.

Diodorus Siculus says that the Gorgons were female warriors, who inhabited the neighborhood of Lake Tritonis, in Libya. Pausanias explains the story of Medusa, by saying that she ruled the people in that neighborhood, and laid waste the lands of the nations in her vicinity. Perseus, having fled, with some companions, from Peloponnesus, surprised her by night, and killed her, together with her escort. The next morning, the beauty of her face appeared so remarkable that

he cut it off, and afterwards took it with him to Greece, to show it to the people, who could not look on it without being struck with astonishment. On this explanation we may remark, that if it is true, Perseus must have had more skill than the surgeons of our day, in being able to preserve the beauty of the features so long after death.

Again, many of the ancient historians, with Pliny, Athenæus, and Solinus, think that the Gorgons were wild women of a savage nature, living in caves and forests, who, falling on wayfarers, committed dreadful atrocities. Palæphatus and Fulgentius think that the Gorgons really were three young women, possessed of great wealth, which they employed in a very careful manner; Phorcus, their father, having left them three islands, and a golden statue of Minerva, which they placed in their common treasury. They had one minister in common for the management of their affairs, who used to go for that purpose from one island to another, whence arose the story that they had but one eye, and that they lent it to one another alternately. Perseus, a fugitive from Argos, hearing of the golden statue, determined to obtain it; and with that view, seized their minister, or, in the allegorical language of the poets, took their eye away from them. He then sent them word, that if they would give him the statue, he would deliver up his captive, and threatened, in case of refusal, to put him to death. Stheno and Euryale consented to this; but Medusa resisting, she was killed by Perseus. Upon his obtaining the statue, which was called the Gorgon, or Gorgonian, he broke it in pieces, and placed the head on the prow of his ship. As the sight of this, and the fame of the exploits of Perseus, spread terror everywhere, and caused passive submission to him, the fable originated, that with Medusa's head he turned his enemies into stone. Landing in the Isle of Seriphus, the king fled, with all his subjects; and, on entering the chief city, finding nothing but the bare stones there, he caused the report to be spread, that he had petrified the inhabitants.

Servius, in his Commentary on the Æneid, quotes an opinion of Ammonius Serenus, that the Gorgons were young women of such beauty as to make a great impression on all that saw them; for which reason they were said to turn them into statues. Le Clerc thinks that the story bears reference to a voyage which the Phœnicians had made in ancient times to the coast of Africa, whence they brought a great number of horses; and that the name 'Perseus' comes from the Phœnician word 'pharscha,' 'a horseman;' while the horse Pegasus was so called from the Phœnician 'pagsous,' 'a bridled horse,' according to the conjecture of Bochart. Alexander of Myndus, a historian quoted by Athenæus, says that Libya had an animal which the natives called 'gorgon;' that it resembled a sheep, and with its breath killed all those who approached it; that a tuft of hair fell over its eyes, which was so heavy as to be removed with difficulty, for the purpose of seeing the objects around it; but that when it was removed, by its looks it struck dead any person whom it gazed upon. He says, that in the war with Jugurtha, some of the soldiers of

Marius were thus slain by it, and that it was at last killed by means of arrows discharged from a great distance.

The Gorgons are said to have inhabited the Gorgades, islands in the Æthiopian Sea, the chief of which was called Cerna, according to Diodorus and Palæphatus. It is not improbable that the Cape Verde Islands were called by this name. The fable of the transformation of Atlas into the mountain of that name may possibly have been based upon the simple fact, that Perseus killed him in the neighborhood of that range, from which circumstance it derived the name which it has borne ever since. The golden apples, which Atlas guarded with so much care, were probably either gold mines, which Atlas had discovered in the mountains of his country, and had secured with armed men and watchful dogs; or sheep, whose fleeces were extremely valuable for their fineness; or else oranges and lemons, and other fruits peculiar to very hot climates, for the production of which the poets especially remarked the country of Tingitana (the modern Tangier), as being very celebrated.

## Book IV, Fable X (lines 663–803)

*Perseus, after his victory over Atlas, and his change into a mountain, arrives in Æthiopia, at the time when Andromeda is exposed to be devoured by a monster. He kills it, and hides the Gorgon's head under the sand, covered with sea-weed and plants; which are immediately turned into coral. He then renders thanks to the Gods for his victory, and marries Andromeda. At the marriage feast he relates the manner in which he had killed Medusa; and the reason why Minerva had changed her hair into serpents.*

The grandson of Hippotas[77] had shut up the winds in their eternal prison; and Lucifer, who reminds {men} of their work, was risen in the lofty sky, in all his splendor. Resuming his wings, {Perseus} binds his feet with them on either side, and is girt with his crooked weapon, and cleaves the liquid air with his winged ankles. Nations innumerable being left behind, around and below, he beholds the people of the Æthiopians and the lands of Cepheus. There the unjust Ammon[78] had ordered the innocent Andromeda to suffer punishment for her mother's tongue.[79]

Soon as the descendant of Abas beheld her, with her arms bound to the hard rock, but that the light breeze was moving her hair, and her eyes were running with warm[80] tears, he would have thought her to be a work of marble. Unconsciously he takes fire, and is astonished; captivated with the appearance of her beauty, {thus} beheld, he almost forgets to wave his wings in the air. When he has lighted {on the ground}, he says, "O thou, undeserving of these chains, but {rather} of those by which anxious lovers are mutually united, disclose to me, inquiring both the name of this land and of thyself, and why thou wearest {these} chains." At first she is silent, and, a virgin, she does not dare address[81] a man; and with her hands she would have concealed her blushing features, if she had not been bound; her eyes, 'twas {all} she could do, she filled with gushing tears. Upon his often urging her, lest she should seem unwilling to confess her offence, she told the name both of her country and herself, and how great had been the confidence of her mother in her beauty. All not yet being told, the waves roared, and a monster approaching,[82] appeared with its head raised out of the boundless ocean, and covered the wide expanse with its breast. The virgin shrieks aloud; her mournful father, and her distracted mother, are there, both wretched, but the latter more justly so. Nor do they bring her any help with them, but tears suitable to the occasion, and lamentations, and they cling round her body, bound {to the rock}.

Then thus the stranger says: "Plenty of time will be left for your tears {hereafter}, the season for giving aid is {but} short. If I were to demand her {in marriage}, I, Perseus, the son of Jove, and of her whom, in prison, Jove embraced in the impregnating {shower of} gold, Perseus, the

conqueror of the Gorgon with her serpent locks, and who has dared, on waving wings, to move through the ætherial air, I should surely be preferred before all as your son-in-law. To so many recommendations I endeavor to add merit (if only the Deities favor me). I {only} stipulate that she may be mine, {if} preserved by my valor." Her parents embrace the condition, (for who could hesitate?) and they entreat {his aid}, and promise as well, the kingdom as a dowry. Behold! as a ship onward speeding, with the beak fixed {in its prow}, plows the waters, impelled by the perspiring arms[83] of youths; so the monster, moving the waves by the impulse of its breast, was as far distant from the rocks, as {that distance} in the mid space of air, which a Balearic string can pass with the whirled plummet of lead; when suddenly the youth, spurning the earth with his feet, rose on high into the clouds. As the shadow of the hero was seen on the surface of the sea, the monster vented its fury on the shadow {so} beheld. And as the bird of Jupiter,[84] when he has espied on the silent plain a serpent exposing its livid back to the sun, seizes it behind; and lest it should turn upon him its raging mouth, fixes his greedy talons in its scaly neck; so did the winged {hero}, in his rapid flight through the yielding {air}, press the back of the monster, and the descendant of Inachus thrust his sword up to the very hilt in its right shoulder, as it roared aloud.

Tortured by the grievous wound, it sometimes raises itself aloft in the air, sometimes it plunges beneath the waves, sometimes it wheels about, just like a savage boar, which a pack of hounds in full cry around him affrights. With swift wings he avoids the eager bites[85] {of the monster}, and, with his crooked sword, one while wounds its back covered with hollow shells, where it is exposed, at another time the ribs of its sides, and now, where its tapering tail terminates in {that of} a fish. The monster vomits forth from its mouth streams mingled with red blood; its wings, {made} heavy {by it}, are wet with the spray. Perseus, not daring any longer to trust himself on his dripping pinions,[86] beholds a rock, which with its highest top projects from the waters {when} becalmed, {but is now} covered by the troubled sea. Resting on that, and clinging to the upper ridge[87] of the rock with his left hand, three or four times he thrusts his sword through its entrails aimed at {by him}. A shout, with applause, fills the shores and the lofty abodes of the Gods. Cassiope and Cepheus, the father, rejoice, and salute him as their son-in-law, and confess that he is the support and the preserver of their house.

Released from her chains, the virgin walks along, both the reward and the cause of his labors. He himself washes his victorious hands in water taken {from the sea}; and that it may not injure the snake-bearing head with the bare sand, he softens the ground with leaves; and strews some weeds produced beneath the sea, and lays upon them the face of Medusa, the daughter of Phorcys. The fresh weeds, being still alive, imbibed the poison of the monster in their spongy pith, and hardened by its touch; and felt an unwonted stiffness in their branches and their leaves. But the Nymphs of the sea attempt the wondrous feat on many {other} weeds, and are

pleased at the same result; and raise seed again from them scattered on the waves. Even now the same nature remains in the coral, that it receives hardness from contact with the air; and what was a plant in the sea, out of the sea becomes stone.

To three Deities he erects as many altars of turf; the left one to Mercury; the right to thee, warlike Virgin; the altar of Jove is in the middle. A cow is sacrificed to Minerva; a calf to the wing-footed {God, and} a bull to thee, greatest of the Deities. Forthwith he takes Andromeda, and the reward of an achievement so great, without any dowry. Hymenæus and Cupid wave their torches before them; the fires are heaped with abundant perfumes. Garlands, too, are hanging from the houses: flageolets and lyres, and pipes, and songs resound, the happy tokens of a joyous mind. The folding-doors thrown open, the entire gilded halls are displayed, and the nobles of king Cepheus sit down at a feast furnished with splendid preparations. After they have done the feast, and have cheered their minds with the gifts of the generous Bacchus, the grandson of Abas inquires the customs and habits of the country. Immediately one {of them}, Lyncides, tells him, on his inquiring, the manners and habits of the inhabitants. Soon as he had told him these things, he said, “Now, most valiant Perseus, tell us, I beseech thee, with how great valor and by what arts thou didst cut off the head all hairy with serpents.” The descendant of Abas tells them that there is a spot situate beneath cold Atlas, safe in its bulwark of a solid mass; that, in the entrance of this, dwelt the two sisters, the daughters of Phorcys, who shared the use of a single eye; that he stealthily, by sly craft, while it was being handed over,[88] obtained possession of this by putting his hand in the way; and that through rocks far remote, and pathless, and bristling with woods on their craggy sides, he had arrived at the abodes of the Gorgons, and saw everywhere, along the fields and the roads, statues of men and wild beasts turned into stone, from their {natural form}, at the sight of Medusa; yet that he himself, from the reflection on the brass of the shield[89] which his left hand bore, beheld the visage of the horrible Medusa; and that, while a sound sleep held her and her serpents {entranced}, he took the head from off the neck; and that Pegasus and his brother,[90] fleet with wings, were produced from the blood of {her}, their mother. He added, too, the dangers of his lengthened journey, {themselves} no fiction;[91] what seas, what lands he had seen beneath him from on high, and what stars he had reached with his waving wings.

Yet, before it was expected,[92] he was silent; {whereupon} one of the nobles rejoined, inquiring why she alone, of the sisters, wore snakes mingled alternately with her hair. “Stranger,” said he, “since thou inquirest on a matter worthy to be related, hear the cause of the thing thou inquirest after. She was the most famed for her beauty, and the coveted hope of many wooers; nor, in the whole of her person, was any part more worthy of notice than her hair: I have met {with some} who said they had seen it. The sovereign of the sea is said to have deflowered her in the Temple of Minerva. The daughter of Jove turned away, and covered her chaste eyes with her shield. And

that this might not be unpunished, she changed the hair of the Gorgon into hideous snakes. Now, too, that she may alarm her surprised foes with terror, she bears in front upon her breast, those snakes which she {thus} produced."

[Footnote 77: *Hippotas*.--Ver. 663. Æolus, the God of the Winds, was the son of Jupiter, by Acesta, the daughter of Hippotas.]

[Footnote 78: *Ammon*.--Ver. 671. Jupiter, with the surname of Ammon, had a temple in the deserts of Libya, where he was worshipped under the shape of a ram; a form which he was supposed to have assumed, when, in common with the other Deities, he fled from the attacks of the Giants. The oracle of Jupiter Ammon being consulted relative to the sea monster, which Neptune, at the request of the Nereids, had sent against the Ethiopians, answered that Andromeda must be exposed to be devoured by it; which Ovid here, not without reason, calls an unjust demand.]

[Footnote 79: *Mother's tongue*.--Ver. 670. Cassiope, the mother of Andromeda, had dared to compare her own beauty with that of the Nereids. Cepheus, the son of Phœnix, was the father of Andromeda.]

[Footnote 80: *Warm*.--Ver. 674. 'Tepido,' 'warm,' is decidedly preferable here to 'trepido,' 'trembling.']

[Footnote 81: *Dare address*.--Ver. 682. Heinsius thinks that 'appellare' here is not the correct reading; and suggests 'aspectare,' which seems to be more consistent with the sense of the passage, which would then be, 'and does not dare to look down upon the hero.']

[Footnote 82: *Monster approaching*.--Ver. 689. Pliny the Elder and Solinus tell us that the bones of this monster were afterwards brought from Joppa, a seaport of Judæa, to Rome, and that the skeleton was forty feet in length, and the spinal bone was six feet in circumference.]

[Footnote 83: *The perspiring arms*.--Ver. 707. 'Juvenum sudantibus acta lacertis' is translated by Clarke, 'forced forward by the arms of sweating young fellows.']

[Footnote 84: *Bird of Jupiter*.--Ver. 714. The eagle was the bird sacred to Jove. The larger kinds of birds which afforded auguries from their mode of flight, were called 'præpetes.']

[Footnote 85: *Avoids the eager bites*.--Ver. 723. Clarke translates this line, 'He avoids the monster's eager snaps with his swift wings.']

[Footnote 86: *His dripping pinions*.--Ver. 730. 'Talaria' were either wings fitted to the ankles, or shoes having such wings fastened to them; they were supposed to be usually worn by Mercury.]

[Footnote 87: *Clinging to the upper ridge*.--Ver. 733. 'Tenens juga prima sinistra' is rendered by Clarke, 'seizing the tip-top of it with his left hand.']

[Footnote 88: *Being handed over*.--Ver. 766. Of course, as they had but one eye between them, they must have both been blind while it was passing from one hand to another, so that Perseus could have had but little difficulty in effecting the theft here mentioned.]

[Footnote 89: *Brass of the shield*.--Ver. 783. This reflecting shield Perseus is said to have received from Minerva, and by virtue of it he was enabled to see without being seen. Lucian says that Minerva herself held this reflecting shield before him, and by that means afforded him the opportunity of seeing the reflection of Medusa's figure; and that Perseus, seizing her by the hair with his left hand, and keeping his eye fixed on the image reflected in the shield, took his sword in his right, and cut off her head, and then, by the aid of his wings, flew away before the other Gorgon sisters were aware of what he had done.]

[Footnote 90: *Pegasus and his brother*.--Ver. 786. Pegasus and Chrysaor were two winged horses, which were fabled to have sprung up from the blood of Medusa, when slain by Perseus.]

[Footnote 91: *Themselves no fiction*.--Ver. 787. His dangers were not false or imaginary, inasmuch as he was pursued by Sthenyo and Euryale, the sisters of Medusa, who were fabled to have wings, and claws of iron on their hands. Ovid deals a sly hit in the words 'non falsa pericula cursus,' at the tales of travellers, who, even in his day, seem to have commenced dealing in the marvellous; as, indeed, we may learn for ourselves, on turning to the pages of Herodotus, who seems to have been often imposed upon.]

[Footnote 92: *Before it was expected*.--Ver. 790. Showing thereby how delighted his audience was with his narrative.]

### Riley's Explanation

It is extremely difficult to surmise what may have given rise to many of the fabulous circumstances here narrated. It has been conjectured by some, that Pegasus and his brother Chrysaor, the two horses produced from the blood of Medusa, were really two ships in the harbor of the island where that princess was residing at the time when she was slain by Perseus; and that, on that event, they were seized by him. Perhaps they had the figure of a winged horse on the prow; from which circumstance the fable had its origin. Possibly, the story of the production of coral from the blood of Medusa may have originated in the fact, that on the defeat of the Gorgons, navigation became more safe, and, consequently, the fishing for coral more common than it had been before.

The story of the exposure of Andromeda may be founded on the fact, that she was contracted by her parents against her will to some fierce, piratical prince, who infested the adjacent seas with his depredations; and that the betrothal was made, on condition that he should allow the realms of her father, Cepheus, to be free and undisturbed; Perseus, being informed of this, slew the pirate, and Phineus having been kept in a state of inactivity through dread of the valor of Perseus, it was fabled that he had been changed into a stone. This interpretation of the story is the one suggested by Vossius.

Some writers think, that Phineus, the uncle of Andromeda, was the enemy from which she was rescued by Perseus, and who is here represented under the form of a monster; while others suggest that this monster was the name of the ship in which the pirate before mentioned was to have carried away Andromeda.

## Book V, Fable I (lines 1–242)

*While Perseus is continuing the relation of the adventures of Medusa, Phineus, to whom Andromeda has been previously promised in marriage, rushes into the palace, with his adherents, and attacks his rival. A furious combat is the consequence, in which Perseus gives signal proofs of his valor. At length, perceiving himself likely to be overpowered by the number of his enemies, he shows them the head of the Gorgon; on which Phineus and his followers are turned into statues of stone. After this victory, he takes Andromeda with him to Argos, his native city, where he turns the usurper Prœtus into stone, and re-establishes his grandfather Acrisius on the throne.*

And while the hero, the son of Danaë, is relating these things in the midst of the company of the subjects of Cepheus, the royal courts are filled with a raging multitude; nor is the clamor such as celebrates a marriage-feast, but one which portends dreadful warfare. You might compare the banquet, changed into a sudden tumult, to the sea, which, when calm, the boisterous rage of the winds disturbs by raising its waves.

Foremost among these, Phineus,[1] the rash projector of the onslaught, shaking an ashen spear with a brazen point, cries, “Behold! {now}, behold! I am come, the avenger of my wife, ravished from me; neither shall thy wings nor Jupiter turned into fictitious gold, deliver thee from me.” As he is endeavoring to hurl {his lance}, Cepheus cries out, “What art thou doing? What fancy, my brother, impels thee, in thy madness, to this crime? Is this the due acknowledgment to return for deserts so great? Dost thou repay the life of her {thus} preserved, with this reward? ’Twas not Perseus, if thou wouldst know the truth, that took her away from thee; but the incensed majesty of the Nereids, and horned Ammon, and the monster of the sea, which came to be glutted with my bowels. She was snatched from thee at that moment, at which she was to have perished; unless it is that thou dost, in thy cruelty, insist upon that very thing, that she should perish, and wilt be appeased only by my affliction. It is not enough, forsooth, that in thy presence she was bound and that thou, both her uncle and her betrothed, didst give no assistance; wilt thou be grieving, besides, that she was saved by another, and wilt thou deprive him of his reward? If this appears great to thee, thou shouldst have recovered it from the rock to which it was fastened. Now, let him who has recovered it, through whom my old age is not childless, have what he stipulated for, both by his merits and his words; and know that he was preferred not before thee, but before certain death.”

{Phineus said} nothing, on the other hand; but viewing both him and Perseus, with alternate looks, he was uncertain whether he should {first} attack the one or the other; and, having paused a short time, he vainly threw his spear, hurled with all the force that rage afforded. As it stood

fixed in the cushion,[2] then, at length, Perseus leapt off from the couch, and in his rage would have pierced the breast of his enemy with the weapon, thrown back, had not Phineus gone behind an altar, and {thus} (how unworthily!) an altar[3] protected a miscreant. However, the spear, not thrown in vain, stuck in the forehead of Rhœtus; who, after he fell, and the steel was wrenched from the skull, he {still} struggled, and besprinkled the laid tables with his blood. But then does the multitude burst forth into ungovernable rage, and hurl their weapons. Some there are, who say that Cepheus ought to die with his son-in-law; but Cepheus has gone out by the entrance of the house, calling right and good faith to witness, and the Gods of hospitality,[4] that this disturbance is made contrary to his will. The warlike Pallas comes; and with her shield protects her brother {Perseus}, and gives him courage. There was an Indian, Athis {by name},[5] whom Limnate, the daughter of the river Ganges, is believed to have brought forth beneath the glassy waters; excelling in beauty, which he improved by his rich dress; in his prime, as yet but twice eight years of age, dressed in a purple tunic, which a golden fringe bordered; a gilded necklace graced his neck, and a curved hair-pin his hair wet with myrrh. He, indeed, had been taught to hit things, although at a distance, with his hurled javelin, but {he was} more skilled at bending the bow. {Perseus} struck him even then, as he was bending with his hands the flexible horns {of a bow}, with a billet, which, placed in the middle of the altar, was smoking, and he crushed his face into his broken skull.

When the Assyrian Lycabas, who was a most attached friend of his, and no concealer of his real affection, saw him rolling his features, the objects of such praises, in his blood; after he had bewailed Athis, breathing forth his life from this cruel wound, he seized the bow which he had bent, and said, “And {now} let the contest against thee be with me; not long shalt thou exult in the fate of the youth, by which thou acquirest more hatred than praise.” All this he had not yet said, {when} the piercing weapon darted from the string, and {though} avoided, still it hung in the folds of his garment. The grandson of Acrisius turned against him his falchion,[6] {already} proved in the slaughter of Medusa, and thrust it into his breast. But he, now dying, with his eyes swimming in black night, looked around for Athis, and sank upon him, and carried to the shades the consolation of a united death. Lo! Phorbas of Syene,[7] the son of Methion, and Amphimedon, the Libyan, eager to engage in the fight, fell down, slipping in the blood with which the earth was warm, soaked on every side; as they arose the sword met them, being thrust in the ribs of the one, {and} in the throat of Phorbas. But Perseus does not attack Erithus, the son of Actor, whose weapon is a broad battle-axe, by using his sword, but he takes up, with both hands, a huge bowl,[8] standing out with figures deeply embossed, and of vast mass in its weight, and hurls it against the man. The other vomits forth red blood, and, falling on his back, beats the ground with his dying head. Then he slays Polydæmon, sprung from the blood of Semiramis, and the Caucasian Abaris, and Lycetus, the son of Sperchius,[9] and Elyces, with

unshorn locks, and Phlegias, and Clytus; and he tramples upon the heaps of the dying, which he has piled up.

But Phineus, not daring to engage hand to hand with his enemy, hurls his javelin, which accident carries against Idas, who, in vain, has declined the warfare[10] and has followed the arms of neither. He, looking at the cruel Phineus with stern eyes, says, “Since I am {thus} forced to take a side, take the enemy, Phineus, that thou hast made, and make amends for my wound with this wound.” And now, just about to return the dart drawn from his body, he falls sinking down upon his limbs void of blood. Here, too, Odytes, the next in rank among the followers of Cepheus, after the king, lies prostrate under the sword of Clymenus; Hypseus kills Protenor, {and} Lyncides Hypseus. There is, too, among them the aged Emathion, an observer of justice, and a fearer of the Gods; as his years prevent him from fighting, he engages by talking, and he condemns and utters imprecations against their accursed arms. As he clings to the altars[11] with trembling hands, Chromis cuts off his head with his sword, which straightway falls upon the altar, and there, with his dying tongue he utters words of execration, and breathes forth his soul in the midst of the fires. Upon this, two brothers, Broteas and Ammon invincible at boxing, if swords could only be conquered by boxing, fell by the hand of Phineus; Ampycus, too, the priest of Ceres, having his temples wreathed with a white fillet. Thou too, son of Iapetus, not to be employed for these services; but one who tuned the lyre, the work of peace, to thy voice, hadst been ordered to attend the banquet and festival with thy music. As thou art standing afar, and holding the unwarlike plectrum, Pettalus says, laughing, “Go sing the rest to the Stygian ghosts,” and fixes the point of the sword in his left temple. He falls, and with his dying fingers he touches once again the strings of the lyre; and in his fall he plays a mournful dirge.[12] The fierce Lycormas does not suffer him to fall unpunished; and tearing away a massive bar from the doorpost on the right, he dashes it against the bones of the middle of the neck {of Pettalus}; struck, he falls to the ground, just like a slaughtered bullock.

The Cinyphian[13] Pelates, too, was trying to tear away the oaken bar of the doorpost on the left; as he was trying, his right hand was fastened {thereto} by the spear of Corythus, the son of Marmarus, and it stood riveted to the wood. {Thus} riveted, Abas pierced his side; he did not fall, however, but dying, hung from the post, which still held fast his hand. Melaneus, too, was slain, who had followed the camp of Perseus, and Dorylas, very rich in Nasamonian land.[14] Dorylas, rich in land, than whom no one possessed it of wider extent, or received {thence} so many heaps of corn. The hurled steel stood fixed obliquely in his groin; the hurt was mortal. When the Bactrian[15] Halcyoneus, the author of the wound, beheld him sobbing forth his soul, and rolling his eyes, he said, “Take {for thine own} this {spot} of earth which thou dost press, out of so many fields,” and he left his lifeless body. The descendant of Abas, as his avenger, hurls against {Halcyoneus} the spear torn from his wound {yet} warm, which, received in the middle

of the nostrils, pierced through his neck, and projected on both sides. And while fortune is aiding his hand, he slays, with different wounds, Clytius and Clanis, born of one mother. For an ashen spear poised with a strong arm is driven through both the thighs of Clytius; with his mouth does Clanis bite the javelin. Celadon, the Mendesian,[16] falls, too; Astreus falls, born of a mother of Palestine, {but} of an uncertain father. Æthion, too, once sagacious at foreseeing things to come, {but} now deceived[17] by a false omen; and Thoactes, the armor-bearer of the king, and Agyrtes, infamous for slaying his father.

More work still remains, than what is {already} done; for it is the intention of all to overwhelm one. The conspiring troops fight on all sides, for a cause that attacks both merit and good faith. The one side, the father-in-law, attached in vain, and the new-made wife, together with her mother, encourage; and {these} fill the halls with their shrieks. But the din of arms, and the groans of those that fall, prevail; and for once, Bellona[18] is deluging the household Gods polluted with plenteous blood, and is kindling the combat anew. Phineus, and a thousand that follow Phineus, surround Perseus {alone}; darts are flying thicker than the hail of winter, on both his sides, past his eyes, and past his ears. On this, he places his shoulders against the stone of a large pillar, and, having his back secure, and facing the adverse throng, he withstands their attack. Chaonian[19] Molpeus presses on the left, Nabathæan Ethemon on the right. As a tiger, urged on by hunger, when it hears the lowings of two herds, in different valleys, knows not on which side in preference to rush out, and {yet} is eager to rush out on both; so Perseus, being in doubt whether to bear onward to the right or to the left, repulses Molpeus by a wound in the leg, which he runs through, and is contented with his flight. Nor, indeed, does Ethemon give him time, but fiercely attacks him; and, desirous to inflict a wound deep in his neck, he breaks his sword, wielded with incautious force; and against the extremity of a column which he has struck, the blade flies to pieces, and sticks in the throat of its owner; yet that blow has not power sufficient to {effect} his death. Perseus stabs him with his Cyllenian[20] falchion, trembling, and vainly extending his unarmed hands.

But when Perseus saw his valor {likely} to yield to such numbers, he said, “Since you yourselves force me to do it, I will seek assistance from an enemy: turn away your faces, if any of my friends are here;” and {then} he produced the head of the Gorgon. “{Go}, seek some one else,” said Thescelus, “for thy miracles to affect;” and, as he was preparing to hurl his deadly javelin with his hand, he stood fast in that posture, a statue of marble. Ampyx, being next him, made a pass with his sword at the breast of Lyncidas, full of daring spirit, and, while making it, his right hand became stiff, moving neither to one side nor the other. But Nileus, who had falsely boasted that he was begotten by the seven-mouthed Nile, and who had engraved on his shield its seven channels, partly in silver, partly in gold, said, “Behold, Perseus, the origin of my race; thou shalt carry to the silent shades a great consolation for thy death, that thou wast killed by one so great.”

The last part of his address was suppressed in the midst of the utterance; and you would think his half-open mouth was attempting to speak, but it gave no passage for his words. Eryx rebuked them,[21] and said, “Ye are benumbed by the cowardice of your minds, not by the locks of the Gorgon; rush on with me, and strike to the ground {this} youth that wields his magic arms.” He was about to rush on, {when} the earth arrested his steps, and he remained an immovable stone, and an armed statue. But all these met with the punishment they had deserved: there was one man, however, Aconteus {by name}, a soldier of Perseus, for whom while he was fighting, on beholding the Gorgon, he grew hard with stone rising upon him. Astyages, thinking him still alive, struck him with his long sword; the sword resounded with a shrill ringing. While Astyages was in amazement, he took on himself the same nature: and the look of one in surprise remained on his marble features. It is a tedious task to recount the names of the men of the lower rank. Two hundred bodies were {yet} remaining for the fight: two hundred bodies, on beholding the Gorgon, grew stiff.

Now at length Phineus repents of this unjust warfare. But what can he do? He sees statues varying in form, and he recognizes his friends, and demands help of them each, called by name; and not {yet} persuaded, he touches the bodies next him; they are marble. He turns away {his eyes}; and thus suppliant, and stretching forth his hands, that confessed {his fault}, and his arms obliquely extended, he says, “Perseus, thou hast conquered; remove the direful monster, and take away that stone-making face of thy Medusa, whatever she may be; take it away, I pray. It is not hatred, or the desire of a kingdom, that has urged me to war: for a wife I wielded arms. Thy cause was the better in point of merit, mine in point of time. I am not sorry to yield. Grant me nothing, most valiant man, beyond this life; the rest be thine.” Upon his saying such things, and not daring to look upon him, whom he is entreating with his voice, {Perseus} says, “What am I able to give thee, most cowardly Phineus, and, a great boon to a craven, that will I give; lay aside thy fears; thou shalt be hurt by no weapon. Moreover, I will give thee a monument to last forever, and in the house of my father-in-law thou shalt always be seen, that my wife may comfort herself with the form of her betrothed.” {Thus} he said, and he turned the daughter of Phorcys to that side, towards which Phineus had turned himself with trembling face. Then, even as he endeavored to turn away his eyes, his neck grew stiff, and the moisture of his eyes hardened in stone. But yet his timid features, and his suppliant countenance, and his hands hanging down, and his guilty attitude, still remained.

The descendant of Abas, together with his wife, enters the walls of his native city; and as the defender and avenger of his innocent mother, he attacks Prœtus.[22] For, his brother being expelled by force of arms, Prœtus had taken possession of the citadel of Acrisius; but neither by the help of arms, nor the citadel which he had unjustly seized, did he prevail against the stern eyes of the snake-bearing monster.

[Footnote 1: *Phineus*.--Ver. 8. He was the brother of Cepheus, to whom Andromeda had been betrothed. There was another person of the same name, who entertained the Argonauts, and who is also mentioned in the Metamorphoses.]

[Footnote 2: *In the cushion*.--Ver. 34. This was probably the mattress or covering of the couch on which the ancients reclined during meals. It was frequently stuffed with wool; but among the poorer classes, with straw and dried weeds.]

[Footnote 3: *An altar*.--Ver. 36. This was either the altar devoted to the worship of the Penates; or, more probably, perhaps, in this instance, that erected for sacrifice to the Gods on the occasion of the nuptials of Perseus and Andromeda.]

[Footnote 4: *Gods of hospitality*.--Ver. 45. Jupiter was especially considered to be the avenger of a violation of the laws of hospitality.]

[Footnote 5: *Athis by name*.--Ver. 47. Athis, or Atys, is here described as of Indian birth, to distinguish him from the Phrygian youth of the same name, beloved by Cybele, whose story is told by Ovid in the Fasti.]

[Footnote 6: *His falchion*.--Ver. 69. The “Harpe” was a short, crooked sword, or falchion: such as we call a “scimitar.”]

[Footnote 7: *Syene*.--Ver. 74. This was a city on the confines of Æthiopia, bordering upon Egypt. Ovid tells us in the Pontic Epistles (Book i. Ep. 5, l. 79), that “there, at the time of the summer solstice, bodies as they stand, have no shadow.”]

[Footnote 8: *A huge bowl*.--Ver. 82. Clarke calls “ingentem cratera” “a swingeing bowl.”]

[Footnote 9: *Sperchius*.--Ver. 86. This was probably a person, and not the river of Thessaly, flowing into the Malian Gulf.]

[Footnote 10: *Has declined the warfare*.--Ver. 91. This is an illustration of the danger of neutrality, when the necessity of the times requires a man to adopt the side which he deems to be in the right.]

[Footnote 11: *Clings to the altars*.--Ver. 103. In cases of extreme danger, it was usual to fly to the temples of the Deities, and to take refuge behind the altar or statue of the God, and even to cling to it, if necessity required.]

[Footnote 12: *A mournful dirge*.--Ver. 118. Clarke translates ‘Casuque canit miserabile carmen;’ ‘and in his fall plays but a dismal ditty.’]

[Footnote 13: *Cinyphian*.--Ver. 124. Cinyps, or Cinyphus, was the name of a river situate in the north of Africa.]

[Footnote 14: *Nasamonian land*.--Ver. 129. The Nasamones were a people of Libya, near the Syrtes, or quicksands, who subsisted by plundering the numerous wrecks on their coasts.]

[Footnote 15: *Bactrian*.--Ver. 135. Bactris was the chief city of Bactria, a region bordering on the western confines of India.]

[Footnote 16: *The Mendesian*.--Ver. 144. Mendes was a city of Egypt, near the mouth of the Nile, where Pan was worshipped, according to Pliny. Celadon was a native of either this place, or of the city of Myndes, in Syria.]

[Footnote 17: *Now deceived*.--Ver. 147. Because he had not foreseen his own approaching fate.]

[Footnote 18: *Bellona*.--Ver. 155. She was the sister of Mars, and was the Goddess of War.]

[Footnote 19: *Chaonian*.--Ver. 163. Chaonia was a mountainous part of Epirus, so called from Chaon, who was accidentally killed, while hunting, by Helenus, the son of Priam. It has been, however, suggested that the reading ought to be 'Choanius;' as the Choanii were a people bordering on Arabia; and very justly, for how should the Chaonians and Nabathæans, or Epirotes, and Arabians become united in the same sentence, as meeting in a region so distant as Æthiopia?]

[Footnote 20: *Cyllenian*.--Ver. 176. His falchion had been given to him by Mercury, who was born on Mount Cyllene, in Arcadia.]

[Footnote 21: *Eryx rebuked them*.--Ver. 195. 'Increpat hos Eryx' is translated by Clarke, 'Eryx rattles these blades.']

[Footnote 22: *Prœtus*.--Ver. 238. He was the brother of Acrisius, the grandfather of Perseus.]

## Riley's Explanation

The scene of this story is supposed by some to have been in Æthiopia, but it is more probably on the coast of Africa. Josephus and Strabo assert that this event happened near the city of Joppa, or Jaffa: indeed, Josephus says that the marks of the chains with which Andromeda was fastened, were remaining on the rock in his time. Pomponius Mela says, that Cepheus, the father of Andromeda, was king of Joppa, and that the memory of that prince and of his brother Phineus was honored there with religious services. He says, too, that the inhabitants used to show the bones of the monster which was to have devoured Andromeda. Pliny tells us the same, and that Scaurus carried these bones with him to Rome. He calls the monster 'a Goddess,' 'Dea

Cete.' Vossius believes that he means the God Dagon, worshipped among the Syrians under the figure of a fish, or sea-monster. Some authors have suggested that the story of the creature which was to have devoured Andromeda, was a confused version of that of the prophet Jonah.

The alleged power of Perseus, to turn his enemies into stone, was probably, a metaphorical mode of describing his heroism, and the terror which everywhere followed the fame of his victory over the Gorgons. This probably caused such consternation, that it was reported that he petrified his enemies by showing them the head of Medusa. Bochart supposes that the rocky nature of the island of Seriphus, where Polydectes reigned, was the ground of the various stories of the alleged metamorphoses into stone, effected by means of the Gorgon's head.

## Book V, Fable II (lines 243–340)

*Polydectes continues his hatred against Perseus, and treats his victories and triumphs over Medusa as mere fictions, on which Perseus turns him into stone. Minerva leaves her brother, and goes to Mount Helicon to visit the Muses, who show the Goddess the beauties of their habitation, and entertain her with their adventure at the court of Pyreneus, and the death of that prince. They also repeat to her the song of the Pierides, who challenged them to sing.*

Yet, O Polydectes,[23] the ruler of little Seriphus, neither the valor of the youth proved by so many toils, nor his sorrows have softened thee; but thou obstinately dost exert an inexorable hatred, nor is there any limit to thy unjust resentment. Thou also detractest from his praises, and dost allege that the death of Medusa is {but} a fiction. “We will give thee a proof of the truth,” says Perseus; “have a regard for your eyes, {all besides};” and he makes the face of the king {become} stone, without blood, by means of the face of Medusa.

Hitherto Tritonia had presented herself as a companion to her brother,[24] begotten in the golden shower. Now, enwrapped in an encircling cloud, she abandons Seriphus, Cythnus and Gyarus[25] being left on the right. And where the way seems the shortest over the sea, she makes for Thebes and Helicon, frequented by the virgin {Muses}; having reached which mountain she stops, and thus addresses the learned sisters: “The fame of the new fountain[26] has reached my ears, which the hard hoof of the winged steed sprung from the blood of Medusa has opened. That is the cause of my coming. I wished to see this wondrous prodigy; I saw him spring from the blood of his mother.” Urania[27] replies, “Whatever, Goddess, is the cause of thy visiting these abodes, thou art most acceptable to our feelings. However, the report is true, and Pegasus is the originator of this spring;” and {then} she conducts Pallas to the sacred streams. She, long admiring the waters produced by the stroke of his foot, looks around upon the groves of the ancient wood, and the caves and the grass studded with flowers innumerable; and she pronounces the Mnemonian[28] maids happy both in their pursuits and in their retreat; when one of the sisters {thus} addresses her:

“O Tritonia, thou who wouldst have come to make one of our number, had not thy valor inclined thee to greater deeds, thou sayest the truth, and with justice thou dost approve both our pursuits and our retreat; and if we are but safe, happy do we reckon our lot. But (to such a degree is no denial borne by villany) all things affright our virgin minds, and the dreadful Pyreneus is placed before our eyes; and not yet have I wholly recovered my presence of mind. He, in his insolence, had taken the Daulian and Phocean[29] land with his Thracian troops, and unjustly held the government. We were making for the temple of Parnassus; he beheld us going, and adoring our Divinities[30] in a feigned worship he said (for he had recognized us), ‘O Mnemonian maids,

stop, and do not scruple, I pray, under my roof to avoid the bad weather and the showers (for it was raining); oft have the Gods above entered more humble cottages.' Moved by his invitation and the weather, we assented to the man, and entered the front part of his house. The rain had {now} ceased, and the South Wind {now} subdued by the North, the black clouds were flying from the cleared sky. It was our wish to depart. Pyreneus closed his house, and prepared for violence, which we escaped by taking wing. He himself stood aloft on the top {of his abode}, as though about to follow us, and said 'Wherever there is a way for you, by the same road there will be {one} for me.' And then, in his insanity, he threw himself from the height of the summit of the tower, and fell upon his face, and with the bones of his skull thus broken, he struck the ground stained with his accursed blood."

{Thus} spoke the Muse. Wings resounded through the air, and a voice of some saluting them[31] came from the lofty boughs. The daughter of Jupiter looked up, and asked whence tongues that speak so distinctly made that noise, and thought that a human being had spoken. They were birds; and magpies that imitate everything, lamenting their fate, they stood perched on the boughs, nine in number. As the Goddess wondered, thus did the Goddess {Urania} commence: "Lately, too, did these being overcome in a dispute, increase the number of the birds. Pierus, rich in the lands of Pella,[32] begot them; the Pæonian[33] Evippe[34] was their mother. Nine times did she invoke the powerful Lucina, being nine times in labor. This set of foolish sisters were proud of their number, and came hither through so many cities of Hæmonia, {and} through so many of Achaia,[35] and engaged in a contest in words such as these: "Cease imposing upon the vulgar with your empty melody. If you have any confidence {in your skill}, ye Thespian Goddesses, contend with us; we will not be outdone in voice or skill; and we are as many in number. Either, if vanquished, withdraw from the spring formed by the steed of Medusa, and the Hyantean Aganippe,[36] or we will retire from the Emathian plains, as far as the snowy Pæonians. Let the Nymphs decide the contest." It was, indeed, disgraceful to engage, but to yield seemed {even} more disgraceful. The Nymphs that are chosen swear by the rivers, and they sit on seats made out of the natural rock. Then, without casting lots, she who had been the first to propose the contest, sings the wars of the Gods above, and gives the Giants honor not their due, and detracts from the actions of the great Divinities; and {sings} how that Typhœus, sent forth from the lowest realms of the earth, had struck terror into the inhabitants of Heaven; and {how} they had all turned their backs in flight, until the land of Egypt had received them in their weariness, and the Nile, divided into its seven mouths. She tells, how that Typhœus had come there, too, and the Gods above had concealed themselves under assumed shapes; and 'Jupiter,' she says, 'becomes the leader of the flock, whence, even at the present day, the Libyan Ammon is figured with horns. {Apollo}, the Delian {God}, lies concealed as a crow, the son of Semele as a he-goat, the sister of Phœbus as a cat, {Juno}, the daughter of Saturn, as a snow-white cow, Venus as a fish,[37] {Mercury}, the Cyllenian {God}, beneath the wings of an Ibis.'[38]

“Thus far she had exerted her noisy mouth to {the sound of} the lyre; we of Aonia[39] were {then} called upon; but perhaps thou hast not the leisure, nor the time to lend an ear to our strains.” Pallas says, “Do not hesitate, and repeat your song to me in its order;” and she takes her seat under the pleasant shade of the grove. The Muse {then} tells her story. “We assigned the management of the contest to one {of our number}. Calliope rises, and, having her long hair gathered up with ivy, tunes with her thumb the sounding chords; and {then} sings these lines in concert with the strings when struck.”

[Footnote 23: *Polydectes*.--Ver. 242. Polydectes was king of the little island of Seriphus, one of the Cyclades. His brother Dictys had removed Perseus, with his mother Danaë, to the kingdom of Polydectes. The latter became smitten with love for Danaë, though he was about to marry Hippodamia. On this occasion he exacted a promise from Perseus, of the head of the Gorgon Medusa. When Perseus returned victorious, he found that his mother, with her protector Dictys, had taken refuge at the altars of the Deities, against the violence of Polydectes; on which Perseus changed him into stone. The story of Perseus afforded abundant materials to the ancient poets. Æschylus wrote a Tragedy called Polydectes, Sophocles one called Danaë, while Euripides composed two, called respectively Danaë and Dictys. Pherecydes also wrote on this subject, and his work seems to have been a text book for succeeding poets. Polygnotus painted the return of Perseus with the head of Medusa, to the island of Seriphus.]

[Footnote 24: *To her brother*.--Ver. 250. As both Tritonia, or Minerva, and Perseus had Jupiter for their father.]

[Footnote 25: *Gyarus*.--Ver. 252. Cythnus and Gyarus were two islands of the Cyclades.]

[Footnote 26: *The new fountain*.--Ver. 256. This was Helicon, which was produced by a blow from the hoof of Pegasus.]

[Footnote 27: *Urania*.--Ver. 260. One of the Muses, who presided over Astronomy.]

[Footnote 28: *Mnemonian*.--Ver. 268. The Muses are called ‘Mnemonides,’ from the Greek word μνήμων ‘remembering,’ or ‘mindful,’ because they were said to be the daughters, by Jupiter, of Mnemosyne, or Memory.]

[Footnote 29: *Phocean*.--Ver. 276. Daulis was a city of Phocis; a district between Bœotia and Ætolia, in which the city of Delphi and Mount Parnassus were situate.]

[Footnote 30: *Our Divinities*.--Ver. 279. ‘Nostra veneratus numina,’ is translated by Clarke, ‘and worshipping our Goddessships.’]

[Footnote 31: *Some saluting them*.--Ver. 295. That is, crying out χαῖρε, χαῖρε, the usual salutation among the Greeks, equivalent to our 'How d'ye do?' From two lines of Persius, it seems to have been a common thing to teach parrots and magpies to repeat these words.]

[Footnote 32: *Lands of Pella*.--Ver. 302. Pella was a city of Macedonia, in that part of it which was called Emathia. It was famed for being the birthplace of Philip, and Alexander the Great.]

[Footnote 33: *Pæonian*.--Ver. 303. Pæonia was a mountainous region of Macedonia, adjacent to Emathia.]

[Footnote 34: *Evippe*.--Ver. 303. Evippe was the wife of Pierus, and the mother of the Pierides.]

[Footnote 35: *Achaia*.--Ver. 306. The Achaia here mentioned was the Hæmonian, or Thessalian Achaia. The other parts of Thessaly were Phthiotis and Pelasgiotis.]

[Footnote 36: *Aganippe*.--Ver. 312. Aganippe was the name of a fountain in Bœotia, near Helicon, sacred to the Muses. It is called Hyantean, from the ancient name of the inhabitants of the country.]

[Footnote 37: *Venus as a fish*.--Ver. 331. The story of the transformation of Venus into a fish, to escape the fury of the Giants, is told, at length, in the second Book of the Fasti.]

[Footnote 38: *Wings of an Ibis*.--Ver. 331. The Ibis was a bird of Egypt, much resembling a crane, or stork. It was said to be of peculiarly unclean habits, and to subsist upon serpents.]

[Footnote 39: *We of Aonia*.--Ver. 333. The Muses obtained the name of Aonides from Aonia, a mountainous district of Bœotia.]

## Riley's Explanation

According to Plutarch, the adventure of the Muses with Pyreneus, and of their asking wings of the Gods to save themselves, is a metaphor, which shows that he, when reigning in Phocis, was no friend to learning. As he had caused all the institutions in which it was taught to be destroyed, it was currently reported, that he had offered violence to the Muses, and that he lost his life in pursuing them. Ovid is the only writer that mentions him by name.

The challenge given by the Pierides to the Muses is not mentioned by any writer before the time of Ovid. By way of explaining it, it is said, that Pierus was a very bad poet, whose works were full of stories injurious to the credit of the Gods. Hence, in time, it became circulated, that his daughters, otherwise his works, were changed into magpies, thereby meaning that they were full of idle narratives, tiresome and unmeaning. It is not improbable that the story of Typhœus, who

forces the Gods to conceal themselves in Egypt, under the forms of various animals, was a poem which Pierus composed on the war of the Gods with the Giants.

## Book V, Fable III (lines 341–384)

*One of the Muses repeats to Minerva the song of Calliope, in answer to the Pierides; in which she describes the defeat of the Giant Typhœus, and Pluto viewing the mountains of Sicily, where Venus persuades her son Cupid to pierce his heart with one of his arrows.*

“Ceres was the first to turn up the clods with the crooked plough; she first gave corn and wholesome food to the earth; she first gave laws; everything is the gift of Ceres. She is to be sung by me; I only wish that I could utter verses worthy of the Goddess, {for} doubtless she is a Goddess worthy of my song. The vast island of Trinacria[40] is heaped up on the limbs of the Giant, and keeps down Typhœus, that dared to hope for the abodes of Heaven, placed beneath its heavy mass. He, indeed, struggles, and attempts often to rise, but his right hand is placed beneath the Ausonian Pelorus,[41] his left under thee, Pachynus;[42] his legs are pressed down by Lilybœum;[43] Ætna bears down his head; under it Typhœus, on his back, casts forth sand, and vomits flame from his raging mouth; often does he struggle to throw off the load of earth, and to roll away cities and huge mountains from his body. Then does the earth tremble, and the King of the shades himself is in dread, lest it may open, and the ground be parted with a wide chasm, and, the day being let in, may affright the trembling ghosts.

“Fearing this ruin, the Ruler had gone out from his dark abode; and, carried in his chariot by black horses, he cautiously surveyed the foundations of the Sicilian land. After it was sufficiently ascertained that no place was insecure, and fear was laid aside, Erycina,[44] sitting down upon her mountain, saw him wandering; and, embracing her winged son, she said, Cupid, my son, my arms, my hands, and my might, take up those darts by which thou conquerest all, and direct the swift arrows against the breast of the God, to whom fell the last lot of the triple kingdom.[45] Thou subduest the Gods above, and Jupiter himself; thou {subduest} the conquered Deities of the deep, and him who rules over the Deities of the deep. Why is Tartarus exempt? Why dost thou not extend the Empire of thy mother and thine own? A third part of the world is {now} at stake. And yet so great power is despised even in our own heaven, and, together with myself, the influence of Love becomes but a trifling matter. Dost thou not see how that Pallas, and Diana, who throws the javelin, have renounced me? The daughter of Ceres, too, will be a virgin, if we shall permit it, for she inclines to similar hopes. But do thou join the Goddess to her uncle, if I have any interest with thee in favor of our joint sway.

“Venus {thus} spoke. He opened his quiver, and, by the direction of his mother, set apart one out of his thousand arrows; but one, than which there is not any more sharp or less unerring, or which is more true to the bow. And he bent the flexible horn, by pressing his knee against it, and struck Pluto in the breast with the barbed arrow.”

[Footnote 40: *Trinacria*.--Ver. 347. Sicily was called Trinacris, or Trinacria, from its three corners or promontories, which are here named by the Poet.]

[Footnote 41: *Pelorus*.--Ver. 350. This cape, or promontory, now called Capo di Faro, is on the east of Sicily, looking towards Italy, whence its present epithet, 'Ausonian.' It was so named from Pelorus, the pilot of Hannibal, who, suspecting him of treachery, had put him to death, and buried him on that spot.]

[Footnote 42: *Pachynus*.--Ver. 351. This Cape, now Capo Passaro, looks towards Greece, from the south of Sicily.]

[Footnote 43: *Lilybæum*.--Ver. 351. Now called Capo Marsala. It is on the west of Sicily, looking towards the African coast.]

[Footnote 44: *Erycina*.--Ver. 363. Venus is so called from Eryx, the mountain of Sicily, on which her son Eryx, one of the early Sicilian kings, erected a magnificent temple in her honor.]

[Footnote 45: *The triple kingdom*.--Ver. 368. In the partition of the dominion of the universe the heavens fell to the lot of Jupiter, the seas to that of Neptune; while the infernal regions, or, as some say, the earth, were awarded to Pluto.]

## Riley's Explanation

The ancients frequently accounted for natural phænomena on fabulous grounds: and whatever they found difficult to explain, from their ignorance of the principles of natural philosophy, they immediately attributed to the agency of a supernatural cause. Ætna was often seen to emit flames, and the earth was subjected to violent shocks from the forces of its internal fires when struggling for a vent. Instead of looking for the source of these eruptions in the sulphur and bituminous matter in which the mountain abounds, they fabled, that the Gods, having vanquished the Giant Typhœus, or, according to some authors, Enceladus, threw Mount Ætna on his body; and that the attempts he made to free himself from the superincumbent weight were the cause of those fires and earthquakes.

## Book V, Fable IV (lines 385–461)

*Pluto surprises Proserpina in the fields of Henna, and carries her away by force. The Nymph Cyane endeavors, in vain, to stop him in his passage, and through grief and anguish, dissolves into a fountain. Ceres goes everywhere in search of her daughter, and, in her journey, turns the boy Stellio into a newt.*

“Not far from the walls of Henna[46] there is a lake of deep water, Pergus by name; Cayster does not hear more songs of swans, in his running streams, than that. A wood skirts the lake, surrounding it on every side, and with its foliage, as though with an awning, keeps out the rays of the sun. The boughs produce a coolness, the moist ground flowers of Tyrian hue. {There} the spring is perpetual. In this grove, while Proserpina is amusing herself, and is plucking either violets or white lilies, and while, with childlike eagerness, she is filling her baskets and her bosom, and is striving to outdo {her companions} of the same age in gathering, almost at the same instant she is beheld, beloved, and seized by Pluto;[47] in such great haste is love. The Goddess, affrighted, with lamenting lips calls both her mother and her companions,[48] but more frequently her mother;[49] and as she has torn her garment from the upper edge, the collected flowers fall from her loosened robes. So great, too, is the innocence of her childish years, this loss excites the maiden’s grief as well. The ravisher drives on his chariot, and encourages his horses, called, each by his name, along whose necks and manes he shakes the reins, dyed with swarthy rust. He is borne through deep lakes, and the pools of the Palici,[50] smelling strong of sulphur, {and} boiling fresh from out of the burst earth; and where the Bacchiadæ,[51] a race sprung from Corinth, with its two seas,[52] built a city[53] between unequal harbors.

“There is a stream in the middle, between Cyane and the Pisæan Arethusa, which is confined within itself, being enclosed by mountain ridges at a short distance {from each other}. Here was Cyane,[54] the most celebrated among the Sicilian Nymphs, from whose name the pool also was called, who stood up from out of the midst of the water, as far as the higher part of her stomach, and recognized the God, and said, ‘No further shall you go. Thou mayst not be the son-in-law of Ceres against her will. {The girl} should have been asked {of her mother}, not carried away. But if I may be allowed to compare little matters with great ones, Anapis[55] also loved me. Yet I married him, courted, and not frightened {into it}, like her.’ She {thus} said, and stretching her arms on different sides, she stood in his way. The son of Saturn no longer restrained his rage; and encouraging his terrible steeds, he threw his royal sceptre, hurled with a strong arm, into the lowest depths of the stream. The earth, {thus} struck, made a way down to Tartarus, and received the descending chariot in the middle of the yawning space. But Cyane, lamenting both

the ravished Goddess, and the slighted privileges of her spring, carries in her silent mind an inconsolable wound, and is entirely dissolved into tears, and melts away into those waters, of which she had been but lately the great guardian Divinity. You might see her limbs soften, her bones become subjected to bending, her nails lay aside their hardness: each, too, of the smaller extremities of the whole of her body melts away; both her azure hair, her fingers, her legs, and her feet; for easy is the change of those small members into a cold stream. After that, her back, her shoulders, her side, and her breast dissolve, vanishing into thin rivulets. Lastly, pure water, instead of live blood, enters her corrupted veins, and nothing remains which you can grasp {in your hand}.

"In the mean time, throughout all lands and in every sea, the daughter is sought in vain by her anxious mother. Aurora, coming with her ruddy locks does not behold her taking any rest, neither does Hesperus. She, with her two hands, sets light to some pines at the flaming Ætna, and giving herself no rest, bears them through the frosty darkness. Again, when the genial day has dulled the light of the stars, she seeks her daughter from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof. Fatigued by the labor, she has {now} contracted thirst, and no streams have washed her mouth, when by chance she beholds a cottage covered with thatch, and knocks at its humble door, upon which an old woman[56] comes out and sees the Goddess, and gives her, asking for water, a sweet drink which she has lately distilled[57] from parched pearled barley. While she is drinking it {thus} presented, a boy[58] of impudent countenance and bold, stands before the Goddess, and laughs, and calls her greedy. She is offended; and a part being not yet quaffed, the Goddess sprinkles him, as he is {thus} talking, with the barley mixed with the liquor.

"His face contracts the stains, and he bears legs where just now he was bearing arms; a tail is added to his changed limbs; and he is contracted into a diminutive form, that no great power of doing injury may exist; his size is less than {that of} a small lizard. He flies from the old woman, astounded and weeping, and trying to touch the monstrosity; and he seeks a lurking place, and has a name suited to his color, having his body speckled with various spots."

[Footnote 46: *Henna*.--Ver. 385. Henna, or Enna, was a city so exactly situated in the middle of Sicily that it was called the navel of that island. The worship of Ceres there was so highly esteemed, that ancient writers remarked, that you might easily take the whole place for one vast temple of that Goddess, and all the inhabitants for her priests. Proserpine is said by many authors, besides Ovid, to have been carried away by Pluto in the vicinity of Henna; though some writers say that it took place in Attica, and others again in Asia, while the Hymn of Orpheus mentions the western coast of Spain. Cicero describes this spot in his Oration against Verres: his words are, 'It is said that Libera, who is the Deity that we call Proserpine, was carried away from the Grove of Enna. Enna, where these events took place to which I now refer, is in a lofty and exposed situation; but on the summit the ground presents a level surface, and there are springs

of everflowing water. The spot is entirely cut off and separated from all [ordinary] means of approach. Around it are many lakes and groves, and flowers in bloom at all seasons of the year; so that the very spot seems to portray the rape of the damsel, with which story, from our very infancy, we have been familiar. Close by, there is a cavern with its face towards the north, of an immense depth, from which they say that father Pluto, in his chariot, suddenly emerged, and carrying off the maiden, bore her away from that spot, and then, not far from Syracuse, descended into the earth, from which place a lake suddenly arose; where, at the present day, the inhabitants of Syracuse celebrate a yearly festival.']

[Footnote 47: *Seized by Pluto*.--Ver. 395. Pluto is here called 'Dis.' This name was given to him as the God of the Earth, from the bowels of which riches are dug up.]

[Footnote 48: *Her companions*.--Ver. 397. Pausanias, in his Messeniaca, has preserved the names of the companions of Ceres, having copied them from the works of Homer.]

[Footnote 49: *Her mother*.--Ver. 397. Homer, in his poem on the subject, represents that Ceres heard the cries of her daughter, when calling upon her mother for assistance. Ovid recounts this tale much more at length in the fourth Book of the Fasti.]

[Footnote 50: *The Palici*.--Ver. 406. The Palici were two brothers, sons of Jupiter and the Nymph Thalea, and, according to some, received their name from the Greek words πάλιν ἱκέσθαι, 'to come again [to life].' Their mother, when pregnant, prayed the earth to open, and to hide her from the vengeful wrath of Juno. This was done; and when they had arrived at maturity, the Palici burst from the ground in the island of Sicily. They were Deities much venerated there, but their worship did not extend to any other countries. We learn from Macrobius that the natives of Sicily pointed out two small lakes, from which the brothers were said to have emerged, and that the veneration attached to them was such, that by their means they decided disputes, as they imagined that perjurers would meet their death in these waters, while the guiltless would be able to come forth from them unharmed. They were fetid, sulphureous pools of water, probably affected by the volcanic action of Mount Ætna.]

[Footnote 51: *The Bacchiadæ*.--Ver. 407. Archias, one of the race of the Bacchiadæ, a powerful Corinthian family, being expelled from Corinth, was said to have founded Syracuse, the capital of Sicily. The family sprang either from Bacchius, a son of Dionysus, or Bacchus, or from the fifth king of Corinth, who was named Bacchis. The family was expelled from Corinth by Cypselus, either on account of their luxury and extravagant mode of life, or because they were supposed to aim at the sovereignty.]

[Footnote 52: *With its two seas*.--Ver. 407. Corinth is called 'Bimaris' by the Latin poets, from its having the Ægean sea on one side of it, and the Ionian sea on the other.]

[Footnote 53: *Built a city*.--Ver. 408. Syracuse had two harbors, one of which was much larger than the other.]

[Footnote 54: *Cyane*.--Ver. 412. According to Claudian, Cyane was one of the companions of Proserpine, when she was carried off by Pluto.]

[Footnote 55: *Anapis*.--Ver. 417. This was a river of Sicily, which, mingling with the waters of the fountain Cyane, falls into the sea at Syracuse, opposite to the island of Ortygia. This island, in which the fountain of Arethusa was situate, was separated from the isle of Sicily by a narrow strait of the sea, and communicating with the city of Syracuse by a bridge, was considered as part of it.]

[Footnote 56: *An old woman*.--Ver. 449. Arnobius calls this old woman here mentioned by the name of Baubo. Nicander, in his Theriaca, calls her Metaneira. Antoninus Liberalis calls her Misma, and Ovid, in the fourth Book of the Fasti, Melanina.]

[Footnote 57: *Lately distilled*.--Ver. 450. Orpheus, in his Hymn, calls the drink given by the old woman to Ceres κυκεὼν. According to Arnobius, it was a mixed liquor, called by the Romans 'cinnus;' made of parched pearled barley, honey, and wine, with flowers and various herbs floating in it. Antoninus Liberalis says, that Ceres drank it off, ἀθρόως, 'at one draught.']

[Footnote 58: *A boy*.--Ver. 451. According to Nicander, the boy was the son of the old woman. If so, the Goddess made her but a poor return for her hospitality.]

## Riley's Explanation

The story of the rape of Proserpine has caused much inquiry among writers, both ancient and modern, as to the facts on which it was founded. Some have grounded it on principles of natural philosophy; while others have supposed it to contain some portion of ancient history, defaced and blemished in lapse of time.

The antiquarian Pezeron is of opinion, that in the partition of the world among the Titan kings, Pluto had the west for his share; and that he carried a colony to the further end of Spain, where he caused the gold and silver mines of that region to be worked. The situation of his kingdom, which lay very low, comparatively with Greece, and which the ancients believed to be covered with eternal darkness, gave rise to the fable, that Pluto had got Hell for his share; and this notion was much encouraged by the subterranean nature of the mines which he caused to be worked. He thinks that the river Tartarus, so famed in the realms of Pluto, was no other than the Tartessa, or Guadalquivir of the present day, which runs through the centre of Spain. Lethe, too, he thinks to have been the Guadalaviar, in the same country. Pluto, he suggests, had heard of the

beauty of Proserpine, the daughter of Ceres, queen of Sicily, and carried her thence, which gave rise to the tradition that she had been carried to the Infernal Regions.

Le Clerc, on the other hand, thinks that it was not Pluto that carried away Proserpine, but Aidoneus, king of Epirus, or Orcus king of the Molossians. Aidoneus is supposed to have wrought mines in his kingdom, and, as the entrance into it was over a river called Acheron, that prince has often been confounded with Pluto; Epirus too, which was situate very low, may have been figuratively described as the Infernal Regions; for which reason, the journeys of Theseus and Hercules into Epirus may have been spoken of as descents into the Stygian abodes. Le Clerc supposes that Ceres was reigning in Sicily at the time when Aidoneus was king of Epirus, and that she took great care to instruct her subjects in the art of tilling the ground and sowing corn, and established laws for regulating civil government and the preservation of private property; for which reasons she was afterward deemed to be the Goddess of the Earth, and of Corn. Cicero and Diodorus Siculus tell us that Ceres made her residence at Enna, or Henna, in Sicily, which name, according to Bochart, signifies 'agreeable fountain.' Cicero and Strabo agree with Ovid in telling us that Proserpine, the only daughter of Ceres, whom other writers name Pherephata, was walking in the adjacent meadows, and gathering flowers with her companions; upon which, certain pirates seized her, and, placing her in a chariot, carried her to the seaside, whence they embarked for Epirus. As Pausanias tells us, it was immediately spread abroad, that Aidoneus, or Pluto, as he was called, had done it, the act having been really committed by others, according to his orders. As those who carried her off concealed themselves in the caverns of Mount Ætna, awaiting their opportunity to escape, it was afterwards fabled that Pluto came out of the Infernal Regions at that place; as that mountain, from its nature, was always deemed one of the outlets of Hell. Upon this, Ceres went to Greece, in search of her daughter; and, resting at Eleusis, in Attica, she heard that the ship in which her daughter was carried away had sailed westward. On this, she complained to Jupiter, one of the Titan kings, but could obtain no further satisfaction than that her daughter should be permitted to visit her occasionally, whereby, at length, her grief was mitigated.

Banier does not agree with these suggestions of Pezeron and Le Clerc, and thinks that Ceres is no other personage than the Isis of the Egyptians, supposing that the story is founded on the following circumstance:--Greece, he says, was afflicted with famine in the reign of Erectheus, who was obliged to send to Egypt for corn, when those who went for it brought back the worship of the Deity who presided over agriculture. The evils which the Athenians had suffered by the famine, and the dread of again incurring the same calamity, made them willingly embrace the rites of a Goddess whom they believed able to protect them from it. Triptolemus established her worship in Eleusis, and there instituted the mysteries which he had brought over from Egypt. These had been previously introduced into Sicily, which was the reason why it was said that

Ceres came from Sicily to Athens. Her daughter was said to have been taken away, because corn and fruit had not been produced in sufficient quantities, for some time, to furnish food for the people. Pluto was said to have carried her to the Infernal regions, because the grain and seeds at that time remained buried, as it were, at the very center of the earth. Jupiter was said to have decided the difference between Ceres and Pluto, because the earth again became covered with crops.

This appears to be an ingenious allegorical explanation of the story; but it is not at all improbable that it may have been founded upon actual facts, and that, having lost her daughter, and going to Attica to seek her, Ceres taught Triptolemus the mysteries of Isis; and that, in process of time, Ceres, having become enrolled among the Divinities of Greece, her worship became confounded with that of Isis.

It is very possible that the story of the transformation of Stellio into a newt may have had no other foundation than the Poet's fancy.

## Book V, Fable V

[V. 462-563]

Ceres proceeds in a fruitless search for her daughter over the whole earth, until the Nymph Arethusa acquaints her with the place of her ravisher's abode. The Goddess makes her complaint to Jupiter, and obtains his consent for her daughter's return to the upper world, provided she has not eaten anything since her arrival in Pluto's dominions. Ascalaphus, however, having informed that she has eaten some seeds of a pomegranate, Ceres is disappointed, and Proserpine, in her wrath, metamorphoses the informer into an owl. The Sirens have wings given them by the Gods, to enable them to be more expeditious in seeking for Proserpine. Jupiter, to console Ceres for her loss, decides that her daughter shall remain six months each year with her mother upon earth, and the other six with her husband, in the Infernal Regions.

"It were a tedious task[59] to relate through what lands and what seas the Goddess wandered; for her search the world was too limited. She returns to Sicily; and while, in her passage, she views all {places}, she comes, too, to Cyane; she, had she not been transformed, would have told her everything. But both mouth and tongue were wanting to her, {thus} desirous to tell, and she had no means whereby to speak. Still, she gave unmistakable tokens, and pointed out, on the top of the water, the girdle[60] of Proserpine, well known to her parent, which by chance had fallen off in that place into the sacred stream.

"Soon as she recognized this, as if then, at last, she fully understood that her daughter had been carried away[61] the Goddess tore her unadorned hair, and struck her breast again and again with her hands. Not as yet does she know where she is, yet she exclaims against all countries, and calls them ungrateful, and not worthy of the gifts of corn; {and} Trinacria before {all} others, in which she has found the proofs of her loss. Wherefore, with vengeful hand, she there broke the ploughs that were turning up the clods, and, in her anger, consigned to a similar death both the husbandmen and the oxen that cultivated the fields, and ordered the land to deny a return of what had been deposited {therein}, and rendered the seed corrupted. The fertility of the soil, famed over the wide world, lies in ruin, the corn dies in the early blade, and sometimes excessive heat of the sun, sometimes excessive showers, spoil it. Both the Constellations and the winds injure it, and the greedy birds pick up the seed as it is sown; darnel, and thistles, and unconquerable weeds, choke the crops of wheat.

"Then the Alpheian Nymph[62] raised her head from out of the Elean waters, and drew back her dripping hair from her forehead to her ears, and said, "O thou mother of the virgin sought over the whole world, and of the crops {as well}, cease {at length} thy boundless toil, and in thy wrath

be not angered with a region that is faithful to thee. This land does not deserve it; and against its will it gave a path for {the commission of} the outrage. Nor am I {now} a suppliant for {my own} country; a stranger I am come hither. Pisa is my native place, and from Elis do I derive my birth. As a stranger do I inhabit Sicily, but this land is more pleasing to me than any other soil. I, Arethusa, now have this for my abode, this for my habitation; which, do thou, most kindly {Goddess}, preserve. Why I have been removed from my {native} place, and have been carried to Ortygia, through the waters of seas so spacious, a seasonable time will come for my telling thee, when thou shalt be eased of thy cares, and {wilt be} of more cheerful aspect. The pervious earth affords me a passage, and, carried beneath its lowest caverns, here I lift my head {again}, and behold the stars which I have not been used {to see}. While, then, I was running under the earth, along the Stygian stream, thy Proserpine was there beheld by my eyes.[63] {She} indeed {was} sad, and not as yet without alarm in her countenance, but still {she is} a queen, and the most ennobled {female} in the world of darkness; still, too, is she the powerful spouse of the Infernal King."

"The mother, on hearing these words, stood amazed, as though she {had been made} of stone, and for a long time was like one stupefied; and when her intense bewilderment was dispelled by the weight of her grief, she departed in her chariot into the ætherial air, and there, with her countenance all clouded, she stood before Jupiter, much to his discredit, with her hair dishevelled; and she said, "I have come, Jupiter, as a suppliant to thee, both for my own offspring and for thine. If thou hast no respect for the mother, {still} let the daughter move her father; and I pray thee not to have the less regard for her, because she was brought forth by my travail. Lo! my daughter, so long sought for, has been found by me at last; if you call it finding[64] to be more certain of one's loss; or if you call it finding, to know where she is. I will endure {the fact}, that she has been carried off, if he will only restore her. For, indeed, a daughter of thine is not deserving of a ravisher for a husband, if now my own daughter is." Jupiter replied, "Thy daughter is a pledge and charge, in common to me and thee; but, should it please thee only to give right names to things, this deed is not an injury, but it is {a mark of} affection, nor will he, as a son-in-law, be any disgrace to us, if thou only, Goddess, shouldst give thy consent. Although other {recommendations} were wanting, how great a thing is it to be the brother of Jupiter! and besides, is it not because other points are not wanting, and because he is not my inferior, except by the accident {of his allotment of the Stygian abodes}? But if thy eagerness is so great for their separation, let Proserpine return to heaven; still upon this fixed condition, if she has touched no food there with her lips; for thus has it been provided by the law of the Destinies."

"{Thus} he spoke; still Ceres is {now} resolved to fetch away her daughter; but not so do the Fates permit. For the damsel had broke her fast; and, while in her innocence she was walking

about the finely-cultivated garden, she had plucked a pomegranate[65] from the bending tree, and had chewed in her mouth seven grains[66] taken from the pale rind. Ascalaphus[67] alone, of all persons, had seen this, whom Orphne, by no means the most obscure among the Nymphs of Avernus,[68] is said once to have borne to her own Acheron within {his} dusky caves. He beheld {this}, and cruelly prevented her return by his discovery. The Queen of Erebus grieved, and changed the informer into an accursed bird, and turned his head, sprinkled with the waters of Phlegethon,[69] into a beak, and feathers, and great eyes. He, {thus} robbed of his own {shape}, is clothed with tawny wings, his head becomes larger, his long nails bend inwards, and with difficulty can he move the wings that spring through his sluggish arms. He becomes an obscene bird, the foreboder of approaching woe, a lazy owl, a direful omen to mortals.

"But he, by his discovery, and his talkativeness, may seem to have merited punishment. Whence have you, daughters of Acheloüs,[70] feathers and the feet of birds, since you have the faces of maidens? Is it because, when Proserpine was gathering the flowers of spring, you were mingled in the number of her companions? After you had sought her in vain throughout the whole world, immediately, that the waters might be sensible of your concern, you wished to be able, on the support of your wings, to hover over the waves, and you found the Gods propitious, and saw your limbs grow yellow with feathers suddenly formed. But lest the sweetness of your voice, formed for charming the ear, and so great endowments of speech, should lose the gift of a tongue, your virgin countenance and your human voice {still} remained."

[Footnote 59: *A tedious task*.--Ver. 463. 'Dicere longa mora est,' is rendered by Clarke, 'It is a tedious business to tell.']

[Footnote 60: *The girdle*.--Ver. 470. The zone, or girdle, a fastening round the loins, was much worn by both sexes among the ancients. It was sometimes made of netted work, and the chief use of it was for holding up the tunic, and keeping it from dragging on the ground. Among the Romans, the Magister Equitum, or 'Master of the Horse,' wore a girdle of red leather, embroidered by the needle, and having its extremities joined by a gold buckle. It also formed part of the cuirass of the warrior. The girdle was used sometimes by men to hold money instead of a purse; and the 'pera,' 'wallet,' or 'purse,' was generally fastened to the girdle. As this article of dress was used to hold up the garments for the sake of expedition, it was loosened when people were supposed to be abstracted from the cares of the world, as in performing sacrifice or attending at funeral rites. A girdle was also worn by the young women, even when the tunic was not girt up; and it was only discontinued by them on the day of marriage. To that circumstance, allusion is made in the present instance, as a proof of the violence that had been committed on Proserpine.]

[Footnote 61: *Had been carried away*.--Ver. 471. Clarke translates ‘tunc denique raptam Scisset,’ ‘knew that she had been kidnapped.’]

[Footnote 62: *Alpheian Nymph*.--Ver. 487. Alpheus was a river of Elis, in the northwestern part of Peloponnesus. Its present name is ‘Carbon.’]

[Footnote 63: *Beheld by my eyes*.--Ver. 505. Ovid here makes Arethusa the discoverer to Ceres of the fate of her daughter. In the Fourth Book of the Fasti, he represents the Sun as giving her that information, in which he follows the account given by Homer. Apollodorus describes the descent of Pluto as taking place at Hermione, a town of Argolis, in Peloponnesus, and the people of that place as informing Ceres of what had happened to her daughter.]

[Footnote 64: *If you call it finding*.--Ver. 520. This remark of the Goddess is very like that of the Irish sailor, who vowed that a thing could not be said to be lost when one knows where it is; and that his master’s kettle was quite safe, for he knew it to be at the bottom of the sea.]

[Footnote 65: *Plucked a pomegranate*.--Ver. 535. It was for this reason that the Thesmophoriazusæ, in the performance of the rites of Ceres, were especially careful not to taste the pomegranate. This fruit was most probably called ‘malum,’ or ‘pomum punicum,’ or ‘puniceum,’ from the deep red or purple color of the inside, and not as having been first introduced from Phœnicia.]

[Footnote 66: *Seven grains*.--Ver. 537. He says here ‘seven,’ but in the Fourth Book of the Fasti, only ‘three’ grains.]

[Footnote 67: *Ascalaphus*.--Ver. 539. He was the son of Acheron, by the Nymph Orphne, or Gorgyra, according to Apollodorus. The latter author says, that for his unseasonable discovery, Ceres placed a rock upon him; but that, having been liberated by Hercules, she changed him into an owl, called ὠτον. The Greek name of a lizard being ἀσκάλαβος, Mellman thinks that the transformation of the boy into a newt, or kind of lizard, which has just been related by the Poet, may have possibly originated in a confused version of the story of Ascalaphus.]

[Footnote 68: *Avernus*.--Ver. 540. Avernus was a lake of Campania, near Baiæ, of a fetid smell and gloomy aspect. Being feigned to be the mouth, or threshold, of the Infernal Regions, its name became generally used to signify Tartarus, or the Infernal Regions. The name is said to have been derived from the Greek word ἄορνος, ‘without birds,’ or ‘unfrequented by birds,’ as they could not endure the exhalations that were emitted by it.]

[Footnote 69: *Phlegethon*.--Ver. 544. This was a burning river of the Infernal Regions; which received its name from the Greek word φλέγω, ‘to burn.’]

[Footnote 70: *Acheloüs*.--Ver. 552. The Sirens were said to be the daughters of the river Acheloüs and of one of the Muses, either Calliope, Melpomene, or Terpsichore.]

### Riley's Explanation

Apollodorus says, that the terms of the treaty respecting Proserpine were, that she should stay on earth nine months with Ceres, and three with Pluto, in the Infernal Regions. Other writers divide the time equally; six months to Ceres, and six to Pluto. They also tell us that the story of Ascalaphus is founded on the fact, that he was one of the courtiers of Pluto, who, having advised his master to carry away Proserpine, did all that lay in his power to obstruct the endeavors of Ceres, and hinder the restoration of her daughter, on which Proserpine had him privately destroyed; to screen which deed the Fable was invented; the pernicious counsels which he gave his master being signified by the seeds of the pomegranate. It has also been suggested that the story of his change into an owl was based on the circumstance that he was the overseer of the mines of Pluto, in which he perished, removed from the light of day. Perhaps he was there crushed to death by the fall of a rock, which caused the poets to say that Proserpine had covered him with a large stone, as Apollodorus informs us, who also says that it was Ceres who inflicted the punishment upon him. The name 'Ascalaphus' signifies, 'one that breaks stones,' and, very probably, that name was only given him to denote his employment. Some writers state that he was changed into a lizard, which the Greeks call 'Ascalabos,' and, probably, the resemblance between the names gave rise to this version of the story.

Probably, the story of the Nymph Cyane reproaching Pluto with his treatment of Proserpine, and being thereupon changed by him into a fountain, has no other foundation than the propinquity of the place where Pluto's emissaries embarked to a stream of that name near the city of Syracuse; which was, perhaps, overflowing at that time, and may have impeded their passage.

Ovid, probably, feigned that the Sirens begged the Gods to change them into birds, that they might seek for Proserpine, on the ground of some existing tradition, that living on the coast of Italy, near the island of Sicily, and having heard of the misfortune that had befallen her, they ordered a ship with sails to be equipped to go in search of her. Further reference to the Sirens will be made, on treating of the adventures of Ulysses.

## Book V, Fable VI (lines 564–641)

*The Muse continues her song, in which Ceres, being satisfied with the decision of Jupiter relative to her daughter, returns to Arethusa, to learn the history of her adventures. The Nymph entertains the Goddess with the Story of the passion of Alpheus, and his pursuit of her; to avoid which, she implores the assistance of Diana, who changes her into a fountain.*

“But Jupiter being the mediator between his brother and his disconsolate sister, divides the rolling year equally {between them}. For {now}, the Goddess, a common Divinity of two kingdoms, is so many months with her mother, and just as many with her husband. Immediately the appearance of both her mind and her countenance is changed; for the brow of the Goddess, which, of late, might appear sad, even to Pluto, himself, is full of gladness; as the Sun, which has lately been covered with watery clouds, when he comes forth from the clouds, {now} dispersed. The genial Ceres, {now} at ease on the recovery of her daughter, {thus} asks, ‘What was the cause of thy wanderings? Why art thou, Arethusa, a sacred spring?’ The waters are silent, {and}, the Goddess raises her head from the deep fountain; and, having dried her green tresses with her hand, she relates the old amours of the stream of Elis.[71]

“‘I was,’ says she, ‘one of the Nymphs which exist in Achaia, nor did any one more eagerly skim along the glades than myself, nor with more industry set the nets. But though the reputation for beauty was never sought by me, although, {too}, I was of robust make, {still} I had the name of being beautiful. But my appearance, when so much commended, did not please me; and I, like a country lass, blushed at those endowments of person in which other females are wont to take a pride, and I deemed it a crime to please. I remember, I was returning weary from the Stymphalian[72] wood; the weather was hot, and my toil had redoubled the intense heat. I found a stream gliding on without any eddies, without any noise, {and} clear to the bottom; through which every pebble, at so great a depth, might be counted, {and} which you could hardly suppose to be in motion. The hoary willows[73] and poplars, nourished by the water, furnished a shade, spontaneously produced, along the shelving banks. I approached, and, at first, I dipped the soles of my feet, and then, as far as the knee. Not content with that, I undressed, and I laid my soft garments upon a bending willow; and, naked, I plunged into the waters.

“‘While I was striking them, and drawing them {towards me}, moving in a thousand ways, and was sending forth my extended arms, I perceived a most unusual murmuring noise beneath the middle of the stream; and, alarmed, I stood on the edge of the nearer bank. ‘Whither dost thou hasten, Arethusa?’ said Alpheus from his waves. ‘Whither dost thou hasten?’ again he said to me, in a hollow tone. Just as I was, I fled without my clothes; {for} the other side had my garments. So much the more swiftly did he pursue, and become inflamed; and, because I was naked, the

more tempting to him did I appear. Thus was I running; thus unrelentingly was he pursuing me; as the doves are wont to fly from the hawk with trembling wings, and as the hawk is wont to pursue the trembling doves, I held out in my course even as far as Orchomenus,[74] and Psophis,[75] and Cyllene, and the Mænalian valleys, and cold Erymanthus and Elis. Nor was he swifter than I, but unequal to {him} in strength, I was unable, any longer, to keep up the chase; for he was able to endure prolonged fatigue. However, I ran over fields {and} over mountains covered with trees, rocks too, and crags, and where there was no path. The sun was upon my back; I saw a long shadow advancing before my feet, unless, perhaps, it was my fear that saw it. But, at all events, I was alarmed at the sound of his feet, and his increased hardness of breathing was {now} fanning the fillets of my hair. Wearied with the exertion of my flight, I said, 'Give aid, Dictynna, to thy armor-bearer, {or} I am overtaken; {I}, to whom thou hast so often given thy bow to carry, and thy darts enclosed in a quiver.' The Goddess was moved, and, taking one of the dense clouds, she threw it over me. The river looked about for me, concealed in the darkness, and, in his ignorance sought about the encircling cloud and twice, unconsciously did he go around the place where the Goddess had concealed me, and twice did he cry, 'Ho, Arethusa![76] Ho, Arethusa!' What, then, were my feelings in my wretchedness? Were they not just those of the lamb, as it hears the wolves howling around the high sheep-folds? Or of the hare, which, lurking in the bush, beholds the hostile noses of the dogs, and dares not make a single movement with her body? Yet he does not depart; for no {further} does he trace any prints of my feet. He watches the cloud and the spot. A cold perspiration takes possession of my limbs {thus} besieged, and azure colored drops distil from all my body. Wherever I move my foot, {there} flows a lake; drops trickle from my hair, and, in less time than I take in acquainting thee with my fate, I was changed into a stream. But still the river recognized the waters, the objects of his love; and, having laid aside the shape of a mortal, which he had assumed, he was changed into his own waters, that he might mingle with me. {Thereupon}, the Delian Goddess cleaved the ground. Sinking, I was carried through dark caverns to Ortygia,[77] which, being dear to me, from the surname of my own Goddess, was the first to introduce me to the upper air.'"

[Footnote 71: *Stream of Elis.*--Ver. 576. The Alpheus really rose in Arcadia; but, as it ran through the territory of the Eleans, and discharged itself into the sea, near Cyllene, the seaport of that people, they worshipped it with divine honors.]

[Footnote 72: *Stymphalian.*--Ver. 585. Stymphalus was the name of a city, mountain, and river of Arcadia, near the territory of Elis.]

[Footnote 73: *Hoary willows.*--Ver. 590. The leaf of the willow has a whitish hue, especially on one side of it.]

[Footnote 74: *Orchomenus*.--Ver. 607. This was a city of Arcadia, in a marshy district, near to Mantinea. There was another place of the same name, in Bœotia, between Elatea and Coronea, famous for a splendid temple to the Graces, there erected.]

[Footnote 75: *Psophis*.--Ver. 607. This was a city of Arcadia also, adjoining to the Elean territory, which received its name from Psophis, the daughter of Lycaon, or of Eryx, according to some writers. There were several other towns of the same name. The other places here mentioned, with the exception of Elis, were mountains of Arcadia.]

[Footnote 76: *Ho, Arethusa!*--Ver. 625-6. Clarke thus translates these lines:--'And twice called out Soho, Arethusa! Soho, Arethusa! What thought had I then, poor soul!']

[Footnote 77: *To Ortygia*.--Ver. 640. From the similarity of its name to that of the Goddess Diana, who was called Ortygia, from the Isle of Delos, where she was born.]

## Riley's Explanation

Bochart tells us that the story of the fountain Arethusa and the river Alpheus, her lover, who traversed so many countries in pursuit of her, has no other foundation than an equivocal expression in the language of the first inhabitants of Sicily. The Phœnicians, who went to settle in that island, finding the fountain surrounded with willows, gave it the name of 'Alphaga,' or 'the fountain of the willows.' Others, again, gave it the name of 'Arith,' signifying 'a stream.' The Greeks, arriving there in after ages, not understanding the signification of these words, and remembering their own river Alpheus, in Elis, imagined that since the river and the fountain had nearly the same name, Alpheus had crossed the sea, to arrive in Sicily.

This notion appearing, probably, to the poets not devoid of ingenuity, they accordingly founded on it the romantic story of the passion of the river God Alpheus for the Nymph Arethusa. Some of the ancient historians appear, however, in their credulity, really to have believed, at least, a part of the story, as they seriously tell us, that the river Alpheus passes under the bed of the sea, and rises again in Sicily, near the fountain of Arethusa. Even among the more learned, this fable gained credit; for we find the oracle of Delphi ordering Archias to conduct a colony of Corinthians to Syracuse, and the priestess giving the following directions:--'Go into that island where the river Alpheus mixes his waters with the fair Arethusa.'

Pausanias avows, that he regards the story of Alpheus and Arethusa as a mere fable; but, not daring to dispute a fact established by the response of an oracle, he does not contradict the fact of the river running through the sea, though he is at a loss to understand how it can happen.

## Book V, Fable VII (lines 642–678)

*Ceres entrusts her chariot to Triptolemus, and orders him to go everywhere, and cultivate the earth. He obeys her, and, at length, arrives in Scythia, where Lyncus, designing to kill him, is changed into a lynx. The Muse then finishes her song, on which the daughters of Pierus are changed into magpies.*

"Thus far Arethusa. The fertile Goddess yoked[78] two dragons to her chariot, and curbed their mouths with bridles; and was borne through the mid air of heaven and of earth, and guided her light chariot to the Tritonian citadel, to Triptolemus; and she ordered him to scatter the seeds that were entrusted {to him} partly in the fallow ground, {and} partly {in the ground} restored to cultivation after so long a time. Now had the youth been borne on high over Europe and the lands of Asia,[79] and he arrived at the coast of Scythia: Lyncus was the king there. He entered the house of the king. Being asked whence he came, and the occasion of his coming, and his name, and his country, he said, 'My country is the famous Athens, my name is Triptolemus. I came neither in a ship through the waves, nor on foot by land; the pervious sky made a way for me. I bring the gifts of Ceres, which, scattered over the wide fields, are to yield {you} the fruitful harvests, and wholesome food.' The barbarian envies him; and that he himself may be {deemed} the author of so great a benefit, he receives him with hospitality, and, when overpowered with sleep, he attacks him with the sword. {But}, while attempting to pierce his breast, Ceres made him a lynx; and again sent the Mopsopian[80] youth to drive the sacred drawers of her chariot through the air.

"The greatest of us[81] had {now} finished her learned song. But the Nymphs, with unanimous voice, pronounced that the Goddesses who inhabit Helicon had proved the conquerors. Then the others, {thus} vanquished, began to scatter their abuse: 'Since,' said she, 'it is a trifling matter for you to have merited punishment by this contest, you add abuse, too, to your fault, and endurance is not permitted us: we shall proceed to punishment, and whither our resentment calls, we shall follow.' The Emathian sisters smiled, and despised our threatening language; and endeavoring to speak, and to menace with their insolent hands amid great clamor, they beheld quills growing out of their nails, and their arms covered with feathers. And they each see the face of the other shooting out into a hard beak, and new birds being added to the woods. And while they strive to beat their breasts elevated by the motion of their arms, they hang poised in the air, {as} magpies, the scandal of the groves. Even then their original talkativeness remains in {them} as birds, and their jarring garrulity, and their enormous love of chattering."

[Footnote 78: *Goddess yoked.*--Ver. 642. Clarke renders 'geminos Dea fertilis angues curribus admovit,' 'the fertile Goddess clapped two snakes to her chariot.']

[Footnote 79: *Lands of Asia*.--Ver. 648. Asia Minor is here meant; the other parts of Asia being included under the term 'Scythicas oras.']

[Footnote 80: *Mopsopian*.--Ver. 661. This very uneuphonious name is derived from Mopsopus, one of the ancient kings of Attica. It here means 'Athenian.']

[Footnote 81: *The greatest of us*.--Ver. 662. Namely, Calliope, who had commenced her song as the representative of the Muses, at line 341.]

## Riley's Explanation

Triptolemus reigned at Eleusis at the time when the mysteries of Ceres were established there. As we are told by Philochorus, he went with a ship, to carry corn into different countries, and introduced there the worship of Ceres, whose priest he was. This is, doubtless, the key for the explanation of the story, that Ceres nursed him on her own milk, and purified him by fire. Some have supposed that the fable refers to the epoch when agriculture was introduced into Greece: but it is much more probable that it relates simply to the introduction there of the mysterious worship of Ceres, which was probably imported from Egypt. It is possible that, at the same period, the Greeks may have learned some improved method of tilling the ground, acquired by their intercourse with Egypt.

Probably, the dangers which Triptolemus experienced in his voyages and travels, gave rise to the story of Lyncus, whose cruelty caused him to be changed into a lynx. Bochart and Le Clerc think that the fable of Triptolemus being drawn by winged dragons, is based upon the equivocal meaning of a Phœnician word, which signified either 'a winged dragon,' or 'a ship fastened with iron nails or bolts.' Philochorus, however, as cited by Eusebius, says that his ship was called a flying dragon, from its carrying the figure of a dragon on its prow. We learn from a fragment of Stobæus, that Erectheus, when engaged in a war against the Eleusinians, was told by the oracle that he would be victorious, if he sacrificed his daughter Proserpine. This, perhaps, may have given rise, or added somewhat, to the story of the rape of Proserpine by Pluto.

According to a fragment of Homer, cited by Pausanias, the names of the first Greeks, who were initiated into the mysteries of Ceres, were,--Celeus, Triptolemus, Eumolpus, and Diocles. Clement of Alexandria calls them Baubon, Dysaulus, Eubuleüs, Eumolpus, and Triptolemus. Eumolpus being the Hierophant, or explainer of the mysteries of Eleusis, made war against Erectheus, king of Athens. They were both killed in battle, and it was thereupon agreed that the posterity of Erectheus should be kings of Athens, and the descendants of Eumolpus should, in future, retain the office of Hierophant.

## Book VI, Fable I (lines 1–145)

*Arachne, vain-glorious of her ingenuity, challenges Minerva to a contest of skill in her art. The Goddess accepts the challenge, and, being enraged to see herself outdone, strikes her rival with her shuttle; upon which, Arachne, in her distress, hangs herself. Minerva, touched with compassion, transforms her into a spider.*

Tritonia had {meanwhile} lent an ear to such recitals as these, and she approved of the songs of the Aonian maids, and their just resentment. Then {thus she says} to herself: "To commend is but a trifling matter; let us, too, deserve commendation, and let us not permit our divine majesty to be slighted without {due} punishment." And {then} she turns her mind to the fate of the Mæonian Arachne; who, as she had heard, did not yield to her in the praises of the art of working in wool. She was renowned not for the place {of her birth}, nor for the origin of her family, but for her skill {alone}. Idmon, of Colophon,[1] her father, used to dye the soaking wool in Phocæan[2] purple.[3] Her mother was dead; but she, too, was of the lower rank, and of the same condition with her husband. Yet {Arachne}, by her skill, had acquired a memorable name throughout the cities of Lydia; although, born of a humble family, she used to live in the little {town} of Hypæpæ.[4] Often did the Nymphs desert the vineyards of their own Tymolus, that they might look at her admirable workmanship; {often} did the Nymphs of the {river} Pactolus[5] forsake their streams. And not only did it give them pleasure to look at the garments when made, but even, too, while they were being made, so much grace was there in her working. Whether it was that she was rolling the rough wool into its first balls, or whether she was unravelling the work with her fingers, and was softening the fleeces worked over again with long drawings out, equalling the mists {in their fineness}; or whether she was moving the {smooth} round spindle with her nimble thumb, or was embroidering with the needle, you might perceive that she had been instructed by Pallas.

This, however, she used to deny; and, being displeased with a mistress so famed, she said, "Let her contend with me. There is nothing which, if conquered, I should refuse {to endure}." Pallas personates an old woman; she both places false gray hair on her temples, and supports as well her infirm limbs by a staff. Then thus she begins to speak: "Old age has not everything which we should avoid; experience comes from lengthened years. Do not despise my advice; let the greatest fame for working wool be sought by thee among mortals. {But} yield to the Goddess, and, rash woman, ask pardon for thy speeches with suppliant voice. She will grant pardon at my entreaty." {The other} beholds her with scowling {eyes}, and leaves the threads she has begun; and scarcely restraining her hand, and discovering her anger by her looks, with such words as these does she reply to the disguised Pallas: "Thou comest {here} bereft of thy understanding,

and worn out with prolonged old age; and it is thy misfortune to have lived too long. If thou hast any daughter-in-law, if thou hast any daughter {of thy own}, let her listen to these remarks. I have sufficient knowledge for myself in myself, and do not imagine that thou hast availed anything by thy advice; my opinion is {still} the same. Why does not she come herself? why does she decline this contest?"

Then the Goddess says, "Lo! she is come;" and she casts aside the figure of an old woman, and shows herself {as} Pallas. The Nymphs and the Mygdonian[6] matrons venerate the Goddess. The virgin alone is not daunted. But still she blushes, and a sudden flush marks her reluctant features, and again it vanishes; {just} as the sky is wont to become tinted with purple, when Aurora is first stirring, and after a short time to grow white from the influence of the Sun. She persists in her determination, and, from a desire for a foolish victory, she rushes upon her own destruction. Nor, indeed, does the daughter of Jupiter decline {it}, or advise her any further, nor does she now put off the contest. There is no delay; they both take their stand in different places, and stretch out two webs {on the loom} with a fine warp. The web is tied around the beam; the sley separates the warp; the woof is inserted in the middle with sharp shuttles, which the fingers hurry along, and being drawn within the warp, the teeth notched in the moving sley strike it. Both hasten on, and girding up their garments to their breasts, they move their skilful arms, their eagerness beguiling their fatigue. There both the purple is being woven, which is subjected to the Tyrian brazen vessel,[7] and fine shades of minute difference; just as the rainbow, with its mighty arch, is wont to tint a long tract of the sky by means of the rays reflected by the shower: in which, though a thousand different colors are shining, yet the very transition eludes the eyes that look upon it; to such a degree is that which is adjacent the same; and yet the extremes are different. There, too, the pliant gold is mixed with the threads, and ancient subjects are represented on the webs.

Pallas embroiders the rock of Mars[8] in {Athens}, the citadel of Cecrops, and the old dispute about the name of the country. Twice six[9] celestial Gods are sitting on lofty seats in august state, with Jupiter in the midst. His own proper likeness distinguishes each of the Gods. The form of Jupiter is that of a monarch. She makes the God of the sea to be standing {there}, and to be striking the rugged rocks with his long trident, and a wild {horse} to be springing forth[10] out of the midst of the opening of the rock; by which pledge {of his favor} he lays claim to the city. But to herself she gives the shield, she gives the lance with its sharp point; she gives the helmet to her head, {and} her breast is protected by the Ægis. She {there} represents, too, the earth struck by her spear, producing a shoot of pale olive with its berries, and the Gods admiring it. Victory is the end of her work. But that the rival of her fame may learn from precedents what reward to expect for an attempt so mad, she adds, in four {different} parts, four contests bright in their coloring, and distinguished by diminutive figures. One corner contains Thracian

Rhodope and Hæmus, now cold mountains, formerly human bodies, who assumed to themselves the names of the supreme Gods. Another part contains the wretched fate of the Pygmæan matron.[11] Her, overcome in a contest, Juno commanded to be a crane, and to wage war against her own people. She depicts, too, Antigone,[12] who once dared to contend with the wife of the great Jupiter; {and} whom the royal Juno changed into a bird; nor did Ilion protect her, or her father Laomedon, from assuming wings, and {as} a white crane, from commending herself with her chattering beak. The only corner that remains, represents the bereft Cinyras; [13] and he, embracing the steps of a temple, {once} the limbs of his own daughters, and lying upon the stone, appears to be weeping. She surrounds the exterior borders with peaceful olive. That is the close; and with her own tree she puts an end to the work.

The Mæonian Nymph delineates Europa, deceived by the form of the bull; and you would think it a real bull, and real sea. She herself seems to be looking upon the land which she has left, and to be crying out to her companions, and to be in dread of the touch of the dashing waters, and to be drawing up her timid feet. She drew also Asterie,[14] seized by the struggling eagle; and made Leda, reclining beneath the wings of the swan. She added, how Jupiter, concealed under the form of a Satyr, impregnated {Antiope},[15] the beauteous daughter of Nycteus, with a twin offspring; {how} he was Amphitryon, when he beguiled thee, Tirynthian[16] dame; how, turned to gold, he deceived Danaë; {how}, changed into fire, the daughter of Asopus;[17] {how}, as a shepherd, Mnemosyne;[18] and as a speckled serpent, Deois.[19] She depicted thee too, Neptune, changed into a fierce bull, with the virgin daughter[20] of Æolus. Thou, seeming to be Enipeus,[21] didst beget the Aloïdæ; as a ram, thou didst delude {Theophane}, the daughter of Bisaltis.[22] Thee too the most bounteous mother of corn, with her yellow hair, experienced[23] as a steed; thee, the mother[24] of the winged horse, with her snaky locks, received as a bird; Melantho,[25] as a dolphin. To all these did she give their own likeness, and the {real} appearance of the {various} localities. There was Phœbus, under the form of a rustic; and how, {besides}, he was wearing the wings of a hawk at one time, at another the skin of a lion; how, too, as a shepherd, he deceived Isse,[26] the daughter of Macareus. How Liber deceived Erigone, [27] in a fictitious bunch of grapes; {and} how Saturn[28] begot the two-formed Chiron, in {the form of} a horse. The extreme part of the web, being enclosed in a fine border, had flowers interwoven with the twining ivy.

Pallas could not blame that work, nor could Envy {censure} it. The yellow-haired Virgin grieved at her success, and tore the web embroidered with the criminal acts of the Gods of heaven. And as she was holding her shuttle {made of boxwood} from Mount Cytorus, three or four times did she strike the forehead of Arachne, the daughter of Idmon. The unhappy creature could not endure it; and being of a high spirit, she tied up her throat in a halter. Pallas, taking compassion, bore her up as she hung; and thus she said: “Live on indeed, wicked one,[29] but still hang; and

let the same decree of punishment be pronounced against thy race, and against thy latest posterity, that thou mayst not be free from care in time to come." After that, as she departed, she sprinkled her with the juices of an Hecatean herb;[30] and immediately her hair, touched by the noxious drug, fell off, and together with it her nose and ears. The head of herself, {now} small as well throughout her whole body, becomes very small. Her slender fingers cleave to her sides as legs; her belly takes possession of the rest {of her}; but out of this she gives forth a thread; and {as} a spider, she works at her web as formerly.

[Footnote 1: *Colophon*.--Ver. 8. Colophon was an opulent city of Lydia, famous for an oracle of Apollo there.]

[Footnote 2: *Phocæan*.--Ver. 9. Phocæa was a city of Æolia, in Ionia, on the shores of the Mediterranean, famous for its purple dye.]

[Footnote 3: *Purple*.--Ver. 9. 'Murex' was a shell-fish, now called 'the purple,' the juices of which were much used by the ancients for dyeing a deep purple color. The most valuable kinds were found near Tyre and Phocæa, mentioned in the text.]

[Footnote 4: *Hypæpæ*.--Ver. 13. This was a little town of Lydia, near the banks of the river Cayster. It was situate on the descent of Mount Tymolus, or Tmolus, famed for its wines and saffron.]

[Footnote 5: *Pactolus*.--Ver. 16. This was a river of Lydia, which was said to have sands of gold.]

[Footnote 6: *Mygdonian*.--Ver. 45. Mygdonia was a small territory of Phrygia, bordering upon Lydia, and colonized by a people from Thrace. Probably these persons had come from the neighboring country, to see the exquisite works of Arachne. As the Poet tells us, many were present when the Goddess discovered herself, and professed their respect and veneration, while Arachne alone remained unmoved.]

[Footnote 7: *Brazen vessel*.--Ver. 60. It seems that brazen cauldrons were used for the purposes of dyeing, in preference to those of iron.]

[Footnote 8: *Rock of Mars*.--Ver. 70. This was the spot called Areiopagus, which was said to have received its name from the trial there of Mars, when he was accused by Neptune of having slain his son Halirrothius.]

[Footnote 9: *Twice six*.--Ver. 72. These were the 'Dii consentes,' mentioned before, in the note to Book i., l. 172. They are thus enumerated in an Elegiac couplet, more consistent with the rules of prosody than the two lines there quoted:--

‘Vulcanus, Mars, Sol, Neptunus, Jupiter, Hermes, Vesta, Diana, Ceres, Juno, Minerva, Venus.’]

[Footnote 10: *To be springing forth.*--Ver. 76-7. Clarke renders ‘facit--e vulnere saxi Exsiluisse ferum,’ ‘she makes a wild horse bounce out of the opening in the rock.’]

[Footnote 11: *Pygmæan matron.*--Ver. 90. According to Ælian, the name of this queen of the Pigmies was Gerane, while other writers call her Pygas. She was worshipped by her subjects as a Goddess, which raised her to such a degree of conceit, that she despised the worship of the Deities, especially of Juno and Diana, on which in their indignation, they changed her into a crane, the most active enemy of the Pygmies. These people were dwarfs, living either in India, Arabia, or Thrace, and they were said not to exceed a cubit in height.]

[Footnote 12: *Antigone.*--Ver. 93. She was the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy, and was remarkable for the extreme beauty of her hair. Proud of this, she used to boast that she resembled Juno; on which the Goddess, offended at her presumption, changed her hair into serpents. In compassion, the Deities afterwards transformed her into a stork.]

[Footnote 13: *Cinyras.*--Ver. 98. Cinyras had several daughters (besides Myrrha), remarkable for their extreme beauty. Growing insolent upon the strength of their good looks, and pretending to surpass even Juno herself in beauty, they incurred the resentment of that Goddess, who changed them into the steps of a temple, and transformed their father into a stone, as he was embracing the steps.]

[Footnote 14: *Asterie.*--Ver. 108. She was the daughter of Cæus, the Titan, and of Phœbe, and was ravished by Jupiter under the form of an eagle. She was the wife of Perses, and the mother of Hecate. Flying from the wrath of Jupiter, she was first changed by him into a quail; and afterwards into a stone.]

[Footnote 15: *Antiope.*--Ver. 110. Antiope was the daughter of Nycteus, a king of Bœotia. Being seduced by Jupiter under the form of a Satyr, she bore two sons, Zethus and Amphion. On being insulted by Dirce, she was seized with madness, and was cured by Phocus, whom she is said to have afterwards married.]

[Footnote 16: *Tirynthian.*--Ver. 112. Tirynthus was a city near Argos, where Hercules was born and educated, and from which place his mother, Alcmene, derived her present appellation.]

[Footnote 17: *Daughter of Asopus.*--Ver. 113. Jupiter changed himself into fire, or, according to some, into an eagle, to seduce Ægina, the daughter of Asopus, king of Bœotia. By her he was the father of Æacus.]

[Footnote 18: *Mnemosyne*.--Ver. 114. This Nymph, as already mentioned, became the mother of the Nine Muses, having been seduced by Jupiter.]

[Footnote 19: *Deois*.--Ver. 114. Proserpine was called Deois, or Dêous Δηοῦς κόρη, from her mother Ceres, who was called Δηὼ by the Greeks, from the verb δήω, 'to find;' because as it was said, when seeking for her daughter, the universal answer of those who wished her success in her search, was, δήεις, 'You will find her.']

[Footnote 20: *Virgin daughter*.--Ver. 116. This was Canace, or Arne, the daughter of Æolus, whom Neptune seduced under the form of a bull.]

[Footnote 21: *Enipeus*.--Ver. 116. Under the form of Enipeus, a river of Thessaly, Neptune committed violence upon Iphimedeia, the wife of the giant Aloëus, and by her was the father of the giants Otus and Ephialtes.]

[Footnote 22: *Bisaltis*.--Ver. 117. Theophane was the daughter of Bisaltis. Changing her into a sheep, and himself into a ram, Neptune begot the Ram with the golden fleece, that bore Phryxus to Colchis.]

[Footnote 23: *Experienced*.--Ver. 119. 'Te sensit,' repeated twice in this line, Clarke translates, not in a very elegant manner, 'had a bout with thee,' and 'had a touch from thee.' By Neptune, Ceres became the mother of the horse Arion; or, according to some, of a daughter, whose name it was not deemed lawful to mention.]

[Footnote 24: *Thee the mother*.--Ver. 119. This was Medusa, who, according to some, was the mother of the horse Pegasus, by Neptune, though it is more generally said that it sprang from her blood, when she was slain by Perseus.]

[Footnote 25: *Melantho*.--Ver. 120. Melantho was the daughter either of Proteus, or of Deucalion, and was the mother of Delphus, by Neptune.]

[Footnote 26: *Isse*.--Ver. 124. She was a native of either Lesbos, or Eubœa. Her father, Macareus, was the son of Jupiter and Cyrene.]

[Footnote 27: *Erigone*.--Ver. 125. She was the daughter of Icarus, and was placed among the Constellations.]

[Footnote 28: *How Saturn*.--Ver. 126. By Phillyra, Saturn was the father of the Centaur Chiron. We may here remark, that Arachne was not very complimentary to the Gods, in the choice of her subjects; probably it was not her intention or wish to be so.]

[Footnote 29: *Wicked one*.--Ver. 136. Clarke translates 'improba,' 'thou wicked jade.']

[Footnote 30: *An Hecatean Herb*.--Ver. 139. This was aconite, or wolfsbane, said to have been discovered by Hecate, the mother of Medea. She was the first who sought after, and taught the properties of poisonous herbs. Some accounts say, that the aconite was produced from the foam of Cerberus, when dragged by Hercules from the infernal regions.]

## Riley's Explanation

The story of Arachne is most probably based upon the simple fact, that she was the most skilful artist of her time, at working in silk and wool. Pliny the Elder tells us, that Arachne, the daughter of Idmon, a Lydian by birth, and of low extraction, invented the art of making linen cloths and nets; which invention was also by some attributed to Minerva. This competition, then, for the merit of the invention, is the foundation of the challenge here described by the Poet. As, however, Arachne is said to have hanged herself in despair, she probably fell a prey to some cause of grief or discontent, the particulars of which, in their simple form, have not come down to us. Perhaps the similarity of her name and employment with those of the spider, as known among the Greeks, gave rise to the story of her alleged transformation; unless we should prefer to attribute the story to the fact of the Hebrew word "arag," signifying to spin, and, in some degree, resembling her name.

In this story, Ovid takes the opportunity of touching upon several fables, the subjects whereof he states to have been represented in the works of Minerva and Arachne. He alludes, among other matters, to the dispute between Neptune and Minerva, about giving a name to the city of Athens. St. Augustine, on the authority of Varro, says, that Cecrops, in building that city, found an olive tree and a fountain, and that the oracle at Delphi, on being consulted, stating that both Minerva and Neptune had a right to name the city, the Senate decided in favor of the Goddess; and this circumstance, he says, gave rise to the story. According to some writers, it was based on the fact, that Cranaüs changed the name of the city from Poseidonius, which it was called after Neptune, to Athenæ, after his own daughter Athena: and as the Areiopagus sanctioned this change, it was fabled that Neptune had been overcome by the judgment of the Gods.

The Jesuit Tournemine suggests the following explanation of the story:--He says, that the aborigines of Attica, being conquered by the Pelasgians, learned from them the art of navigation, which they turned to account by becoming pirates. Cecrops, bringing a colony from Saïs, in Egypt, tried to abolish this barbarous custom, and taught them a more civilized mode of life; and, among other things, he showed them how to till the earth, and to raise the olive, for the cultivation of which he found the soil very favorable. He also introduced the worship of Minerva, or Athena, as she was called, a Goddess highly honored at Saïs, and to whom the olive tree was dedicated. Her the Athenians afterwards regarded as the patroness of their city, which they called after her name. Athens becoming famous for its olives, and, considerable profit arising

from their cultivation, the new settlers attempted to wean the natives from piracy, by calling their attention to agricultural pursuits. To succeed in this, they composed a fable, in which Neptune was said to be overcome by Minerva; who, even in the judgment of the twelve greater deities, had found out something of more utility than he. This fable Tournemine supposes to have been composed in the ancient language of the country, which was the Phrygian, mingled with many Phœnician words; and, as in those languages the same word signifies either a ship or a horse, those who afterwards interpreted the fable, took the word in the latter signification, and spoke of a horse instead of a ship, which was really the original emblem employed in the fiction.

Vossius thinks that the fable originated in a dispute between the sailors of Athens, who acknowledged Neptune for their chief, and the people, who followed the Senate, governed by Minerva. The people prevailed, and a life of civilization, marked by attention to the pursuits of agriculture, was substituted for one of piracy; which gave occasion for the saying, that Minerva had overcome Neptune.

With reference to the intrigues and lustful actions attributed to the various Deities by Arachne in the delineations on her embroidery, we may here remark, by way of elucidating the origin of these stories in general, that, in early times, when the earth was sunk in ignorance and superstition, and might formed the only right in the heathen world, where a king or petty chieftain demanded the daughter of a neighbor in marriage, and met with a refusal, he immediately had recourse to arms, to obtain her by force. Their standards and ships, on these expeditions, carrying their ensigns, consisting of birds, beasts, or fabulous monsters, gave occasion to those who described their feats of prowess to say, that the ravisher had changed himself into a bull, an eagle, or a lion, for the purpose of effecting his object. The kings and potentates of those days, being frequently called Jupiter, Apollo, Neptune, etc., and the priests of the Gods so named often obtaining their ends by assuming the names of the Divinities they served, we can account the more easily for the number of intrigues and abominable actions, attended by changes and transformations, which the poets and mythologists attribute to many of the Deities.

Palæphatus suggests a very ingenious method of accounting for these stories; founded, however, it must be owned, on a very low estimate of female virtue in those times. He says, that these fabulous narratives originate in the figures of different animals which were engraved on the coins of those times; and that, when money was given to buy over or to procure the seduction of a female, it was afterward said that the lover had himself taken the figure which was represented on the coin, by means of which his object had been effected.

Ovid, in common with many of the ancient historians, geographers, and naturalists, mentions the Pygmies, of which, from the time of Homer downwards, a nation was supposed to exist, in a

state of continual warfare with the Cranes. Aristotle, who believed in their existence, placed them in Æthiopia; Pliny, Solinus, and Philostratus in India, near the source of the Ganges; others again, in Scythia, on the banks of the Danube. Some of the moderns have attempted to explain the origin of this prevalent notion. Olaüs Magnus thinks the Samoeids and Laplanders to have been the Pygmies of Homer. Gesner and others fancy that they have found their originals in Thuringia; while Albertus Magnus supposed that the Pygmies were the monkeys, which are so numerous in the interior of Africa, and which were taken for human beings of diminutive stature. Vander Hart, who has written a most ingenious treatise on the subject, suggests that the fable originated in a war between two cities in Greece, Pagæ and Gerania, the similarity of whose names to those of the Pygmies and the Cranes, gave occasion to their neighbors, the Corinthians, to confer on them those nicknames. It is most probable, however, that the story was founded upon the diminutive stature of some of the native tribes of the interior of Africa.

As to the fable of Pygas being changed into a crane, Banier suggests, that the origin of it may be found in the work of Antoninus Liberalis, quoting from the Theogony of Bœus. That poet, whose works are lost, says, that among the Pygmies there was a very beautiful princess, named Œnoë, who greatly oppressed her subjects. Having married Nicodamas, she had by him a son, named Mopsus, whom her subjects seized upon, to educate him in their own way. She accordingly raised levies against her own subjects; and that circumstance, together with the name of Gerane, which, according to Ælian, she also bore, gave rise to the fable, which said that she was changed into a crane; the resemblance which it bore to ‘geranos,’ the Greek for ‘a crane,’ suggesting the foundation of the story.

## Book VI, Fable II (lines 146–312)

*The Theban matrons, forming a solemn procession in honor of Latona, Niobe esteems herself superior to the Goddess, and treats her and her offspring with contempt; on which, Apollo and Diana, to avenge the affront offered to their mother, destroy all the children of Niobe; and she, herself, is changed into a statue.*

All Lydia is in an uproar, and the rumor of the fact goes through the town of Phrygia, and fills the wide world with discourse {thereon}. Before her own marriage Niobe had known her,[31] at the time, when still single, she was inhabiting Mæonia and Sipylus.[32] And yet by the punishment of her countrywoman, Arachne, she was not warned to yield to the inhabitants of Heaven, and to use less boastful words. Many things augmented her pride; but yet, neither the skill of her husband, nor the descent of them both, nor the sovereignty of a mighty kingdom, pleased her so much (although all of them did please her) as her own progeny; and Niobe might have been pronounced the happiest of mothers, if she had not so seemed to herself.

For Manto, the daughter of Tiresias, foreknowing the future, urged by a divine impulse, had proclaimed through the middle of the streets, “Ye women of Ismenus, go all of you,[33] and give to Latona, and the two children of Latona, the pious frankincense, together with prayers, and wreathe your hair with laurel; by my mouth does Latona command {this}.” Obedience is paid; and all the Theban women adorn their temples with leaves {of laurel}, as commanded, and offer frankincense on the sacred fires, and words of supplication. Lo! Niobe comes, surrounded with a crowd of attendants, conspicuous for the gold interwoven in her Phrygian garments, and beautiful, so far as anger will allow; and tossing her hair, hanging down on both shoulders, with her graceful head, she stands still; and as she loftily casts around her haughty eyes, she says, “What madness is this to prefer the inhabitants of Heaven, that you have {only} heard of, to those who are seen? or why is Latona worshipped at the altars, {and} my Godhead is still without its {due} frankincense? Tantalus was my father, who alone was allowed to approach the tables of the Gods above. The sister of the Pleiades[34] is my mother; the most mighty Atlas is my grandsire, who bears the æthereal skies upon his neck. Jupiter is my other grandsire; of him, too, I boast as my father-in-law.[35] The Phrygian nations dread me; the palace of Cadmus is subject to me as its mistress; and the walls that were formed by the strings of my husband’s {lyre}, together with their people, are governed by me and my husband; to whatever part of the house I turn my eyes, immense wealth is seen. To this is added a face worthy of a Goddess. Add to this my seven daughters,[36] and as many sons, and, at a future day, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law. Now inquire what ground my pride has {for its existence}; and presume to prefer Latona the Titaness, the daughter of some obscure Cæus, to whom, when in travail,[37]

the great earth once refused a little spot, to myself. Neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by water, was your Goddess received; she was banished the world, till Delos, pitying the wanderer, said, “Thou dost roam a stranger on the land, I in the waves;” and gave her an unstable place {of rest}. She was made the mother of two children, that is {but} the seventh part of my issue. I am fortunate, and who shall deny it? and fortunate I shall remain; who, too, can doubt of that? Plenty has made me secure; I am too great for Fortune possibly to hurt; and, though she should take away many things from me, {even then} much more will she leave me: my {many} blessings have now risen superior to apprehensions. Suppose it possible for some part of this multitude of my children to be taken away {from me}; still, thus stripped, I shall not be reduced to two, the number of Latona; an amount, by the number of which, how far, {I pray}, is she removed from one that is childless? Go from the sacrifice; hasten away from the sacrifice, and remove the laurel from your hair!”

They remove it, and the sacrifice they leave unperformed; and what they can do, they adore the Divinity in gentle murmurs. The Goddess was indignant; and on the highest top of {Mount} Cynthus, she spoke to her two children in such words as these: “Behold! I, your mother, proud of having borne you, and who shall yield to no one of the Goddesses, except to Juno {alone}, am called in question whether I am a Goddess, and, for all future ages, I am driven from the altars devoted {to me}, unless you give me aid. Nor is this my only grief; the daughter of Tantalus has added abusive language to her shocking deeds, and has dared to postpone you to her own children, and (what {I wish} may fall upon herself), she has called me childless; and the profane {wretch} has discovered a tongue like her father’s.”[38] To this relation Latona was going to add entreaties, when Phœbus said, “Cease thy complaints, ’tis prolonging the delay of her punishment.” Phœbe said the same; and, by a speedy descent through the air, they arrived, covered with clouds, at the citadel of Cadmus.

There was near the walls a plain, level, and extending far and wide, trampled continually by horses, where multitudes of wheels and hard hoofs had softened the clods placed beneath them. There, part of the seven sons of Amphion are mounting upon their spirited steeds, and press their backs, red with the Tyrian dye, and wield the reins heavy with gold; of these, Ismenus, who had formerly been the first burden of his mother, while he is guiding the steps of the horses in a perfect circle, and is curbing their foaming mouths, cries aloud, “Ah, wretched me!” and, pierced through the middle of his breast, bears a dart {therein}; and the reins dropping from his dying hand, by degrees he falls on his side, over {the horse’s} shoulder. The next {to him}, Sipylus, on hearing the sound of a quiver in the air, gives rein[39] {to his horse}; as when the pilot, sensible of the storm {approaching}, flies on seeing a cloud, and unfurls the hanging sails on every side, that the light breeze may by no means escape them. He gives rein, {I said}; while thus giving it, the unerring dart overtakes him, and an arrow sticks quivering in the top of his neck, and the

bare steel protrudes from his throat. He, as he is bending forward, rolls over the neck, {now} let loose, and {over} the mane, and stains the ground with his warm blood. The unhappy Phædimus, and Tantalus, the heir to the name of his grandsire, when they had put an end to their wonted exercise {of riding}, had turned to the youthful exercises of the palæstra, glowing with oil;[40] and now had they brought[41] breast to breast, struggling in a close grapple, when an arrow, sped onward from the stretched bow, pierced them both, just as they were united together. At the same instant they groaned aloud, and together they laid their limbs on the ground, writhing with pain; together as they lay, for the last time, they rolled their eyeballs, and together they breathed forth their life.

Alphenor sees this, and, beating his torn breast, flies to them, to lift up their cold limbs in his embrace, and falls in this affectionate duty. For the Delian God pierces the inner part of his midriff with the fatal steel. Soon as it is pulled out, a part of his lungs is dragged forth on the barbs, and his blood is poured forth, with his life, into the air; but no single wound reaches the unshaven Damasicthon. He is struck where the leg commences, and where the sinewy ham makes the space between the joints soft; and while he is trying with his hand to draw out the fatal weapon, another arrow is driven through his neck, up to the feathers. The blood drives this out, and itself starting forth, springs up on high, and, piercing the air, spouts forth afar. The last {of them}, Ilioneus, had raised his unavailing arms in prayer, and had said, “O, all ye Gods, in common, (not knowing that all were not to be addressed) spare me!” The {God}, the bearer of the bow, was moved, when now his arrow could not be recalled; yet he died with the slightest wound {of all}, his heart not being struck deep by the arrow.

The report of this calamity, and the grief of the people, and the tears of her family, made the mother acquainted with a calamity so sudden, wondering that it could have happened, and enraged that the Gods above had dared this, {and} that they enjoyed a privilege so great. For Amphion the father, thrusting his sword through his breast, dying, had ended his grief together with his life. Alas! how different is this Niobe from that Niobe who had lately driven the people from the altars of Latona, and, with lofty head, had directed her steps through the midst of the city, envied by her own people, but now to be pitied even by an enemy! She falls down upon the cold bodies, and with no distinction she distributes her last kisses among all her sons. Raising her livid arms from these towards heaven, she says, “Glut thyself, cruel Latona, with my sorrow; glut thyself, and satiate thy breast with my mourning; satiate, too, thy relentless heart with seven deaths. I have received my death-blow;[42] exult and triumph, my victorious enemy. But why victorious? More remains to me, in my misery, than to thee, in thy happiness. Even after so many deaths, I am the conqueror.” {Thus} she spoke; {when} the string twanged from the bent bow, which affrighted all but Niobe alone; she {became} bold by her misfortunes.

The sisters were standing in black array, with their hair dishevelled, before the biers[43] of their brothers. One of these, drawing out the weapon sticking in her entrails, about to die, swooned away, with her face placed upon her brother. Another, endeavoring to console her wretched parent, was suddenly silent, and was doubled together with an invisible wound; and did not close her mouth, until after the breath had departed. Another, vainly flying, falls down; another dies upon her sister; another lies hid; another you might see trembling. And {now} six being put to death, and having received different wounds, the last {only} remains; her mother covering her with all her body, {and} with all her garments, cries, “Leave me but one, and that the youngest; the youngest only do I ask out of so many, and {that but} one.” And while she was entreating, she, for whom she was entreating, was slain. Childless, she sat down among her dead sons and daughters and husband, and became hardened by her woes. The breeze moves no hair {of hers}; in her features is a color without blood; her eyes stand unmoved in her sad cheeks; in her form there is no {appearance} of life. Her tongue itself, too, congeals within, together with her hardened palate, and the veins cease to be able to be moved. Her neck can neither be bent, nor can her arms give any motion, nor her feet move. Within her entrails, too, it is stone.

Still did she weep on; and, enveloped in a hurricane of mighty wind, she was borne away to her native land. There, fixed on the top of a mountain,[44] she dissolves; and even yet does the marble distil tears.

[Footnote 31: *Had known her*.--Ver. 148. This was the more likely, as Tantalus, the father of Niobe, was king of both Phrygia and Lydia.]

[Footnote 32: *Sipylus*.--Ver. 149. This was the name of both a city and a mountain of Lydia.]

[Footnote 33: *Go all of you*.--Ver. 159. Clarke renders the words ‘Ismenides, ite frequentes,’ ‘Go, ye Theban ladies in general.’]

[Footnote 34: *Sister of the Pleiades*.--Ver. 174. Taygete, one of the Pleiades, was the mother of Niobe.]

[Footnote 35: *As my father-in-law*.--Ver. 176. Because Jupiter was the father of her husband, Amphion.]

[Footnote 36: *Seven daughters*.--Ver. 182. Tzetzes enumerates fourteen daughters of Niobe, and gives their names.]

[Footnote 37: *When in travail*.--Ver. 187. She alludes to the occasion on which Latona fled from the serpent Python, which Juno, in her jealousy, had sent against her; and when Delos, which had hitherto been a floating island, became immovable, for the convenience of Latona, in labor

with Apollo and Diana. That island was said to have received its name from the Greek, δῆλος, 'manifest,' or 'appearing,' from having risen to the surface of the sea on that occasion.]

[Footnote 38: *Like her father's*.--Ver. 213. Latona alludes to one of the crimes of Tantalus, the father of Niobe, who was accused of having indiscreetly divulged the secrets of the Gods.]

[Footnote 39: *Gives rein*.--Ver. 230. This was done with the intention of making his escape.]

[Footnote 40: *Glowing with oil*.--Ver. 241. Clarke renders this line, 'Were gone to the juvenile work of neat wrestling.' It would be hard to say what 'neat' wrestling is. He seems not to have known, that the 'Palæstra' was called 'nitida,' as shining with the oil which the wrestlers used for making their limbs supple, and the more difficult for their antagonist to grasp. Juvenal gives the epithet 'ceromaticum' to the neck of the athlete, or wrestler, which word means 'rubbed with wrestler's oil.']

[Footnote 41: *Now had they brought*.--Ver. 243-4. Clarke thus translates 'Et jam contulerant arcto luctantia nexu Pectora pectoribus;' 'And now they had clapped breast to breast, struggling in a close hug.']

[Footnote 42: *I have received my death-blow*.--Ver. 283. 'Efferor' literally means, 'I am carried out.' 'Effero' was the term used to signify the carrying of the body out of the city walls, for the purposes of burial.]

[Footnote 43: *Before the biers*.--Ver. 289. The body of the deceased person was in ancient times laid out on a bed of the ordinary kind, with a pillow for supporting the head and back; among the Romans, it was placed in the vestibule of the house, with its feet towards the door, and was dressed in the best robe which the deceased had worn when alive. Among the better classes, the body was borne to the place of burial, or the funeral pile, on a couch, which was called 'feretrum,' or 'capulus.' This was sometimes made of ivory, and covered with gold and purple.]

[Footnote 44: *Top of a mountain*.--Ver. 311. This was Mount Sipylus, in Bœotia, which, as we learn from Pausanias, had on its summit a rock, which, at a distance, strongly resembled a female in an attitude of sorrow. This resemblance is said to exist even at the present day.]

### Riley's Explanation

All the ancient historians agree with Diodorus Siculus and Apollodorus, that Niobe was the daughter of Tantalus, and the sister of Pelops; but she must not be confounded with a second Niobe, who was the daughter of Phoroneus, and the first mortal (Homer tells us) with whom Jupiter fell in love. Homer says that she was the mother of twelve children, six sons and six daughters. Herodotus says, that she had but two sons and three daughters. Diodorus Siculus

makes her the mother of fourteen children, seven of each sex. Apollodorus, on the authority of Hesiod, says, that she had ten sons and as many daughters; but gives the names of fourteen only. The story of the destruction of her children is most likely based upon truth, and bears reference to a historical fact. The plague, which ravaged the city of Thebes, destroyed all the children of Niobe; and contagious distempers being attributed to the excessive heat of the sun, it was fabled that Apollo had killed them with his arrows; while women, who died of the plague, were said to owe their death to the anger of Diana. Thus, Homer says, that Laodamia and the mother of Andromache were killed by Diana. Valerius Flaccus relates the sorrow of Clytie, the wife of Cyzicus, on the death of her mother, killed by the same Goddess; so the Scholiast on Pindar (Pythia, ode iii.) says, on the authority of Pherecydes, that Apollo sent Diana to kill Coronis and several other women. Eustathius distinctly asserts, that the poets attributed the deaths of men, who died of the plague, to Apollo; and those of women, dying a similar death, to Diana.

This supposition is based upon rational and just grounds; since many contagious distempers may be clearly traced to the exhalations of the earth, acted on by the intense heat of the sun. Homer, most probably, means this, when he says that the plague came upon the Grecian camp, on the God, in his anger, discharging his arrows against it; or, in other words, when the extreme heat of his rays had caused a corruption of the atmosphere. It may be here observed, that arrows were the symbol of Apollo, when angry, and the harp when he was propitious. Diogenes Laertius tells us, that, during the prevalence of the plague, it was the custom to place branches of laurel on the doors of the houses, in the hope that the God, being reminded of Daphne, would spare the places which thereby claimed his protection.

Ovid says, that the sons of Niobe were killed while managing their horses; but Pausanias tells us that they died on Mount Cithæron, while engaged in hunting, and that her daughters died at Thebes. Homer says, that her children remained nine days without burial, because the Gods changed the Thebans into stones, and that the offended Divinities themselves performed the funeral rites on the tenth day; the meaning probably, is, that, they dying of the plague, no one ventured to bury them, and all seemed insensible to the sorrows of Niobe, as each consulted his own safety. Ismenus, her eldest son, not being able to endure the pain of his malady, is said to have thrown himself into a river of Bœotia, which, from that circumstance, received his name. After the death of her husband and children, Niobe is said to have retired to Mount Sipylus, in Lydia, where she died. Here, as Pausanias informs us, was a rock, resembling, at a distance, a woman overwhelmed with grief; though according to the same author, who had visited it, the resemblance could not be traced on approaching it. On this ground, Ovid relates, that she was borne on a whirlwind to the top of a Lydian mountain, where she was changed into a rock.

Pausanias tells us, that Melibœa, or Chloris, and Amycle, two of her daughters, appeased Diana, who preserved their lives; or that, in other words, they recovered from the plague; though he

inclines to credit the version of Homer, who says that all of her children died by the hands of Apollo and Diana. Melibœa received the surname of Chloris, from the paleness which ensued on her alarm at the sudden death of her sisters.

## Book VI, Fable III (lines 313–381)

*Latona, fatigued with the burden of her two children, during a long journey, and parched with thirst, goes to drink at a pond, near which some countrymen are at work. These clowns, in a brutal manner, not only hinder her from drinking, but trouble the water to make it muddy; on which, the Goddess, to punish their brutality, transforms them into frogs.*

But then, all, both women and men, dread the wrath of the divinity, {thus} manifested, and with more zeal {than ever} all venerate with {divine} worship the great godhead of the Deity who produced the twins; and, as {commonly} happens, from a recent fact they recur to the narration of former events.

One of them says, “Some countrymen of old, in the fields of fertile Lycia, {once} insulted the Goddess, {but} not with impunity. The thing, indeed, is but little known, through the obscure station of the individuals, still it is wonderful. I have seen upon the spot, the pool and the lake noted for the miracle. For my father being now advanced in years, and incapable of travel, ordered me to bring thence some choice oxen, and on my setting out, had given me a guide of that nation: with whom, while I was traversing the pastures, behold! an ancient altar, black with the ashes of sacrifices, was standing in the middle of a lake, surrounded with quivering reeds. My guide stood still, and said in a timid whisper, ‘Be propitious to me;’ and with a like whisper, I said, ‘Be propitious.’ However, I asked him whether it was an altar of the Naiads, or of Faunus, or of some native God; when the stranger answered me in such words; ‘Young man, there is no mountain Divinity for this altar. She calls this her own, whom once the royal Juno banished from the world; whom the wandering Delos, at the time when it was swimming as a light island, hardly received at her entreaties. There Latona, leaning against a palm, together with the tree of Pallas, brought forth twins, in spite of their stepmother {Juno}. Hence, too, the newly delivered {Goddess} is said to have fled from Juno, and in her bosom to have carried the two divinities, her children. And now the Goddess, wearied with her prolonged toil, being parched with the heat of the season, contracted thirst in the country of Lycia, which bred the Chimæra[45] when the intense sun was scorching the fields; the craving children, too, had exhausted her suckling breasts. By chance she beheld a lake[46] of fine water, in the bottom of a valley; some countrymen were there, gathering bushy osiers, together with bulrushes, and sedge natural to fenny spots. The Titaness approached, and bending her knee, she pressed the ground, that she might take up the cool water to drink; the company of rustics forbade it. The Goddess thus addressed them, as they forbade her: ‘Why do you deny me water? The use of water is common {to all}. Nature has made neither sun, nor air, nor the running stream, the property of any one. To her public bounty have I come, which yet I humbly beg of you to grant me. I was not

intending to bathe my limbs here, and my wearied joints, but to relieve my thirst. My mouth, as I speak, lacks moisture, and my jaws are parched, and scarce is there a passage for my voice therein; a draught of water will be nectar to me, and I shall own, that, together with it, I have received my life {at your hands}. In {that} water you will be giving me life. Let these, too, move you, who hold out their little arms from my bosom'; and by chance the children were holding out their arms.

"What person might not these kindly words of the Goddess have been able to influence? Still, they persist in hindering {the Goddess thus} entreating them; and moreover add threats and abusive language, if she does not retire to a distance. Nor is this enough. They likewise muddy the lake itself {with} their feet and hands; and they raise the soft mud from the very bottom of the water, by spitefully jumping to and fro. Resentment removes her thirst. For now no longer does the daughter of Cæus supplicate the unworthy {wretches}, nor does she any longer endure to utter words below {the majesty of} a Goddess; and raising her hands to heaven, she says, 'For ever may you live in that pool.' The wish of the Goddess comes to pass. They delight to go beneath the water, and sometimes to plunge the whole of their limbs in the deep pool; now to raise their heads, and now to swim on the top of the water; oft to sit on the bank of the pool, {and} often to leap back again into the cold stream. And even now do they exercise their offensive tongues in strife: and banishing {all} shame, although they are beneath the water, {still} beneath the water,[47] do they try to keep up their abuse. Their voice, too, is now hoarse, and their bloated necks swell out; and their very abuse dilates their extended jaws. Their backs are united to their heads: their necks seem as though cut off; their backbone is green; their belly, the greatest part of their body, is white; and {as} new-made frogs, they leap about in the muddy stream."

[Footnote 45: *The Chimæra*.--Ver. 339. The Chimæra, according to the poets, was a monster having the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon. It seems, however, that it was nothing more than a volcanic mountain of Lycia, in Asia Minor, whence there were occasional eruptions of flame. The top of it was frequented by lions; the middle afforded plentiful pasture for goats; and towards the bottom, being rocky, and full of caverns, it was infested by vast numbers of serpents, that harbored there.]

[Footnote 46: *Beheld a lake*.--Ver. 343. Probus, in his Commentary on the Second Book of the Georgics, says that the name of the spring was Mela, and that of the shepherd who so churlishly repulsed Latona, was Neocles. Antoninus Liberalis says, that the name of the stream was Melites, and that Latona required the water for the purpose of bathing her children. He further tells us, that on being repulsed, she carried her children to the river Xanthus, and returning thence, hurled stones at the peasants, and changed them into frogs.]

[Footnote 47: *Beneath the water*.--Ver. 376. Some commentators are so fanciful as to say, that the repetition of the words ‘sub aqua,’ in the line ‘Quamvis sint sub aquâ, sub aquâ, maledicere tentant,’ not inelegantly [non ineleganter] expresses the croaking noise of the frogs. A man’s fancy must, indeed, be exuberant to find any such resemblance; more so, indeed, than that of Aristophanes, who makes his frogs say, by way of chorus, ‘brekekekekex koäx koäx.’ Possibly, however, that might have been the Attic dialect among frogs.]

## Riley’s Explanation

This story may possibly be based upon some current tradition of Latona having been subjected to such cruel treatment from some country clowns; or, which is more probable, it may have been originally invented as a satire on the rude manners and uncouth conduct of the peasantry of ancient times. The story may also have been framed, to account, in a poetical manner, for the origin of frogs.

## Book VI, Fable IV (lines 382–411)

*The Satyr Marsyas, having challenged Apollo to a trial of skill on the flute, the God overcomes him, and then flays him alive for his presumption. The tears that are shed on the occasion of his death produce the river that bears his name.*

When thus one, who, it is uncertain, had related the destruction of {these} men of the Lycian race, another remembers {that of} the Satyr;[48] whom, overcome {in playing} on the Tritonian reed, the son of Latona visited with punishment. “Why,” said he, “art thou tearing me from myself? Alas! I {now} repent; alas,” cried he, “the flute is not of so much value!” As he shrieked aloud, his skin was stript[49] off from the surface of his limbs, nor was he aught but {one entire} wound. Blood is flowing on every side; the nerves, exposed, appear, and the quivering veins throb without any skin. You might have numbered his palpitating bowels, and the transparent lungs within his breast. The inhabitants of the country, the Fauns, Deities of the woods, and his brothers the Satyrs, and Olympus,[50] even then renowned, and the Nymphs lamented him; and whoever {besides} on those mountains was feeding the wool-bearing flocks, and the horned herds.

The fruitful earth was moistened, and being moistened received the falling tears, and drank them up in her lowest veins, which, when she had turned into a stream, she sent forth into the vacant air. And then, as the clearest river in Phrygia, running towards the rapid sea within steep banks, it bears the name of Marsyas.

From narratives such as these the people return at once to the present events, and mourn Amphion extinct together with {all} his race. The mother is {an object} of hatred. Yet {her brother} Pelops is said alone to have mourned for her as well; and after he had drawn his clothes from his shoulder towards his breast, he discovered the ivory on his left shoulder. This shoulder, at the time of his birth, was of the same color with the right one, and {was} formed of flesh. They say that the Gods afterwards joined his limbs cut asunder by the hands of his father; and the rest of them being found, that part which is midway between the throat and the top of the arm, was wanting. Ivory was inserted there, in the place of the part that did not appear; and so by that means Pelops was made entire.

[Footnote 48: *The Satyr*.--Ver. 382. Herodotus tells this story of the Satyr Marsyas, under the name of Silenus. Fulgentius informs us, that in paintings, Marsyas was represented with the tail of a pig.]

[Footnote 49: *His skin was stript*.--Ver. 387. Apollo fastened him to a pine-tree, or, according to Pliny the Elder, a plane-tree, which was to be seen even in his day. The skin was afterwards

suspended by Apollo in the city of Celenæ. Hyginus says, that Apollo hewed Marsyas to pieces. The description here of the flaying is, perhaps, very natural; but it is all the more disgusting for being so. A commentator justly says, that it might suit a Roman, whose eyes were familiar with bloodshed, much better than the taste of the reader of modern times.]

[Footnote 50: *Olympus*.--Ver. 393. He was a Satyr, the brother and pupil of Marsyas. Pausanias describes a picture, painted by Polygnotus, in which Olympus was represented as sitting by Marsyas, clad as a youth, and learning to play on the flute. Euripides, in the Iphigenia in Aulis (l. 576) says that Olympus discovered some new measures for the 'tibia,' or flute. From Hyginus we learn, that Apollo delivered to him the body of Marsyas for burial.]

### Riley's Explanation

Marsyas was the son of Hyagnis, the inventor of a peculiar kind of flute, and of the Phrygian measure. Livy and Quintus Curtius tell us, that the story of Apollo and Marsyas is an allegory; and that the river Marsyas gave rise to it. They say that the river, falling from a precipice, in the neighborhood of the town of Celenæ, in Phrygia, made a very stunning and unpleasant noise; but that the smoothness of its course afterwards gave occasion for the saying, that the vengeance of Apollo had rendered it more tractable.

It is, however, not improbable that the story may have been based on historical facts. Having learned from his father, Hyagnis, the art of playing on the flute, and, proud of his skill, at a time when the musical art was yet in its infancy, Marsyas may have been rash enough to challenge either a priest of Apollo, or some prince who bore that name, and, for his presumption, to have received the punishment described by Ovid. Herodotus certainly credited the story; for he says that the skin of the unfortunate musician was to be seen, in his time, in the town of Celenæ. Strabo, Pausanias, and Aulus Gellius also believe its truth. Suidas tells us, that Marsyas, mortified at his defeat, threw himself into the river that runs near Celenæ, which, from that time, bore his name. Strabo says, that Marsyas had stolen the flute from Minerva, which proved so fatal to him, and had thereby drawn upon himself the indignation of that Divinity. Ovid, in the Sixth Book of the Fasti, and Pausanias, quoting from Apollodorus, tell us, that Minerva, having observed, by seeing herself in the river Meander, that, when she played on the flute, her cheeks were swelled out in an unseemly manner, threw aside the flute in her disgust, and Marsyas finding it, learned to play on it so skilfully, that he challenged Apollo to a trial of proficiency. Hyginus, in his 165th Fable, says that Marsyas was the son of Œagrius, and not Hyagnis; perhaps, however, this is a corrupt reading.

## Book VI, Fable V (lines 412–586)

*Tereus, king of Thrace, having married Progne, the daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, falls in love with her sister Philomela, whom he ravishes, and then, having cut out her tongue, he shuts her up in a strong place in a forest, to prevent a discovery. The unfortunate Philomela finds means to acquaint her sister with her misfortunes; for, weaving her story on a piece of cloth, she sends it to Progne by the hands of one of her keepers.*

The neighboring princes met together; and the cities that were near, entreated their kings to go to console {Pelops, namely}, Argos and Sparta, and the Pelopean Mycenæ, and Calydon,[51] not yet odious to the stern Diana, and fierce Orchomeneus, and Corinth famous for its brass,[52] and fertile Messene, and Patræ, and humble Cleonæ,[53] and the Neleian Pylos, and Trœzen not yet named from Pittheus;[54] and other cities which are enclosed by the Isthmus between the two seas, and those which, situated beyond, are seen from the Isthmus between the two seas. Who could have believed it? You, Athens, alone omitted it. A war prevented this act of humanity; and barbarous troops[55] brought {thither} by sea, were alarming the Mopsopian walls. The Thracian Tereus had routed these by his auxiliary forces, and by his conquest had acquired an illustrious name. Him, powerful both in riches and men, and, as it happened, deriving his descent from the mighty Gradivus, Pandion united to himself, by the marriage of {his daughter} Progne.

Neither Juno, the guardian of marriage rites, nor yet Hymeneus, nor the Graces,[56] attended those nuptials. {On that occasion}, the Furies brandished torches, snatched from the funeral pile. The Furies prepared the nuptial couch, and the ill-boding owl hovered over the abode, and sat on the roof of the bridal chamber. With these omens were Progne and Tereus wedded; with these omens were they made parents. Thrace, indeed, congratulated them, and they themselves returned thanks to the Gods, and they commanded the day, upon which the daughter of Pandion was given to the renowned prince, and that upon which Itys was born, to be considered as festivals. So much does our true interest lie concealed {from us}. Now Titan had drawn the seasons of the repeated year through five autumns, when Progne, in gentle accents, said to her husband, “If I have any influence {with thee}, either send me to see my sister, or let my sister come hither. Thou shalt promise thy father-in-law that she shall return in a short time. As good as a mighty God {wilt thou be} to me, if thou shalt allow me to see my sister.”

He {thereupon} ordered ships to be launched;[57] and with sails and oars he entered the Cecropian harbor, and landed upon the shores of the Piræus.[58] As soon as ever an opportunity was given of {addressing} his father-in-law, and right hand was joined to right hand, with evil omen their discourse began. He had commenced to relate the occasion of his coming, {and} the

request of his wife, and to promise a speedy return for {Philomela, if} sent. {When} lo! Philomela comes, richly adorned in costly apparel; richer {by far} in her charms; such as we hear {of} the Naiads and Dryads {as they} haunt the middle of the forests, if you were only to give them the like ornaments and dress. Tereus was inflamed upon seeing the virgin, no otherwise than if one were to put fire beneath the whitening ears of corn, or were to burn leaves and {dry} grass laid up in stacks. Her beauty, indeed, is worthy {of love}; but inbred lust, as well, urges him on, and the people in those regions are {naturally} much inclined to lustfulness. He burns, both by his own frailty and that of his nation. He has a desire to corrupt the care of her attendants, and the fidelity of her nurse, and {besides}, to tempt herself with large presents, and to spend his whole kingdom {in so doing}; or else, to seize her, and, when seized, to secure her by a cruel war. And there is nothing which, being seized by an unbridled passion, he may not dare; nor does his breast contain the internal flame. And now he ill bears with delay; and with eager mouth returns to {urge} the request of Progne, and under it he pleads his own wishes; passion makes him eloquent. As oft as he presses beyond what is becoming, he pretends that Progne has thus desired. He adds tears as well, as though she had enjoined them too. O ye Gods above, how much of dark night do the breasts of mortals contain! Through his very attempt at villany, Tereus is thought to be affectionate, and from his crime does he gather praise.

And how is it, too, that Philomela desires the same thing? and fondly embracing the shoulders of her father with her arms, she begs, even by her own safety (and against it too), that she may visit her sister. Tereus views her, and, while viewing her, is embracing her beforehand in imagination; and, as he beholds her kisses, and her arms around {her father's} neck, he receives them all as incentives, and fuel, and the food of his furious passion; and, as often as she embraces her father, he could wish to be {that} father, and, even then, he would have been not the less impious. The father is overcome by the entreaties of them both. She rejoices, and returns thanks to her parent, and, to her misfortune, deems that the success of both, which will be the cause of sorrow to them both. Now but little of his toil was remaining for Phœbus, and his steeds were beating with their feet the descending track of Olympus; a regal banquet was set on the tables, and wine in golden {vessels}; after this, their bodies were given up to gentle sleep. But the Odrysian king,[59] though he was withdrawn, still burned for her; and, recalling her form, her movements, her hands, fancies that which he has not yet seen, to be such as he wishes; and he himself feeds his own flames, his anxiety preventing sleep.

It was {now} day; and Pandion, grasping the right hand of his son-in-law, about to depart, with tears bursting forth, recommended his companion {to his care}. "I commit her, my dear son-in-law, to thee, because reasons, grounded on affection, have compelled me, and both {my daughters} have desired it, and thou as well, Tereus, hast wished it; and I entreat thee, begging by thy honor, by thy breast {thus} allied to us, {and} by the Gods above, to protect her with the

love of a father; and do send back to me, as soon as possible, this sweet comfort of my anxious old age, {for} all delay will be tedious to me, and do thou, too, Philomela, if thou hast any affection for me, return as soon as possible: 'tis enough that thy sister is so far away." {Thus} did he enjoin, and at the same time he gave kisses to his daughter, and his affectionate tears fell amid his instructions. He {then} demanded the right hands of them both, as a pledge of their fidelity, and joined them together when given, and bade them, with mindful lips, to salute for him his absent daughter and grandson, and with difficulty[60] uttered the last farewell, his mouth being filled with sobs; and he shuddered at the presages of his own mind. But as soon as Philomela was put on board of the painted ship, and the sea was urged by the oars, and the land was left behind, he exclaimed, "I have gained my point; the object of my desires is borne along with me." The barbarian exults, too, and with difficulty defers his joy in his intention, and turns not his eyes anywhere away from her. No otherwise than when the ravenous bird of Jupiter, with crooked talons, has placed a hare in his lofty nest; there is no escape for the captive; the plunderer keeps his eye on his prey. And now the voyage is ended, and now they have gone forth from the wearied ship, upon his own shore; when the king drags the daughter of Pandion into a lofty dwelling, concealed in an ancient wood, and there he shuts her up, pale and trembling, and dreading everything, and now with tears inquiring where her sister is; and confessing his baseness, he masters by force her a maiden, and but one, while she often vainly calls on her father, often on her sister, and on the great Gods above all. She trembles like a frightened lamb, which, wounded, being snatched from the mouth of a hoary wolf, does not as yet seem to itself in safety; and as a dove, its feathers soaked with its own blood, still trembles, and dreads the ravening talons wherein it has been {lately} held. {But} soon, when consciousness returned, tearing her dishevelled hair like one mourning, and beating her arms in lamentation, stretching out her hands, she said, "Oh, barbarous {wretch}, for thy dreadful deeds; oh, cruel {monster}! have neither the requests of my father, with his affectionate tears, moved thee, nor a regard for my sister, nor my virgin state, nor the laws of marriage? Thou hast confounded all. I am become the supplanter of my sister; thou, the husband of both of us. This punishment was not my due. Why dost thou not take away this life, that no villany, perfidious {wretch}, may remain {unperpetrated} by thee? and would that thou hadst done it before thy criminal embraces! {then} I might have had a shade void of {all} crime. Yet, if the Gods above behold these things, if the majesty of the Gods be anything; if, with myself, all things are not come to ruin; one time or other thou shalt give me satisfaction. I myself, having cast shame aside, will declare thy deeds. If opportunity is granted me, I will come among the people; if I shall be kept imprisoned in the woods, I will fill the woods, and will move the conscious rocks. Let Heaven hear these things, and the Gods, if there are any in it."

After the wrath of the cruel tyrant was aroused by such words, and his fear was not less than it, urged on by either cause, he drew the sword, with which he was girt, from the sheath, and

seizing her by the hair, her arms being bent behind her back, he compelled her to submit to chains. Philomela was preparing her throat, and, on seeing the sword, had conceived hopes of her death. He cut away, with his cruel weapon, her tongue seized with pincers, while giving vent to her indignation, and constantly calling on the name of her father, and struggling to speak. The extreme root of the tongue {still} quivers. {The tongue} itself lies, and faintly murmurs, quivering upon the black earth; and as the tail of a mangled snake is wont to writhe about, {so} does it throb, and, as it dies, seeks the feet of its owner. It is said, too, that often after this crime (I could hardly dare believe it) he satisfied his lust upon her mutilated body.

He has the effrontery, after such deeds, to return to Progne, who, on seeing her husband, inquires for her sister; but he heaves feigned sighs, and tells a fictitious story of her death; and his tears procure him credit. Progne tears from her shoulders her robes, shining with broad gold, and puts on black garments, and erects an honorary sepulchre, and offers expiation to an imaginary shade; and laments the death of a sister not thus to be lamented.

The God {Apollo}, the year being completed, had run through the twice six signs {of the Zodiac}. What can Philomela do? A guard prevents her flight; the walls of the house are hard, built of solid stone: her speechless mouth is deprived of the means of discovering the crime. But in grief there is extreme ingenuity, and inventive skill arises in misfortunes. She skilfully suspends the warp in a web of Barbarian design,[61] and interweaves purple marks with white, as a mode of discovering the villany {of Tereus}; and delivers it, when finished, to one {of her attendants}, and begs her, by signs, to carry it to her mistress. As desired, she carries it to Progne, and does not know what she is delivering in it. The wife of the savage tyrant unfolds the web, and reads the mournful tale[62] of her sister, and (wondrous that she can be so!) she is silent. 'Tis grief that stops her utterance, and words sufficiently indignant fail her tongue, in want of them; nor is there room for weeping. But she rushes onward, about to confound both right and wrong, and is wholly {occupied} in the contrivance of revenge.

[Footnote 51: *Calydon*.--Ver. 415. This was a city of Ætolia, which derived its name from Calydon, the son of Endymion. Diana, being incensed against Œneus, its king, because he omitted her when offering the first fruits to the other Deities, sent an immense boar to ravage its fields, which was slain by Meleager. Ovid recounts these circumstances in the eighth book of the Metamorphoses. Argos, Sparta, and Mycenæ, are also included in one line, by Homer, as having been under the particular tutelage of Juno.]

[Footnote 52: *Famous for its brass*.--Ver. 416. According to some writers, the Corinthian brass became famous after the fall of Corinth, when it was taken and burnt by the Consul Mummius. On that occasion, they say, that from the immense number of statues melted in the conflagration, a stream of metal poured through the streets, consisting of melted gold, silver,

and copper; in which, of course, the latter would be predominant. If that was the ground on which the Corinthian brass was so much commended, Ovid is here guilty of an anachronism.]

[Footnote 53: *Cleonæ*.--Ver. 417. This was a little town, situate between Argos and Corinth. It is called 'humilis,' not from its situation, but from the small number of its inhabitants. Patræ was a city of Achaia.]

[Footnote 54: *Pittheus*.--Ver. 418. He was the uncle of Theseus; and was (after the time here mentioned) the king of Trœzen, in Peloponnesus.]

[Footnote 55: *Barbarous troops*.--Ver. 423. Some suggest that it is here meant that Attica was invaded by the Amazons at this time; and they rely on a passage of Justin in support of the position. The story is, however, very improbable.]

[Footnote 56: *The Graces*.--Ver. 429. The Graces, who were the attendants of Venus, were three in number, Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne.]

[Footnote 57: *To be launched*.--Ver. 445. The ships were launched into the sea by means of rollers placed beneath them, from which circumstance they were said 'deduci,' 'to be led down.']

[Footnote 58: *Shores of the Piræus*.--Ver. 446. The Piræus was the arsenal and the harbor of the Athenians, and owed its magnificence to the vast conceptions of Themistocles.]

[Footnote 59: *The Odrysian king*.--Ver. 490. Tereus is thus called, from the Odrysæ, a people of Thrace.]

[Footnote 60: *With difficulty*.--Ver. 510. Clarke translates 'vix,' 'with much ado.']

[Footnote 61: *Barbarian design*.--Ver. 576. Probably of a Phrygian design.]

[Footnote 62: *The mournful tale*.--Ver. 582. This line is translated by Clarke, 'And reads the miserable ditty of her sister.']

### Riley's Explanation

The gravest authors among the ancients, such as Strabo and Pausanias, speaking of this tragical story, agree that the narrative, divested of its poetical ornaments, is strictly conformable to truth; though, of course, the sequel bears evident marks of embellishment either by the fancy of the Poet, or the superstition of the vulgar.

## Book VI, Fable VI (lines 587–676)

*Progne delivers her sister Philomela from captivity, and brings her to the court of Tereus, where she revolves in her mind her different projects of revenge. Her son Itys, in the meantime, comes into her apartment, and is murdered by his mother and aunt. Progne afterwards serves him up at a feast, which she prepares for her husband; on which, being obliged to fly from the fury of the enraged king, she is changed into a swallow, Philomela into a nightingale, and Tereus himself into a lapwing.*

It is {now} the time[63] when the Sithonian[64] matrons are wont to celebrate the triennial festival of Bacchus. Night is conscious of their rites; by night Rhodope resounds with the tinklings of the shrill cymbal. By night the queen goes out of her house, and is arrayed according to the rites of the God, and carries the arms of the frantic solemnity. Her head is covered with vine leaves; from her left side hang down the skins of a deer;[65] upon her shoulder rests a light spear. {Then} the terrible Progne rushing through the woods, a multitude of her followers attending her, and agitated by the fury of her resentment, pretends, Bacchus, that it is {inspired} by thee.

She comes at length to the lonely dwelling, and howls aloud, and cries “Evoë!” and breaks open the gates, and seizes her sister, and puts upon her, {so} seized, the badges of Bacchus, and conceals her countenance under the foliage of ivy; and dragging her along, full of amazement, leads her within her threshold. When Philomela perceives that she has arrived at that accursed house,[66] the wretched woman shudders, and paleness spreads over her whole face. Progne having {now} got a {fitting} place {for so doing}, takes away the symbols of the rites,[67] and unveils the blushing face of her wretched sister; and holds her in her embraces. But she, on the other hand, cannot endure to lift up her eyes; seeming to herself the supplanter of her sister, and fixing her looks on the ground, her hand is in the place of voice to her, as she desires to swear and to call the Gods to witness that this disgrace has been brought upon her by violence. Progne burns {with rage}, and contains not her anger; and checking the grief of her sister, she says, “We must not act in this matter with tears, but with the sword, {and even} with anything, if {such} thou hast, that can possibly outdo the sword. I have, sister, prepared myself for every crime! Either, when I shall have set fire to the royal palace with torches, I will throw the artful Tereus into the midst of the flames, or with the steel will I cut away his tongue or his eyes, or the members that have deprived thee of thy chastity, or by a thousand wounds will I expel his guilty soul {from his body}. Something tremendous am I prepared for; what it is, I am still in doubt.”

While Progne was uttering such expressions, Itys came to his mother. By him she was put in mind of what she might do; and looking at him with vengeful eyes, she said, “Ah! how like thou

art to thy father!" And saying no more, she prepared for a horrible deed, and burned with silent rage. Yet when her son came to her, and saluted his mother and drew her neck {towards him} with his little arms, and added kisses mingled with childish endearments, the mother, in truth, was moved, and her anger abated, and her eyes, in spite of her, became wet with tears {thus} forced {from her}. But soon as she found the mother {in her} shrinking from excess of affection, from him again did she turn towards the features of her sister; and looking at them both by turns, she said, "Why does the one employ endearments, {while} the other is silent with her tongue torn from her? Why does she not call her sister, whom he calls mother? Consider to what kind of husband thou art married, daughter of Pandion. Thou dost grow degenerate. Tenderness in the wife of Tereus is criminality." No {more} delay {is there}; she drags Itys along, just as the tigress of the banks of the Ganges {does} the suckling offspring of the hind, through the shady forests. And when they are come to a remote part of the lofty house, Progne strikes[68] him with the sword, extending his hands, and as he beholds his fate, crying now "Alas!" and now "My mother!" and clinging to her neck, where his breast joins his side; nor does she turn away her face. Even one wound {alone} is sufficient for his death; Philomela cuts his throat with the sword; and they mangle his limbs, still quivering and retaining somewhat of life. Part of them boils,[69] in the hollow cauldrons; part hisses on spits; the inmost recesses stream with gore. His wife sets Tereus, in his unconsciousness, before this banquet; and falsely pretending rites after the manner of her country, at which it is allowed one man only to be present, she removes his attendants and servants. Tereus himself, sitting aloft on the throne of his forefathers, eats and heaps his own entrails into his own stomach. And so great is the blindness of his mind, {that} he says, "Send for Itys." Progne is unable to conceal her cruel joy; and now, desirous to be the discoverer of her having murdered him, she says, "Thou hast within {thee}, that for which thou art asking." He looks around, and inquires where he is; as he inquires, and calls him again, Philomela springs forth, just as she is, with her hair disordered by the infernal murder, and throws the bloody head of Itys in the face of his father; nor at any time has she more longed to be able to speak, and to testify her joy by words such as are deserved.

The Thracian pushes from him the table with a loud cry, and summons the Viperous sisters[70] from the Stygian valley; and at one moment he desires, if he {only} can, by opening his breast to discharge thence the horrid repast, and the half-digested entrails. And then he weeps, and pronounces himself the wretched sepulchre of his own son; and then he follows the daughters of Pandion with his drawn sword. You would have thought the bodies of the Cecropian[71] Nymphs were supported by wings; {and} they were supported by wings. The one of them makes for the woods, the other takes her place beneath the roofs {of houses}. Nor {even} as yet have the marks of murder withdrawn from her breast; and her feathers are {still} stained with blood. He, made swift by his grief, and his desire for revenge, is turned into a bird, upon whose head stands a crested {plume}; a prolonged bill projects in place of the long spear. The name of the bird is

‘epops’ [{lapwing}]; its face appears to be armed. This affliction dispatched Pandion to the shades of Tartarus before his day, and the late period of protracted old age.

[Footnote 63: *Now the time*.--Ver. 587. This was the festival of Bacchus, before mentioned as being celebrated every three years, in memory of his Indian expedition.]

[Footnote 64: *Sithonian*.--Ver. 588. Sithonia was a region of Thrace, which lay between Mount Hæmus and the Euxine sea. The word, however, is often used to signify the whole of Thrace.]

[Footnote 65: *Skins of a deer*.--Ver. 593. These were the ‘nebrides,’ or skins of fawns and deer, which the Bacchanals wore when celebrating the orgies. The lance mentioned here was, no doubt, the thyrsus.]

[Footnote 66: *That accursed house*.--Ver. 601. Clarke translates this line, ‘As soon as Philomela perceived she had got into the wicked rogue’s house.’]

[Footnote 67: *Symbols of the rites*.--Ver. 603. These were the ivy, the deer-skins, and the thyrsus.]

[Footnote 68: *Progne strikes*.--Ver. 641. ‘Ense ferit Progne’ is translated by Clarke, ‘Progne strikes with the sword poor Itys.’]

[Footnote 69: *Part of them boils*.--Ver. 645-6. Clarke gives this comical translation: ‘Then part of them bounces about in hollow kettles; part hisses upon spits; the parlor runs down with gore.’]

[Footnote 70: *Viperous sisters*.--Ver. 662. Tereus invokes the Furies, who are thus called from having their hair wreathed with serpents. Clarke translates, ‘ingenti clamore,’ in line 661, ‘with a huge cry.’]

[Footnote 71: *Cecropian*.--Ver. 667. The Cecropian or Athenian Nymphs are Progne and Philomela, the daughters of Pandion, king of Athens.]

### Riley’s Explanation

By the symbolical changes of Philomela, Progne, and Tereus, those who framed this termination of the story intended to depict the different characters of the persons whose actions are there represented. As the lapwing delights in filth and impurity, the ancients thereby portrayed the unscrupulous character of Tereus; and, as the flight of that bird is but slow, it shows that he was not able to overtake his wife and her sister. The nightingale, concealed in the woods and thickets, seems there to be concealing her misfortunes and sorrows; and the swallow, which

frequents the abodes of man, shows the restlessness of Progne, who seeks in vain for her son, whom, in her frantic fit, she has so barbarously murdered.

Anacreon and Apollodorus, however, reverse the story, saying that Philomela was changed into a swallow, and Progne into a nightingale. This event is said by some writers to have happened not in Thrace, but at Daulis, a town of Phocis, where Tereus is supposed to have gone to settle. Pausanias tells us, that the tomb of Tereus was to be seen near Athens, so that it is probable that he died at a distance from Thrace, his native country. Homer alludes to the story of Philomela in somewhat different terms; speaking of the grounds of the grief of Penelope, he says, that 'she made her complaints to be heard like the inconsolable Philomela, the daughter of Pandarus, always hidden among the leaves and branches of trees. When the Spring arrives, she makes her voice echo through the woods, and laments her dear Itylus, whom she killed by an unhappy mistake; varying, in her continued plaints, the mournful melody of her notes.' By this, Homer seems to have known nothing of Tereus or of Progne, and to have followed a tradition, which was to the following effect:--Pandarus had three daughters, Ædon, Mecrope, and Cleothera. Ædon, the eldest, was married to Zethus, the brother of Amphion, by whom she had one son, who was named Itylus. Envying the more numerous family of Niobe, her sister-in-law, she resolved to despatch the eldest of her nephews; and, as her son was brought up with his cousin, and was his bedfellow, she bade him change his place in the bed, on the night on which she intended to commit the crime. Itylus forgot her commands, and consequently his mother killed him by mistake for her nephew.

## Book VI, Fable VII (lines 677–721)

*Boreas, not obtaining the consent of Erectheus, king of Athens, for the marriage of his daughter, Orithyïa, takes that princess in his arms, and carries her away into Thrace. By her he has two sons, Calaïs and Zethes, who have wings, like their father, and afterwards embark with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece.*

Erectheus[72] received the sceptre of {that} country, and the government of the state; it is a matter of doubt whether he was more powerful through his justice, or by his mighty arms. He had, indeed, begotten four sons, and as many of the female sex: but the beauty of two {of them} was equal. Of these, Cephalus,[73] the son of Æolus, was blessed with thee, Procris, for his wife; Tereus and the Thracians were an obstacle to Boreas; and long was {that} God without his much-loved Orithyïa, while he was entreating, and choosing rather to use prayers than force. But when nothing was effected by blandishments, terrible with that rage which is his wont, and but too natural with that wind, he said, "And {this is} deservedly {done}; for why did I relinquish my own weapons, my violence, my strength, my anger, and my threatening spirit, and turn to prayers, the employment of which ill becomes me? Violence is suitable for me; by violence do I dispel the lowering clouds, by violence do I arouse the seas, and overthrow the knotted oaks, and harden the snow, and beat the earth with hail. I too, when I have met with my brothers in the open air (for that is {peculiarly} my field), struggle with efforts so great, that the intermediate sky thunders again with our onset, and fires flash, struck forth from the hollow clouds. I too, when I have descended into the hollow recesses of the earth, and in my rage have placed my back against its lowest depths, disturb the shades below, and the whole globe with earthquakes. By these means should I have sought this alliance; and Erectheus ought not to have been entreated {to be} my father-in-law, but made so by force."

Boreas, having said these words, or some not less high-sounding than these, shakes his wings, by the motion of which all the earth is fanned, and the wide sea becomes ruffled; and the lover, drawing his dusty mantle over the high tops {of mountains}, sweeps the ground, and, wrapt in darkness, embraces with his tawny wings Orithyïa, as she trembles with fear. As she flies, his flame, being agitated, burns more fiercely. Nor does the ravisher check the reins of his airy course, before he reaches the people and the walls of the Ciconians.[74] There, too, is the Actæan damsel made the wife of the cold sovereign, and {afterwards} a mother, bringing forth twins at a birth, who have the wings of their father, the rest {like} their mother. Yet they say that these {wings} were not produced together with their bodies; and while their long beard, with its yellow hair, was away, the boys Calaïs and Zethes were without feathers. {But} soon after, at once wings began to enclose both their sides, after the manner of birds, and at once their cheeks {began} to

grow yellow {with down}. When, therefore, the boyish season of youth was passed, they sought, [75] with the Minyæ, along the sea {before} unmoved,[76] in the first ship {that existed}, the fleece that glittered with shining hair {of gold}.

[Footnote 72: *Erectheus*.--Ver. 677. This personage really was king of Athens before Pandion, the father of Progne and Philomela, and not after him, as Ovid here states; at least, such is the account given by Pausanias and Eusebius: the order of succession being Actæus, Cecrops, Cranaüs, Amphictyon, Erecthonius, Pandion, Erectheus, Cecrops II., Pandion II., Ægeus, Theseus.]

[Footnote 73: *Cephalus*.--Ver. 681. He was the son of Deioneus, and the grandson of Æolus. According to some writers, he was the son of Mercury; in and the Art of Love (Book iii. l. 725) he is called 'Cyllenia proles.' Strabo says that he was the son-in-law of Deioneus. His story is related at length in the next Book.]

[Footnote 74: *The Ciconians*.--Ver. 710. The Cicones were a people of Thrace, living near Mount Ismarus, and the Bistonian lake.]

[Footnote 75: *They sought*.--Ver. 720. This was the fleece of the ram that carried Phryxus along the Hellespont to Colchis, which is mentioned again in the next Book.]

[Footnote 76: *Before unmoved*.--Ver. 721. This passage may mean that that part of the sea had not been navigated before; though many of the poets assert that the Argo was the first ship that was ever built. It is more probable that it was the first vessel that was ever fitted out as a ship of war.]

## Riley's Explanation

Plato tells us that the story of the rape of Orithyïa is but an allegory, which signifies that, by accident, she was blown by the wind into the sea, where she was drowned. Apollodorus and Pausanias, however, assert that this story is based on historical facts, and that Boreas, king of Thrace, seized Orithyïa, the daughter of Erectheus, king of Athens, and sister of Procris, as she was passing the river Ilissus, and carried her into his dominions, where she became the mother of twins, Calaïs and Zethes. In the Argonautic expedition, these chiefs delivered Phineus, the king of Bithynia, from the persecution of the Harpies, which were in the habit of snatching away the victuals served up at his table.

## Book VII, Fable I (lines 1–158)

*Jason, after having met with various adventures, arrives with the Argonauts in Colchis, and demands the Golden Fleece. Medea falls in love with Jason, and by the power of her enchantments preserves him from the dangers he has to encounter in obtaining it. He obtains the prize, and carrying off Medea, returns in triumph to Thessaly.*

And now the Minyæ[1] were ploughing the sea in the Pagasæan ship;[2] and Phineus prolonging a needy old age under perpetual night, had been visited, and the youthful sons of the North wind had driven the birds with the faces of virgins from {before} the mouth of the distressed old man;[3] and having suffered many things under the famous Jason, had reached at length the rapid waters of the muddy Phasis.

And while they go to the king, and ask the fleece that once belonged to Phryxus, and conditions are offered them, dreadful for the number of mighty labors; in the meantime, the daughter of Æetes[4] conceives a violent flame; and having long struggled {against it}, after she is unable to conquer her frenzy by reason, she says: "In vain, Medea, dost thou resist; some God, who, I know not, is opposing thee. It is a wonder too, if it is not this, or at least something like this, which is called 'love.' For why do the commands of my father appear too rigid for me? and yet too rigid they are. Why am I in dread, lest he whom I have seen {but} so lately, should perish? What is the cause of alarm so great? Banish the flames conceived in thy virgin breast, if thou canst, unhappy {creature}. If I could, I would be more rational. But a new power draws me on, against my will; and Cupid persuades one thing, reason another. I see which is the more proper {course}, and I approve of it, {while} I follow the wrong one. Why, royal maiden, art thou burning for a stranger, and why coveting the nuptial ties of a strange country? This land, too, may give thee something which thou mayst love. Whether he shall live, or whether die, is in {the disposal of} the Gods. Yet he may survive; and that I may pray for, even without love. For what {fault} has Jason committed? Whom, but one of hard heart, would not the {youthful} age of Jason affect? his descent too, and his valor? Whom, though these other points were wanting, would not his beauty move? at least, he has moved my breast. But unless I shall give him aid, he will be breathed upon by the mouths of the bulls; and will engage with his own {kindred} crops, an enemy sprung from the earth; or he will be given as a cruel prey to the ravenous dragon. If I allow this, then I will confess that I was born of a tigress; then, {too}, that I carry steel and stone in my heart. Why do I not as well behold him perish? Why not, too, profane my eyes by seeing it? Why do I not stimulate the bulls against him, and the fierce sons of the earth, and the never-sleeping dragon? May the Gods award better things. And yet these things are not to be prayed for, but must be effected by myself. Shall I {then} betray the kingdom of my father? and by my

aid shall some stranger, I know not who, be saved; that being delivered by my means, he may spread his sails to the winds without me, and be the husband of another; and I, Medea, be left for punishment? If he can do this, and if he is capable of preferring another to me, let him perish in his ingratitude. But not such is his countenance, not such that nobleness of soul, that gracefulness of person, that I should fear treachery, and forgetfulness of what I deserve. Besides, he shall first pledge his faith, and I will oblige the Gods to be witnesses of our compact. What then dost thou dread, {thus} secure? Haste {then},[5] and banish {all} delay. Jason will ever be indebted to thee for his preservation; thee will he unite to himself in the rites of marriage, and throughout the Pelasgian cities[6] thou wilt be celebrated by crowds of matrons, as the preserver {of their sons}. And shall I then, borne away by the winds, leave my sister[7] and my brother,[8] and my father, and my Gods, and my native soil? My father is cruel, forsooth; my country, too, is barbarous;[9] my brother is still {but} an infant; the wishes of my sister are in my favor. The greatest of the Gods is in possession of me. I shall not be relinquishing anything great; I shall be pursuing what is great; the credit of saving the youth of Greece,[10] acquaintance with a better country, and cities, whose fame is flourishing even here, and the politeness and the arts of their inhabitants; and the son of Æson, whom I could be ready to take in exchange for {all} the things that the whole world contains; with whom for my husband I shall both be deemed dear to the Gods, and shall reach the stars with my head. Why say that I know not what mountains[11] are reported to arise in the midst of the waves, and that Charybdis, an enemy to ships, one while sucks in the sea, at another discharges it; and how that Scylla, begirt with furious dogs, is said to bark in the Sicilian deep? Yet holding him whom I love, and clinging to the bosom of Jason, I shall be borne over the wide seas; embracing him, naught will I dread; or if I fear anything, for my husband alone will I fear. And dost thou, Medea, call this a marriage, and dost thou give a plausible name to thy criminality? Do but consider how great an offence thou art meditating, and, while {still} thou mayst, fly from guilt."

{Thus} she said, and before her eyes stood Virtue, Affection, and Modesty; and now Cupid turned his vanquished back. She was going to the ancient altars of Hecate,[12] the daughter of Perses, which a shady grove and the recesses of a wood concealed. And now she was resolved, and her passion being checked, had subsided; when she beheld the son of Æson, and the extinguished flame revived. Her cheeks were covered with blushes, and her whole face was suffused with a glow. As a spark is wont to derive nourishment from the winds, which, but small when it lay concealed beneath the ashes cast over it, {is wont} to increase, and aroused, to rise again to its original strength, so her love, now declining, which you would suppose was now growing languid, when she beheld the youth, was rekindled with the appearance of him before her eyes. And by chance, on that day, the son of Æson was more beauteous than usual. You might forgive her loving him. She gazes; and keeps her eyes fixed upon his countenance, as though but now seen for the first time; and in her frenzy she thinks she does not behold the face

of a mortal; nor does she turn away from him. But when the stranger began to speak, and seized her right hand, and begged her assistance with a humble voice, and promised her marriage; she said, with tears running down, “I see what I ought to do; and it will not be ignorance of the truth, but love that beguiles me. By my agency thou shalt be saved; when saved, grant what thou hast promised.”

He swears by the rites of the Goddess of the triple form, and the Deity which is in that grove, and by the sire[13] of his future father-in-law, who beholds all things, and by his own adventures, and by dangers so great. Being believed {by her}, he immediately received some enchanted herbs, and thoroughly learned the use of them, and went away rejoicing to his abode. The next morning had {now} dispersed the twinkling stars, {when} the people repaired to the sacred field of Mavors, and ranged themselves on the hills. In the midst of the assembly sat the king himself, arrayed in purple, and distinguished by a sceptre of ivory. Behold! the brazen-footed bulls breathe forth flames[14] from their adamantine nostrils; and the grass touched by the vapors is on fire. And as the forges filled {with fire} are wont to roar, or when flints[15] dissolved in an earthen furnace receive intense heat by the sprinkling of flowing water; so do their breasts rolling forth the flames enclosed within, and their scorched throats, resound. Yet the son of Æson goes forth to meet them. The fierce {bulls} turn their terrible features, and their horns pointed with iron, towards his face as he advances, and with cloven hoofs they spurn the dusty ground, and fill the place with lowings, that send forth clouds of smoke. The Minyæ are frozen with horror. He comes up, and feels not the flames breathed forth by them, so great is the power of the incantations. He even strokes their hanging dewlaps with a bold right hand, and, subjected to the yoke, he obliges them to draw the heavy weight of a plough, and to turn up with the share the plain {till now} unused to it.[16]

The Colchians are astonished; the Minyæ fill {the air} with their shouts, and give him {fresh} courage. Then in a brazen helmet he takes the dragon’s teeth,[17] and strews them over the ploughed up fields. The ground, impregnated beforehand with a potent drug, softens the seed; and the teeth that were sown grow up, and become new bodies. And as the infant receives the human form in the womb of the mother, and is there formed in all its parts, and comes not forth into the common air until at maturity, so when the figure of man is ripened in the bowels of the pregnant earth, it arises in the fruitful plain; and, what is still more surprising, it brandishes arms produced at the same time. When the Pelasgians saw them preparing to hurl their spears with sharp points at the head of the Hæmonian youth, they lowered their countenances and their courage, {quailing} with fear. She, too, became alarmed, who had rendered him secure; and when she saw the youth, being but one, attacked by so many enemies, she turned pale, and suddenly chilled {with fear}, sat down without blood {in her cheeks}. And, lest the herbs that had been given by her, should avail him but little, she repeats an auxiliary charm, and summons

{to her aid} her secret arts. He, hurling a heavy stone into the midst of his enemies, turns the warfare, now averted from himself, upon themselves. The Earth-born brothers perish by mutual wounds, and fall in civil fight. The Greeks congratulate him, and caress the conqueror, and cling to him in hearty embraces. And thou too, barbarian maiden, wouldst fain have embraced him; 'twas modesty that opposed the design; otherwise thou wouldst have embraced him; but regard for thy reputation restrained thee from doing so. What thou mayst do, {thou dost do}; thou rejoicest with a silent affection, and thou givest thanks to thy charms, and to the Gods, the authors of them.

It {still} remains to lay asleep with herbs the watchful dragon, who, distinguished by his crest and his three tongues, and terrible with his hooked teeth, is the keeper of the Golden Fleece. After he has sprinkled him with herbs of Lethæan juice,[18] and has thrice repeated words that cause placid slumbers, which {would even calm} the boisterous ocean, {and} which would stop the rapid rivers, sleep creeps upon the eyes that were strangers to it, and the hero, the son of Æson, gains the gold; and proud of the spoil and bearing with him the giver of the prize as a second spoil, he arrives victorious, with his wife, at the port of Iolcos.[19]

[Footnote 1: *The Minyæ*.--Ver. 1. The Argonauts. The Minyæ were a people of Thessaly, so called from Minyas, the son of Orchomenus.]

[Footnote 2: *Pagasæan ship*.--Ver. 1. Pagasæ was a seaport of Thessaly, at the foot of Mount Pelion, where the ship Argo was built.]

[Footnote 3: *Distressed old man*.--Ver. 4. Clarke translates 'miseri senis ore,' 'from the mouth of the miserable old fellow.']

[Footnote 4: *Daughter of Æetes*.--Ver. 9. Medea was the daughter of Æetes, the king of Colchis. Juno, favoring Jason, had persuaded Venus to inspire Medea with love for him.]

[Footnote 5: *Haste then*.--Ver. 47. Clarke translates 'accingere,' more literally than elegantly, 'buckle to.']

[Footnote 6: *Pelasgian cities*.--Ver. 49. Pelasgia was properly that part of Greece which was afterwards called Thessaly. The province of Pelasgiotis, in Thessaly, afterwards retained its name, which was derived from the Pelasgi, an early people of Greece. Pliny informs us that Peloponnesus at first had the names of 'Apia' and 'Pelasgia.' Some suppose that the Pelasgi derived their name from Pelasgus, the son of Jupiter; while other writers assert that they were so called from πελαργοὶ, 'storks,' from their wandering habits. The name is frequently used, as in the present instance, to signify the whole of the Greeks.]

[Footnote 7: *My sister*.--Ver. 51. Her sister was Chalciope, who had married Phryxus, after his arrival in Colchis. Her children being found by Jason, in the isle of Dia, they came with him to Colchis, and presented him to their mother, who afterwards commended him to the care of Medea.]

[Footnote 8: *And my brother*.--Ver. 51. Her brother was Absyrtus, whose tragical death is afterwards mentioned.]

[Footnote 9: *Is barbarous*.--Ver. 53. It was certainly 'barbara' in the eyes of a Greek; but the argument sounds rather oddly in the mouth of Medea, herself a native of the country.]

[Footnote 10: *The youth of Greece*.--Ver. 56. These were the Argonauts, who were selected from the most noble youths of Greece.]

[Footnote 11: *What mountains*.--Ver. 63. These were the Cyanean rocks, or Symplegades, at the mouth of the Euxine sea.]

[Footnote 12: *Hecate*.--Ver. 74. Ancient writers seem to have been much divided in opinion who Hecate was. Ovid here follows the account which made her to be the daughter of Perses, who, according to Diodorus Siculus, was the son of Phœbus, and the brother of Æetes. Marrying her uncle Æetes, she is said to have been the mother of Circe, Medea, and Absyrtus. By some writers she is confounded with the Moon and with Proserpine; as identical with the Moon, she has the epithets 'Triceps' and 'Triformis,' often given to her by the poets, because the Moon sometimes is full, sometimes disappears, and often shows but part of her disk.]

[Footnote 13: *And by the sire*.--Ver. 96. Allusion is made to the Sun, who was said to be the father of Æetes, the destined father-in-law of Jason.]

[Footnote 14: *Breathe forth flames*.--Ver. 104. The name of the God of fire is here used to signify that element. Apollodorus says, that Medea gave Jason a drug (φάρμακον) to rub over himself and his armor.]

[Footnote 15: *Or when flints*.--Ver. 107. It is difficult to determine whether 'silices' here means 'flint-stones,' or 'lime-stone;' probably the latter, from the mention of water sprinkled over them. If the meaning is 'flint-stones,' the passage may refer to the manufacture of glass, with the art of making which the ancients were perfectly acquainted.]

[Footnote 16: *Unused to it*.--Ver. 119. Because, being sacred to Mars, it was not permitted to be ploughed.]

[Footnote 17: *Dragon's teeth*.--Ver. 122. These were a portion of the teeth of the dragon slain by Cadmus, which Mars and Minerva had sent to Æetes.]

[Footnote 18: *Lethæan juice*.--Ver. 152. Lethe was a river of the infernal regions, whose waters were said to produce sleep and forgetfulness.]

[Footnote 19: *Port of Iolcos*.--Ver. 158. Iolcos was a city of Thessaly, of which country Jason was a native.]

## Riley's Explanation

To understand this story, one of the most famous in the early history of Greece, we must go back to the origin of it, and examine the fictions which the poets have mingled with the history of the expedition of the Argonauts, one of the most remarkable events of the fabulous ages.

Athamas, the son of Æolus, grandson of Hellen, and great-grandson of Deucalion, having married Ino, the daughter of Cadmus, was obliged to divorce her, on account of the madness with which she was attacked. He afterwards married Nephele, by whom he had a son and daughter, Phryxus and Helle; but on his taking his first wife again, she brought him two sons, Learchus and Melicerta. Ino, hating the children of Nephele, sought to destroy them. Phryxus being informed thereof, ordered a ship to be privately prepared; and taking his father's treasures, sailed with his sister Helle, to seek a retreat in the court of Æetes, his kinsman. Helle died on the voyage, but Phryxus arrived in Colchis, where he dedicated the prow of his ship to Neptune, or Jupiter. He there married Chalciope, by whom he had four sons, Argos, Phrontes, Molas, and Cylindus. Some years after, Æetes caused him to be assassinated; and his sons fleeing to the court of their grandfather, Athamas, were shipwrecked on an island, where they remained until found there by Jason, who took them back to their mother. Having mourned them as dead, she was transported with joy on finding them, and used every exertion to aid Jason in promoting his addresses to Medea. Æetes having seized the treasures of Athamas on the death of Phryxus, the Greeks prepared an expedition to recover them, and to avenge his death. Pelias, who had driven his brother Æson from the throne of Iolcos, desiring to procure the absence of his son Jason, took this opportunity of engaging him in an enterprise, which promised both glory, profit, and a large amount of personal exertion. The uneasiness which Pelias felt was caused by the prediction of an oracle, that he should be killed by a prince of the family of Æolus, and which warned him to beware of a person who should have but one shoe. Just at that period, Jason, returning from the school of Chiron, lost one of his shoes in crossing a river. On this, his uncle was desirous to destroy him; but not daring to do so publicly, he induced him to embark with the Argonauts, expecting that he would perish in an undertaking of so perilous a nature. Many young nobles of Greece repaired to the court of Iolcos, and joined in the

undertaking, when they chose Jason for their leader, and embarked in a ship, the name of which was Argo, and from which the adventurers received the name of Argonauts.

Diodorus Siculus says, that the ship was so named from its swiftness; while others say, that it was so called from Argus, the name of its builder, or from the Argives, or Greeks, on board of it. Bochart, however, supposes, that the name is derived from the Phœnician word 'arco,' which signifies 'long,' and suggests, that before that time the Greeks sailed in vessels of a rounder form, Jason being the first who sailed in a ship built in the form of a galley. After many adventures, on arriving at the Isle of Lemnos, they found that the women had killed their husbands in a fit of jealousy, on which the Argonauts took wives from their number, and Jason received for his companion Hypsipyle, the daughter of Thoas. Putting to sea again, they were driven on the coast of Bithynia, where they delivered Phineus, its king, from the persecution of the Harpies, who were in the habit of snatching away the victuals from his table. These monsters, of hideous form, with crooked beaks and talons, huge wings, and the faces of women, the Argonauts, and especially Calais and Zethes, pursued as far as the islands called Strophades, in the Ionian sea, where Iris appearing to them, enjoined them to pursue the Harpies no further, promising that Phineus should no longer be persecuted by them. To explain this story, some suppose that the Harpies were the daughters of Phineus, who by their dissipation and extravagance, had ruined him in his old age, which occasioned the saying, that they snatched the victuals out of his mouth. Le Clerc thinks, that the Harpies were vast swarms of grasshoppers, which ravaged all Paphlagonia, and caused a famine in the dominions of Phineus; the word 'arbati,' whence the term 'Harpy' is derived, signifying 'a grasshopper;' and that the North wind blowing them into the Ionian sea, it gave rise to the saying, that the sons of Boreas pursued them so far. Diodorus Siculus does not mention the Harpies, though he speaks of the arrival of the Argonauts at the court of Phineus.

After some other adventures, the Argonauts arrived at Colchis. Æetes, or Æeta, the king, having been forewarned by an oracle, that a stranger should deprive him of his crown and life, had established a custom of sacrificing all strangers found in his dominions. His daughter Medea, falling in love with Jason, promised him her assistance in preserving them from the dangers to which they were exposed, on the condition of his marrying her. Having engaged to do so, she conducted him by night to the royal palace, and gave him a false key, by means whereof he found the royal treasures, and carrying them off, embarked with Medea and his companions. By way of explaining the miraculous portion of the story, we may, perhaps, not err in supposing, that the account of it was originally written in the Phœnician language; and through not understanding it, the Greeks invented the fiction of the Fleece, the Dragon, and the Fiery Bulls. Bochart and Le Clerc have observed, that the Syriac word 'gaza,' signifies either 'a treasure,' or 'a fleece.' 'Saur,' which means 'a wall,' also means 'a bull;' and in the same language the same word, 'nachas,'

signifies both ‘brass,’ ‘iron,’ and ‘a dragon.’ Hence, instead of the simple narrative, that Jason, by the aid of Medea, carried away the treasures which Æetes kept within walls, with bolts, or locks of metal, and which Phryxus had carried to Colchis in a ship with the figure of a ram at the prow, it was published, and circulated by the ignorant, that the Gods, to save Phryxus from his stepmother, sent him a sheep with a golden fleece, which bore him to Colchis; that its fleece became the object of the ambition of the leading men of Greece; and that whoever wished to bear it away was obliged to contend with bulls and dragons. Some historians, by way of interpreting the story, affirm, that the keeper of the treasures was named ‘Draco,’ or ‘Dragon,’ and that the garrison of the stronghold of Æetes was brought from the ‘Tauric’ Chersonesus. They say also, that the fleece was the skin of the sheep which Phryxus had sacrificed to Neptune, which he had caused to be gilt. It is not, however, very likely, that an object so trifling could have excited the avarice of the Greeks, and caused them to undertake an expedition accompanied with so many dangers. The dragon’s teeth most probably bear reference to some foreign troops which Jason, in the same way as Cadmus had done, found means to alienate from Æetes, and to bring over to his own side. Homer makes but very slight allusion to the adventures of the Argonauts.

## Book VII, Fable II (lines 159–349)

*Jason, after his return home, requests Medea to restore his father Æson to youth, which she performs; then, going to the court of Pelias, she avenges the injuries which he had done to the family of Jason, by making him the victim of the credulity of his own daughters, who, in compliance with her pretended regard for them, stab him to death. Medea, having executed her design, makes her escape in her chariot.*

The Hæmonian mothers and aged fathers bring presents, for receiving their sons {safe home}; and frankincense dissolves, piled on the flames, and the devoted victim falls, having its horns gilded. But Æson is not among those congratulating, being now near death, and worn out with the years of old age; when thus the son of Æson {addresses Medea}: "O wife, to whom I confess that I owe my safety, although thou hast granted me everything, and the sum of thy favors exceeds {all} belief; {still}, if {thy enchantments} can effect this (and what can enchantments not effect?), take away from my own years, and, when taken, add them to {those of} my father."

And {thus saying}, he could not check his tears. She was moved with the affection of the petitioner; and {her father}, Æetes, left behind, recurred to her mind, unlike {that of Jason}; yet she did not confess any such feelings. "What a piece of wickedness, husband," said she, "has escaped thy affectionate lips! Can I, then, seem capable of transferring to any one a portion of thy life? May Hecate not allow of this; nor dost thou ask what is reasonable; but, Jason, I will endeavor to grant thee a favor {still} greater than that which thou art asking. By my arts we will endeavor to bring back the long years of my father-in-law, and not by means of thy years; if the Goddess of the triple form[20] do but assist, and propitiously aid {so} vast an undertaking." Three nights were {now} wanting that the horns {of the Moon} might meet entirely, and might form a {perfect} orb. After the Moon shone in her full, and looked down upon the Earth, with her disk complete, {Medea} went forth from the house, clothed in garments flowing loose, with bare feet,[21] and having her unadorned hair hanging over her shoulders, and unattended, directed her wandering steps through the still silence of midnight. Sound sleep has {now} relaxed {the nerves of both} men, and birds, and beasts; the hedges and the motionless foliage are still, without any noise, the dewy air is still; the stars alone are twinkling; towards which, holding up her arms, three times she turns herself about, three times she besprinkles her hair with water taken from the stream; with three yells she opens her mouth, and, her knee bending upon the hard ground, she says, "O Night, most faithful to these my mysteries, and ye golden Stars, who, with the Moon, succeed the fires of the day, and thou, three-faced Hecate,[22] who comest conscious of my design, and ye charms and arts of the enchanters, and thou, too, Earth, that dost furnish the enchanters with powerful herbs; ye breezes, too, and winds, mountains,

rivers, and lakes, and all ye Deities of the groves, and all ye Gods of night, attend here; through whose aid, whenever I will, the rivers run back from their astonished banks to their sources, {and} by my charms I calm the troubled sea, and rouse it when calm; I disperse the clouds, and I bring clouds {upon the Earth}; I both allay the winds, and I raise them; and I break the jaws of serpents with my words and my spells; I move, too, the solid rocks, and the oaks torn up with their own {native} earth, and the forests {as well}. I command the mountains, too, to quake, and the Earth to groan, and the ghosts to come forth from their tombs. Thee, too, O Moon, do I draw down, although the Temesæan[23] brass relieves thy pangs. By my spells, also, the chariot of my grandsire is rendered pale; Aurora, too, is pale through my enchantments. For me did ye blunt the flames of the bulls, and with the curving plough you pressed the necks that never before bore the yoke. You raised a cruel warfare for those born of the dragon among themselves, and you lulled to sleep the keeper {of the golden fleece}, that had never known sleep; and {thus}, deceiving the guardian, you sent the treasure into the Grecian cities. Now there is need of juices, by means of which, old age, being renewed, may return to the bloom {of life}, and may receive back again its early years; and {this} ye will give me; for not in vain did the stars {just now} sparkle; nor yet in vain is the chariot come, drawn by the necks of winged dragons."

A chariot sent down from heaven was come; which, soon as she had mounted, and had stroked the harnessed necks of the dragons, and had shaken the light reins with her hands, she was borne aloft, and looked down upon Thessalian Tempe below her, and guided her dragons towards the chalky regions;[24] and observed the herbs which Ossa, and which the lofty Pelion bore, Othrys, too, and Pindus, and Olympus {still} greater than Pindus; and part she tore up by the root gently worked, part she cut down with the bend of a brazen sickle.[25] Many a herb, too, that grew on the banks of Apidanus[26] pleased her; many, too, {on the banks} of Amphrysus; nor, Enipeus, didst thou escape. The Peneian waters, and the Spercheian as well, contributed something, and the rushy shores of Bœbe.[27] She plucks, too, enlivening herbs by the Eubœan Anthedon,[28] not yet commonly known by the change of the body of Glaucus.[29] And now the ninth day,[30] and the ninth night had seen her visiting all the fields in her chariot, and upon the wings of the dragons, when she returned; nor had the dragons been fed, but with the odors {of the plants}: and yet they cast the skin of old age full of years. On her arrival she stood without the threshold and the gates, and was canopied by the heavens alone, and avoided the contact of her husband, and erected two altars of turf; on the right hand, one to Hecate, but on the left side one to Youth.[31] After she had hung them round with vervain and forest boughs, throwing up the earth from two trenches not far off, she performed the rites, and plunged a knife into the throat of a black ram, and besprinkled the wide trenches with blood. Then pouring thereon goblets[32] of flowing wine, and pouring brazen goblets of warm milk; she at the same time utters words, and calls upon the Deities of the earth, and entreats the king of the shades[33] below, together with his ravished wife, that they will not hasten to deprive the aged

limbs of life. When she had rendered them propitious both by prayers and prolonged mutterings, she commanded the exhausted body of Æson to be brought out to the altars, and stretched it cast into a deep sleep by her charms, {and} resembling one dead, upon the herbs laid beneath him.

She orders the son of Æson to go far thence, and the attendants, too, to go afar; and warns them to withdraw their profane eyes from her mysteries. At her order, they retire. Medea, with dishevelled hair, goes round the blazing altars like a worshipper of Bacchus, and dips her torches, split into many parts, in the trench, black with blood, and lights them, {thus} dipt, at the two altars. And thrice does she[34] purify the aged man with flames, thrice with water, and thrice with sulphur. In the meantime the potent mixture[35] is boiling and heaving in the brazen cauldron, placed {on the flames}, and whitens with swelling froth. There she boils roots cut up in the Hæmonian valleys, and seeds and flowers and acrid juices. She adds stones fetched from the most distant East, and sand, which the ebbing tide of the ocean has washed. She adds, too, hoar-frost gathered at night by the light of the moon, and the ill-boding wings of a screech owl,[36] together with its flesh; and the entrails of an ambiguous wolf, that was wont to change its appearance of a wild beast into {that of} a man. Nor is there wanting there the thin scaly slough of the Cinyphian water-snake,[37] and the liver of the long-lived stag;[38] to which, besides, she adds the bill and head of a crow that had sustained {an existence of} nine ages. When, with these and a thousand other things without a name, the barbarian {princess} has completed the medicine prepared for the mortal {body}, with a branch of the peaceful olive long since dried up, she stirs them all up, and blends the lowest {ingredients} with the highest. Behold! the old branch, turned about in the heated cauldron, at first becomes green; and after no long time assumes foliage, and is suddenly loaded with heavy olives. Besides, wherever the fire throws the froth from out of the hollow cauldron, and the boiling drops fall upon the earth, the ground becomes green, and flowers and soft grass spring up.

Soon as Medea sees this, she opens the throat[39] of the old man with a drawn sword; and allowing the former blood to escape, replenishes {his veins} with juices. Soon as Æson has drunk them in, either received in his mouth or in his wound, his beard and his hair[40] laying aside their hoariness, assume a black hue. His leanness flies, being expelled; his paleness and squalor are gone. His hollow veins are supplied with additional blood, and his limbs become instinct with vigor. Æson is astonished, and calls to recollection that he was such four times ten years before.

Liber had beheld from on high the miraculous operations of so great a prodigy; and taught {thereby} that youthful years can be restored to his nurses,[41] he requests this present from the daughter of Æetes.[42]

And that her arts[43] may not cease, the Phasian feigns a counterfeited quarrel with her husband, and flies as a suppliant to the threshold of Pelias[44] and (as he himself is oppressed with old age) his daughters receive her; whom, after a short time, the crafty Colchian engages to herself by the appearance of a pretended friendship. And while among the greatest of her merits, she relates that the infirmities of Æson have been removed, and is dwelling upon that part {of the story}, a hope is suggested to the damsels, the daughters of Pelias, that by the like art their parent may become young again; and this they request {of her}, and repeatedly entreat her to name her own price. For a short time she is silent, and appears to be hesitating, and keeps their mind in suspense, as they ask, with an affected gravity.

Afterwards, when she has promised them, she says, "That there may be the greater confidence in this my skill, the leader of the flock among your sheep, which is the most advanced in age, shall become a lamb by this preparation." Immediately, a fleecy {ram}, enfeebled by innumerable years, is brought, with his horns bending around his hollow temples; whose withered throat, when she has cut with the Hæmonian knife, and stained the steel with its scanty blood, the enchantress plunges the limbs of the sheep, and her potent juices together, into the hollow copper. The limbs of his body are lessened, and he puts off his horns, and his years together with his horns; and in the midst of the kettle a low bleating is heard. And without any delay, while they are wondering at the bleating, a lamb springs forth, and gambols in its course, and seeks the suckling dugs. The daughters of Pelias are amazed; and after her promises have obtained her credit, then, indeed, they urge her still more strongly. Phœbus had thrice taken the yoke off his horses sinking in the Iberian sea;[45] and upon the fourth night the radiant stars were twinkling, when the deceitful daughter of Æetes set pure water upon a blazing fire, and herbs without any virtue. And now sleep like to death, their bodies being relaxed, had seized the king, and the guards together with their king, which her charms and the influence of her enchanting tongue had caused. The daughters {of the king}, {as} ordered, had entered the threshold, together with the Colchian, and had surrounded the bed; "Why do you hesitate now, in your indolence? Unsheathe your swords," says she, "and exhaust the ancient gore, that I may replenish his empty veins with youthful blood. The life and the age of your father is now in your power. If you have any affection and cherish not vain hopes, perform your duty to your father, and drive away old age with your weapons, and, thrusting in the steel, let out his corrupted blood."

Upon this exhortation, as each of them is affectionate, she becomes especially undutiful, and that she may not be wicked, she commits wickedness. Yet not one is able to look upon her own blow; and they turn away their eyes, and turning away their faces, they deal chance blows with their cruel right hands. He, streaming with gore, yet raises his limbs on his elbows, and, half-mangled, attempts to rise from the couch; and in the midst of so many swords stretching forth

his pale arms, he says, “What are you doing, my daughters? What arms you against the life of your parent?” Their courage and their hands fail {them}. As he is about to say more, the Colchian severs his throat, together with his words, and plunges him, {thus} mangled, in the boiling cauldron.

[Footnote 20: *Of the triple form*.--Ver. 177. Hecate, the Goddess of enchantment.]

[Footnote 21: *With bare feet*.--Ver. 183. To have the feet bare was esteemed requisite for the due performance of magic rites, though sometimes on such occasions, and probably in the present instance, only one foot was left unshod. In times of drought, according to Tertullian, a procession and ceremonial, called ‘nudipedalia,’ were resorted to, with a view to propitiate the Gods by this token of grief and humiliation.]

[Footnote 22: *Three-faced Hecate*.--Ver. 194. Though Hecate and the Moon are here mentioned as distinct, they are frequently considered to have been the same Deity, with different attributes. The three heads with which Hecate was represented were those of a horse, a dog, and a pig, or sometimes, in the place of the latter, a human head.]

[Footnote 23: *Temesæan*.--Ver. 207. Temesa was a town of the Brutii, on the coast of Etruria, famous for its copper mines. It was also sometimes called Tempsa. There was also another Temesa, a city of Cyprus, also famous for its copper.]

[Footnote 24: *Chalky regions*.--Ver. 223. Such was the characteristic of the mountainous country of Thessaly, where she now alighted.]

[Footnote 25: *Brazen sickle*.--Ver. 227. We learn from Macrobius and Cælius Rhodiginus that copper was preferred to iron in cutting herbs for the purposes of enchantment, in exorcising spirits, and in aiding the moon in eclipses against the supposed charms of the witches, because it was supposed to be a purer metal.]

[Footnote 26: *Apidanus*.--Ver. 228. This and Amphrysus were rivers of Thessaly.]

[Footnote 27: *Shores of Bœbe*.--Ver. 231. Strabo makes mention of lake Bœbeis, near the town of Bœbe, in Thessaly. It was not far from the mouth of the river Peneus.]

[Footnote 28: *Anthedon*.--Ver. 232. This was a town of Bœotia, opposite to Eubœa, being situated on the Euripus, now called the straits of Negropont.]

[Footnote 29: *Glaucus*.--Ver. 233. He was a fisherman, who was changed into a sea God, on tasting a certain herb. His story is related at the end of the 13th Book.]

[Footnote 30: *Ninth day*.--Ver. 234. The numbers three and nine seem to have been deemed of especial virtue in incantations.]

[Footnote 31: *One to youth*.--Ver. 241. This goddess was also called Hebe, from the Greek word signifying youth. She was the daughter of Juno, and the wife of Hercules. She was also the cup-bearer of the Gods, until she was supplanted by Ganymede.]

[Footnote 32: *Goblets*.--Ver. 246. 'Carchesia.' The 'carchesium' was a kind of drinking cup, used by the Greeks from very early times. It was slightly contracted in the middle, and its two handles extended from the top to the bottom. It was employed in the worship of the Deities, and was used for libations of blood, wine, milk, and honey. Macrobius says that it was only used by the Greeks. Virgil makes mention of it as used to hold wine.]

[Footnote 33: *King of the shades*.--Ver. 249. Pluto and Proserpine. Clarke translates this line and the next, 'And prays to the king of shades with his kidnapped wife, that they would not be too forward to deprive the limbs of the old gentleman of life.']

[Footnote 34: *Thrice does she*.--Ver. 261. Clarke thus renders this and the two following lines: 'And purifies the old gentleman three times with flame, three times with water, and three times with sulphur. In the meantime the strong medicine boils, and bounces about in a brazen kettle set on the fire.']

[Footnote 35: *The potent mixture*.--Ver. 262. This reminds us of the line of Shakespeare in Macbeth, 'Make the hell-broth thick and slab.']

[Footnote 36: *A screech owl*.--Ver. 269. 'Strigis.' The 'strix' is supposed to have been the screech owl, and was a favorite bird with the enchanters, who were supposed to have the power of assuming that form. From the description given of the 'striges' in the Sixth Book of the Fasti, it would almost appear that the qualities of the vampyre bat were attributed to them.]

[Footnote 37: *Water snake*.--Ver. 272. The 'chelydrus' was a venomous water-snake of a powerful and offensive smell. The Delphin Commentator seems to think that a kind of turtle is here meant.]

[Footnote 38: *Long-lived stag*.--Ver. 273. The stag was said to live four times, and the crow nine times, as long as man.]

[Footnote 39: *Opened the throat*.--Ver. 285-6. Clarke translates the words 'quod simul ac vidit, stricto Medea recludit Ense senis jugulum,' 'which as soon as Medea saw, she opens the throat of the old gentleman with a drawn sword.']

[Footnote 40: *And his hair*.--Ver. 288. Medea is thought by some writers not only to have discovered a dye for giving a dark color to grey hair, but to have found out the invigorating properties of the warm bath.]

[Footnote 41: *To his nurses*.--Ver. 295. These (in Book iii. l. 314.) he calls by the name of Nyseïdes; but in the Fifth Book of the Fasti they are styled Hyades, and are placed in the number of the Constellations. A commentator on Homer, quoting from Pherecydes, calls them 'Dodonides.']

[Footnote 42: *Daughter of Æetes*.--Ver. 296. The reading in most of the MSS. here is Tetheiâ, or 'Thetide;' but Burmann has replaced it by Æetide, 'the daughter of Æetes.' It has been justly remarked, why should Bacchus apply to Tethys to have the age of the Nymphs, who had nursed him, renewed, when he had just beheld Medea, and not Tethys, do it in favor of Æson?]

[Footnote 43: *That her arts*.--Ver. 297. 'Neve doli cessent' is translated by Clarke, 'and that her tricks might not cease.']

[Footnote 44: *Pelias*.--Ver. 298. He was the brother of Æson, and had dethroned him, and usurped his kingdom.]

[Footnote 45: *The Iberian sea*.--Ver. 324. The Atlantic, or Western Ocean, is thus called from Iberia, the ancient name of Spain; which country, perhaps, was so called from the river Iberus, or Ebro, flowing through it.]

## Riley's Explanation

The authors who have endeavored to explain the true meaning and origin of the story of the restitution of Æson to youth, are much divided in their opinions concerning it. Some think it refers to the mystery of reviving the decrepit and aged by the transfusion of youthful blood. It is, however, not improbable, that Medea obtained the reputation of being a sorceress, only because she had been taught by her mother the virtues of various plants: and that she administered a potion to Æson, which furnished him with new spirits and strength.

The daughters of Pelias being desirous to obtain the same favor of Medea for their father, she, to revenge the evils which he had brought upon her husband and his family, may possibly have mixed some venomous herbs in his drink, which immediately killed him.

## Book VII, Fable III (lines 350–401)

*Medea, after having killed Pelias, goes through several countries to Corinth, where, finding that Jason, in her absence, has married the daughter of king Creon, she sets fire to the palace, whereby the princess and her father are consumed. She then murders the two children which she had by Jason, before his face, and takes to flight.*

And unless she had mounted into the air with winged dragons, she would not have been exempt from punishment; she flies aloft, over both shady Pelion, the lofty habitation[46] of the son of Phillyra, and over Othrys, and the places noted for the fate of the ancient Cerambus.[47] He, by the aid of Nymphs, being lifted on wings into the air, when the ponderous earth was covered by the sea pouring over it, not being overwhelmed, escaped the flood of Deucalion. On the left side, she leaves the Æolian Pitane,[48] and the image of the long Dragon[49] made out of stone, and the wood of Ida,[50] in which Bacchus hid a stolen bullock beneath the appearance of a fictitious stag; {the spot} too, where the father of Corythus[51] lies buried beneath a little sand, and the fields which Mæra[52] alarmed by her unusual barking.

The city, too, of Eurypylus,[53] in which the Coan matrons[54] wore horns, at the time when the herd of Hercules[55] departed {thence}; Phœbean Rhodes[56] also, and the Ialysian Telchines,[57] whose eyes[58] corrupting all things by the very looking upon them, Jupiter utterly hating, thrust beneath the waves of his brother. She passed, too, over the Cartheian walls of ancient Cea,[59] where her father Alcidamas[60] was destined to wonder that a gentle dove could arise from the body of his daughter.

After that, she beholds the lakes of Hyrie,[61] and Cycneian Tempe,[62] which the swan that had suddenly become such, frequented. For there Phyllius, at the request of the boy, had given him birds, and a fierce lion tamed; being ordered, too, to subdue a bull, he had subdued him; and being angry at his despising his love so often, he denied him, {when} begging the bull as his last reward. The other, indignant, said, “Thou shalt wish that thou hadst given it;” and {then} leaped from a high rock. All imagined he had fallen; but, transformed into a swan, he hovered in the air on snow-white wings. But his mother, Hyrie, not knowing that he was saved, dissolved in tears, and formed a lake {called} after her own name.

Adjacent to these {places} is Pleuron;[63] in which Combe,[64] the daughter of Ophis, escaped the wounds of her sons with trembling wings. After that, she sees the fields of Calaurea,[65] sacred to Latona, conscious of the transformation of their king, together with his wife, into birds. Cyllene is on the right hand, on which Menephron[66] was {one day} to lie with his mother, after the manner of savage beasts. Far hence she beholds Cephisus,[67] lamenting the fate of his

grandson, changed by Apollo into a bloated sea-calf; and the house of Eumelus,[68] lamenting his son in the air.

At length, borne on the wings of her dragons, she reached the Pirenian Ephyre.[69] Here, those of ancient times promulgated that in the early ages mortal bodies were produced from mushrooms springing from rain. But after the new-made bride was consumed, through the Colchian drugs, and both seas beheld the king's house on fire, her wicked sword was bathed in the blood of her sons; and the mother, having {thus} barbarously revenged herself, fled from the arms of Jason. Being borne hence by her Titanian dragons,[70] she entered the city of Pallas, which saw thee, most righteous Phineus,[71] and thee, aged Periphas,[72] flying together, and the granddaughter of Polypemon[73] resting upon new-formed wings.

[Footnote 46: *Lofty habitation*.--Ver. 352. The mountains of Thessaly are so called, because Chiron, the son of the Nymph Phillyra, lived there.]

[Footnote 47: *Cerambus*.--Ver. 353. Antoninus Liberalis, quoting from Nicander, calls him Terambus, and says that he lived at the foot of Mount Pelion; he incurred the resentment of the Nymphs, who changed him into a scarabæus, or winged beetle. Flying to the heights of Parnassus, at the time of the flood of Deucalion, he thereby made his escape. Some writers say that he was changed into a bird.]

[Footnote 48: *Pitane*.--Ver. 357. This was a town of Ætolia, in Asia Minor, near the mouth of the river Caicus.]

[Footnote 49: *The long dragon*.--Ver. 358. He alludes, most probably, to the story of the Lesbian changed into a dragon or serpent, which is mentioned in the Eleventh book, line 58.]

[Footnote 50: *Wood of Ida*.--Ver. 359. This was the grove of Ida, in Phrygia. It is supposed that he refers to the story of Thyoneus, the son of Bacchus, who, having stolen an ox from some Phrygian shepherds, was pursued by them; on which Bacchus, to screen his son, changed the ox into a stag, and invested Thyoneus with the garb of a hunter.]

[Footnote 51: *Father of Corythus*.--Ver. 361. Paris was the father of Corythus, by Œnone. He was said to have been buried at Cebrena, a little town of Phrygia, near Troy.]

[Footnote 52: *Mæra*.--Ver. 362. This was the name of the dog of Icarius, the father of Erigone, who discovered the murder of his master by the shepherds of Attica, and was made a Constellation, under the name of the Dog-star. As, however, the flight of Medea was now far distant from Attica, it is more likely that the Poet refers to the transformation of some female, named Mæra, into a dog, whose story has not come down to us; indeed, Lactantius expresses

this as his opinion. Burmann thinks that it refers to the transformation of Hecuba, mentioned in the 13th book, line 406; and that 'Mæra' is a corruption for some other name of Hecuba.]

[Footnote 53: *Eurypylus*.--Ver. 363. He was a former king of the Isle of Cos, in the Ægean Sea, and was much famed for his skill as an augur.]

[Footnote 54: *The Coan matrons*.--Ver. 363. Lactantius says that the women of Cos, extolling their own beauty as superior to that of Venus, incurred the resentment of that Goddess, and were changed by her into cows. Another version of the story is, that these women, being offended at Hercules for driving the oxen of Ægeon through their island, were very abusive, on which Juno transformed them into cows: to this latter version reference is made in the present passage.]

[Footnote 55: *Hercules*.--Ver. 364. He besieged and took the chief city of the island, which was also called Cos; and having slain Eurypylus, carried off his daughter Chalciope.]

[Footnote 56: *Phœbean Rhodes*.--Ver. 365. The island of Rhodes, in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Asia Minor, was sacred to the Sun, and was said never to be deserted by his rays.]

[Footnote 57: *Ialysian Telchines*.--Ver. 365. Ialysus was one of the three most ancient cities of Rhodes, and was said to have been founded by Ialysus, whose parent was the Sun. The Telchines, or Thelchines, were a race supposed to have migrated thither from Crete. They were persons of great artistic skill, on which account they may, possibly, have obtained the character of being magicians; such was the belief of Strabo.]

[Footnote 58: *Whose eyes*.--Ver. 366. The evil eye was supposed by the ancients not only to have certain fascinating powers, but to be able to destroy the beauty of any object on which it was turned.]

[Footnote 59: *Cea*.--Ver. 368. This island, now Zia, is in the Ægean sea, near Eubœa. Carthæa was a city there, the ruins of which are still in existence.]

[Footnote 60: *Alcidamas*.--Ver. 369. Antoninus Liberalis says, that Alcidamas lived not at Carthæa, but at Iülis, another city in the Isle of Cea.]

[Footnote 61: *Lakes of Hyrie*.--Ver. 371. Hyrie was the mother of Cycnus; and pining away with grief on the transformation of her son, she was changed into a lake, called by her name.]

[Footnote 62: *Cycneian Tempe*.--Ver. 371. This was not Thessalian Tempe, but a valley of Teumesia, or Teumesus, a mountain of Bœotia.]

[Footnote 63: *Pleuron*.--Ver. 382. This was a city of Ætolia, near Mount Curius. It was far distant from Bœotia and Lake Hyrie. Some commentators, therefore, suggest that the reading should be Brauron, a village of Attica, near the confines of Bœotia.]

[Footnote 64: *Combe*.--Ver. 383. She was the mother of the Curetes of Ætolia, who, perhaps, received that name from Mount Curius. There was another Combe, the daughter of Asopus, who discovered the use of brazen arms, and was called Chalcis, from that circumstance. She was said to have borne a hundred daughters to her husband.]

[Footnote 65: *Calaurea*.--Ver. 384. This was an island between Crete and the Peloponnesus, in the Saronic gulf, which was sacred to Apollo. Latona resided there, having given Delos to Neptune in exchange for it. Demosthenes died there.]

[Footnote 66: *Menephron*.--Ver. 386. Hyginus says, that he committed incest both with his mother Blias, and with Cyllene, his daughter.]

[Footnote 67: *Cephisus*.--Ver. 388. The river Cephisus, in Bœotia, had a daughter, Praxithea. She was the wife of Erectheus, and bore him eight sons, the fate of one of whom is perhaps here referred to.]

[Footnote 68: *Eumelus*.--Ver. 390. He was the king of Patræ, on the sea-coast of Achaia. Triptolemus visited him with his winged chariot; on which, Antheas, the son of Eumelus, ascended it while his father was sleeping, and falling from it, he was killed. He is, probably, here referred to; and the reading should be 'natum,' and not 'natam.' Some writers, however, suppose that his daughter was changed into a bird.]

[Footnote 69: *Pirenian Ephyre*.--Ver. 391. Corinth was so called from Ephyre, the daughter of Neptune, who was said to have lived there. Its inhabitants were fabled to have sprung from mushrooms.]

[Footnote 70: *Titanian dragons*.--Ver. 398. Her dragons are so called, either because, as Pindar says, they had sprung from the blood of the Titans, or because, according to the Greek tradition, the chariot and winged dragons had been sent to Medea by the Sun, one of whose names was Titan.]

[Footnote 71: *Phineus*.--Ver. 399. Any further particulars of the person here named are unknown. Some commentators suggest 'Phini,' and that some female of the name of Phinis is alluded to, making the adjective 'justissime' of the feminine gender.]

[Footnote 72: *Periphas*.--Ver. 400. He was a very ancient king of Attica, before the time of Cecrops, and was said to have been changed into an eagle by Jupiter, while his wife was

transformed into an osprey.]

[Footnote 73: *Polypemon*.--Ver. 401. This was a name of the robber Procrustes, who was slain by Theseus. Halcyone, the daughter of his son Scyron, having been guilty of incontinence, was thrown into the sea by her father, on which she was changed into a kingfisher, which bore her name.]

### Riley's Explanation

Jason being reconciled to the children of Pelias, gave the crown to his son Acastus. Becoming tired of Medea, he married Glauce, or Creüsa, the daughter of Creon, king of Corinth. Medea, hastening to that place, left her two sons in the temple of Juno, and set fire to Creon's palace, where he and his daughter were consumed to ashes, after which she killed her own children. Euripides, in his tragedy of Medea, makes a chorus of Corinthian women say, that the Corinthians themselves committed the murder, and that the Gods sent a plague on the city, as a punishment for the deed. Pausanias also says, that the tomb of Medea's children, whom the Corinthians stoned to death, was still to be seen in his time; and that the Corinthians offered sacrifices there every year, to appease their ghosts, as the oracle had commanded them.

Apollodorus relates this story in a different manner. He says, that Medea sent her rival a crown, dipped in a sort of gum of a combustible nature; and that when Glauce had put it on her head, it began to burn so furiously, that the young princess perished in the greatest misery. Medea afterwards retired to Thebes, where Hercules engaged to give her assistance against Jason, which promise, however, he failed to perform. Going thence to Athens, she married Ægeus.

The story of her winged dragons may, perhaps, be based on the fact, that her ship was called 'the Dragon.' In recounting the particulars of her flight, Ovid makes allusion to several stories by the way, the most of which are entirely unknown to us. With regard to these fictions, it may not be out of place to remark here, as affording a key to many of them, that where a person escaped from any imminent danger, it was published that he had been changed into a bird. If, to avoid pursuit, a person hid himself in a cave, he was said to be transformed into a serpent; and if he burst into tears, from excess of grief, he was reported to have changed into a fountain; while, if a damsel lost herself in a wood, she became a Nymph, or a Dryad. The resemblance of names, also, gave rise to several fictions: thus, Alopis was changed into a fox; Cygnus into a swan; Coronis into a crow; and Cerambus into a horned beetle. As some few of the stories here alluded to by Ovid, refer to historical events, it may be remarked, that the account of the women of Cos being changed into cows, is thought by some to have been founded on the cruel act of the companions of Hercules, who sacrificed some of them to the Gods of the country. The inhabitants of the Isle of Rhodes were said to have been changed into rocks, because they perished in an inundation, which laid a part of that island under water, and particularly the

town of Ialysus. The fruitfulness of the daughter of Alcidamas occasioned it to be said, that she was changed into a dove. The rage of Mæra is shown by her transformation into a bitch; and Arne was changed into a daw, because, having sold her country, her avarice was well depicted under the symbol of that bird, which, according to the popular opinion, is fond of money. Phillyra, the mother of the Centaur Chiron, was said to be changed into a linden-tree, probably because she happened to bear the name of that tree, which in the Greek language is called φιλύρα.

## Book VII, Fable IV (lines 402–468)

*Hercules chains the dog Cerberus, the guardian of the gates of the Infernal Regions. Theseus, after his exploits at Corinth, arrives at Athens, where Medea prepares a cup of poison for him. The king, however, recognizing his son, just as he is about to drink, snatches away the cup from him, while Medea flies in her chariot. Ægeus then makes a festival, to celebrate the arrival and preservation of Theseus. In the mean time, Minos, the king of Crete, solicits several princes to assist him in a war against Athens, to revenge the death of his son Androgeus, who had been murdered there.*

Ægeus, to be blamed for this deed alone, shelters her; and hospitality is not enough, he also joins her {to himself} by the ties of marriage. And now was Theseus, his son, arrived, unknown to his father, who, by his valor, had established peace in the Isthmus between the two seas. For his destruction Medea mingles the wolfsbane, which she once brought with her from the shores of Scythia. This, they say, sprang from the teeth of the Echidnean dog. There is a gloomy cave,[74] with a dark entrance, {wherein} there is a descending path, along which the Tirynthian hero dragged away Cerberus resisting, and turning his eyes sideways from the day and the shining rays {of the Sun}, in chains formed of adamant; he, filled with furious rage, filled the air with triple barkings at the same moment, and sprinkled the verdant fields with white foam. This, they suppose, grew solid, and, receiving the nourishment of a fruitful and productive soil, acquired the power of being noxious. Because, full of life, it springs up on the hard rock, the rustics call it aconite.[75]

This, by the contrivance of his wife, the father Ægeus himself presented to his son,[76] as though to an enemy. Theseus had received the presented cup with unsuspecting right hand, when his father perceived upon the ivory hilt of his sword the tokens of his race,[77] and struck the guilty {draught} from his mouth. She escaped death, having raised clouds by her enchantments.

But the father, although he rejoices at his son's being safe, astonished that so great a wickedness can be committed with so narrow an escape from death, heats the altars with fires, and loads the Gods with gifts; and the axes strike the muscular necks of the oxen having their horns bound with wreaths. No day is said {ever} to have shone upon the people of Erectheus more famous than that--the senators and the common people keep up the festivity; songs, too, they sing, wine inspiring wit. "Thee, greatest Theseus," said they, "Marathon[78] admired for {shedding} the blood of the Cretan bull; and that the husbandman ploughs Cromyon[79] in safety from the boar, is thy procurement and thy work. By thy means the country of Epidaurus saw the club-bearing son of Vulcan[80] fall; {and} the banks of the river Cephisus[81] saw the cruel Procrustes {fall by thee}. Eleusis, sacred to Ceres, beheld the death of Cercyon.[82] Sinnis[83]

fell too, who barbarously used his great powers; who was able to bend {huge} beams, and used to pull pine trees from aloft to the earth, destined to scatter {human} bodies far and wide. The road to Alcathoë,[84] the Lelegeïan city, is now open in safety, Scyron[85] being laid low {in death}: {and} the earth denies a resting-place, the water, {too}, denies a resting-place to the bones of the robber scattered piecemeal; these, long tossed about, length of time is reported to have hardened into rocks. To {these} rocks the name of Scyron adheres. If we should reckon up thy glorious deeds, and thy years, thy actions would exceed thy years {in number}. For thee, bravest {hero}, we make public vows: in thy honor do we quaff the draughts of wine." The palace rings with the acclamations of the populace, and the prayers of those applauding; and there is no place sorrowing throughout the whole city.

And yet (so surely is the pleasure of no one unalloyed, and some anxiety is {ever} interposing amid joyous circumstances), Ægeus does not have his joy undisturbed, on receiving back his son. Minos prepares for war; who, though he is strong in soldiers, strong in shipping, is still strongest of all in the resentment of a parent, and, with retributive arms, avenges the death of {his son} Androgeus. Yet, before the war, he obtains auxiliary forces, and crosses the sea with a swift fleet, in which he is accounted strong. On the one side, he joins Anaphe[86] to himself; and the realms of Astypale; Anaphe by treaty, the realms of Astypale by conquest; on the other side, the low Myconos, and the chalky lands of Cimolus,[87] and the flourishing Cythnos, Scyros, and the level Seriphos;[88] Paros, too, abounding in marble, and {the island} wherein the treacherous Sithonian[89] betrayed the citadel, on receiving the gold, which, in her covetousness, she had demanded. She was changed into a bird, which even now has a passion for gold, the jackdaw {namely}, black-footed, and covered with black feathers.

[Footnote 74: *A gloomy cave*.--Ver. 409. This cavern was called Acherusia. It was situate in the country of the Mariandyni, near the city of Heraclea, in Pontus, and was said to be the entrance of the Infernal Regions. Cerberus was said to have been dragged from Tartarus by Hercules, through this cave, which circumstance was supposed to account for the quantity of aconite, or wolfsbane, that grew there.]

[Footnote 75: *Call it aconite*.--Ver. 419. From the Greek ακόνη, 'a whetstone.']

[Footnote 76: *Presented to his son*.--Ver. 420. Medea was anxious to secure the succession to the throne of Athens to her son Medus, and was therefore desirous to remove Theseus out of the way.]

[Footnote 77: *Tokens of his race*.--Ver. 423. Ægeus, leaving Æthra at Trœzen, in a state of pregnancy, charged her, if she bore a son, to rear him, but to tell no one whose son he was. He placed his own sword and shoes under a large stone, and directed her to send his son to him

when he was able to lift the stone, and to take them from under it; and he then returned to Athens, where he married Medea. When Theseus had grown to the proper age, his mother led him to the stone under which his father had deposited his sword and shoes, which he raised with ease, and took them out. It was, probably, by means of this sword that Ægeus recognized his son in the manner mentioned in the text.]

[Footnote 78: *Marathon*.--Ver. 434. This was a town of Attica, adjoining a plain of the same name, where the Athenians, under the command of Miltiades, overthrew the Persians with immense slaughter. The bull which Theseus slew there was presented by Neptune to Minos. Being brought into Attica by Hercules, it laid waste that territory until it was slain by Theseus.]

[Footnote 79: *Cromyon*.--Ver. 435. This was a village of the Corinthian territory, which was infested by a wild boar of enormous size, that slew both men and animals. It was put to death by Theseus.]

[Footnote 80: *Vulcan*.--Ver. 437. By Antilia, Vulcan was the father of Periphetes, a robber who infested Epidaurus, in the Peloponnesus. He was so formidable with his club, that he was called Corynetas, from κορύνη, the Greek for 'a club.']

[Footnote 81: *Cephisus*.--Ver. 438. Procrustes was a robber of such extreme cruelty that he used to stretch out, or lop off, the extremities of his captives, according as they were shorter or longer than his bedstead. He infested the neighborhood of Eleusis, in Attica, which was watered by the Cephisus. He was put to death by Theseus.]

[Footnote 82: *Cercyon*.--Ver. 439. It was his custom to challenge travellers to wrestle, and to kill them, if they declined the contest, or were beaten in it. Theseus accepted his challenge; and having overcome him, put him to death. Eleusis was especially dedicated to Ceres; there the famous Eleusinian mysteries of that Goddess were held.]

[Footnote 83: *Sinnis*.--Ver. 440. He was a robber of Attica, to whom reference is made in the Ibis, line 409.]

[Footnote 84: *Alcathoë*.--Ver. 443. Megara, or Alcathoë, which was founded by Lelex, was almost destroyed by Minos, and was rebuilt by Alcathoüs, the son of Pelops. He, flying from his father, on being accused of the murder of his brother Chrysippus, retired to the city of Megara, where, having slain a lion which was then laying waste that territory, he was held in the highest veneration by the inhabitants.]

[Footnote 85: *Scyron*.--Ver. 443. This robber haunted the rocks in the neighborhood of Megara, and used to insist on those who became his guests washing his feet. This being done upon the rocks, Scyron used to kick the strangers into the sea while so occupied, where a tortoise lay ready

to devour the bodies. Theseus killed him, and threw his body down the same rocks, which derived their name of Saronic, or Scyronic, from this robber.]

[Footnote 86: *Anaphe*.--Ver. 461. This, and the other islands here named, were near the isle of Crete, and perhaps in those times were subject to the sway of Minos.]

[Footnote 87: *Cimolus*.--Ver. 463. Pliny the Elder tells us, that this island was famous for producing a clay which seems to have had much the properties of soap. It was of a grayish white color, and was also employed for medicinal purposes.]

[Footnote 88: *Seriphos*.--Ver. 464. Commentators are at a loss to know why Seriphos should here have the epithet 'plana,' 'level,' inasmuch as it was a very craggy island. It is probably a corrupt reading.]

[Footnote 89: *Sithonian*.--Ver. 466. This was Arne, whose story is referred to in the Explanation, p. 242 / p. 270.]

## Riley's Explanation

If it is the fact, as many antiquarians suppose, that much of the Grecian mythology was derived from that of the Egyptians, there can be but little doubt that their system of the Elysian Fields and the Infernal Regions was derived from the Egyptian notions on the future state of man. The story too, of Cerberus is, perhaps, based upon the custom of the Egyptians, who kept dogs to guard the fields or caverns in which they kept their mummies.

It is, however, very possible that the story of Cerberus may have been founded upon a fact, or what was believed to be such. There was a serpent which haunted the cavern of Tænarus, in Laconia, and ravaged the districts adjacent to that promontory. This cave, being generally considered to be one of the avenues to the kingdom of Pluto, the poets thence derived the notion that this serpent was the guardian of its portals. Pausanias observes, that Homer was the first who said that Cerberus was a dog; though, in reality, he was a serpent, whose name in the Greek language signified 'one that devours flesh.' The story that Cerberus, with his foam, poisoned the herbs that grew in Thessaly, and that the aconite and other poisonous plants were ever after common there, is probably based on the simple fact, that those herbs were found in great quantities in that region.

Women, using these herbs in their pretended enchantments, gave ground for the stories of the witches of Thessaly, and of their ability to bring the moon down to the earth by their spells and incantations; which latter notion was probably based on the circumstance, that these women used to invoke the Night and the Moon as witnesses of their magical operations.

## Book VII, Fable V (lines 469–613)

*Minos, having engaged several powers in his interest, and having been refused by others, goes to the island of Ægina, where Æacus reigns, to endeavor to secure an alliance with that prince; but without success. Upon his departure, Cephalus arrives, as ambassador, from Athens, and obtains succors from the king; who gives him an account of the desolation which a pestilence had formerly made in his country, and of the surprising manner in which it had been re-peopled.*

But Oliaros,[90] and Didyme, and Tenos,[91] and Andros,[92] and Gyaros,[93] and Peparethos, fruitful in the smooth olive,[94] do not aid the Gnossian ships. Then Minos makes for Œnopia,[95] the kingdom of Æacus, lying to the left. The ancients called it Œnopia, but Æacus himself called it Ægina, from the name of his mother. The multitude rushes forth, and desires greatly to know a man of so great celebrity. Both Telamon,[96] and Peleus, younger than Telamon, and Phocus, the {king's} third son, go to meet him. Æacus himself, too, {though} slow through the infirmity of old age, goes forth, and asks him what is the reason of his coming? The ruler of a hundred cities, being put in mind of his fatherly sorrow {for his son}, sighs, and gives him this answer: "I beg thee to assist arms taken up on account of my son; and be a party in a war of affection. For his shades do I demand satisfaction." To him the grandson of Asopus says, "Thou askest in vain, and for a thing not to be done by my city; for, indeed, there is no land more closely allied to the people of Cecropia. Such are {the terms of} our compact." {Minos} goes away in sadness, and says, "This compact of thine will cost thee a dear price;" and he thinks it more expedient to threaten war than to wage it, and to waste his forces there prematurely.

Even yet may the Lyctian[97] fleet be beheld from the Œnopian walls, when an Attic ship, speeding onward with full sail, appears, and enters the friendly harbor, which is carrying Cephalus, and together {with him} the request of his native country. The youthful sons of Æacus recognize Cephalus, although seen but after a long period, and give their right hands, and lead him into the house of their father. The graceful hero, even still retaining some traces of his former beauty, enters; and, holding a branch of his country's olive, being the elder, he has on his right and left hand the two younger in age, Clytus and Butes, the sons of Pallas.[98] After their first meeting has had words suitable {thereto}, Cephalus relates the request of the people of Cecrops, and begs assistance, and recounts the treaties and alliances of their forefathers; and he adds, that the subjection of the whole of Achaia is aimed at. After the eloquence {of Cephalus} has thus promoted the cause entrusted to him, Æacus, leaning with his left hand on the handle of his sceptre, says--

“Ask not for assistance, O Athens, but take it, and consider, beyond doubt, the resources which this island possesses, as thy own, and let all the forces of my kingdom go {along with thee}. Strength is not wanting. I have soldiers enough both for my defence, and for {opposing} the enemy. Thanks to the Gods; this is a prosperous time, and one that can excuse no refusal of mine.” “Yes, {and} be it so,” says Cephalus:[99] “and I pray that thy power may increase along with thy citizens. Indeed, as I came along just now, I received {much} pleasure, when a number of youths, so comely and so equal in their ages, came forward to meet me. Yet I miss many from among them, whom I once saw when I was formerly entertained in this city.” Æacus heaves a sigh, and thus he says, with mournful voice: “A better fortune will be following a lamentable beginning; I {only} wish I could relate this to you. I will now tell it you without any order, that I may not be detaining you by any long preamble.[100] They are {now} lying as bones and ashes, for whom thou art inquiring with tenacious memory. And how great a part were they of my resources that perished! A dreadful pestilence fell upon my people, through the anger of the vengeful Juno, who hated a country named[101] from her rival. While the calamity seemed natural, and the baneful cause of so great destruction was unknown, it was opposed by the resources of medicine. {But} the havoc exceeded {all} help, which {now} lay baffled. At first the heaven encompassed the earth with a thick darkness, and enclosed within its clouds a drowsy heat. And while the Moon was four times filling her orb by joining her horns, {and}, four times decreasing, was diminishing her full orb, the hot South winds were blowing with their deadly blasts. It is known for a fact that the infection came even into fountains and lakes, and that many thousands of serpents were wandering over the uncultivated fields, and were tainting the rivers with their venom. The violence of this sudden distemper was first discovered by the destruction of dogs, and birds, and sheep, and oxen, and among the wild beasts. The unfortunate ploughman wonders that strong oxen fall down at their work, and lie stretched in the middle of the furrow. {And} while the wool-bearing flocks utter weakly bleatings, both their wool falls off spontaneously, and their bodies pine away. The horse, once of high mettle, and of great fame on the course, degenerates for the {purposes of} victory; and, forgetting his ancient honors, he groans at the manger, doomed to perish by an inglorious distemper. The boar remembers not to be angry, nor the hind to trust to her speed, nor the bears to rush upon the powerful herds.

“A faintness seizes all {animals}; both in the woods, in the fields, and in the roads, loathsome carcases lie strewed. The air is corrupted with the smell {of them}. I am relating strange events. The dogs, and the ravenous birds, and the hoary wolves, touch them not; falling away, they rot, and, by their exhalations, produce baneful effects, and spread the contagion far and wide. With more dreadful destruction the pestilence reaches the wretched husbandmen, and riots within the walls of the extensive city. At first, the bowels are scorched,[102] and a redness, and the breath drawn with difficulty, is a sign of the latent flame. The tongue, {grown} rough, swells; and the parched mouth gapes, with its throbbing veins; the noxious air, too, is inhaled by the

breathing. {The infected} cannot endure a bed, or any coverings; but they lay their hardened breasts upon the earth, and their bodies are not made cool by the ground, but the ground is made hot by their bodies. There is no physician at hand; the cruel malady breaks out upon even those who administer remedies; and {their own} arts become an injury to their owners. The nearer at hand any one is, and the more faithfully he attends on the sick, the sooner does he come in for his share of the fatality. And when the hope of recovery is departed, and they see the end of their malady {only} in death, they indulge their humors, and there is no concern as to what is to their advantage; for, {indeed}, nothing is to their advantage. All sense, too, of shame being banished, they lie {promiscuously} close to the fountains and rivers, and deep wells; and their thirst is not extinguished by drinking, before their life {is}. Many, overpowered {with the disease}, are unable to arise thence, and die amid the very water; and yet another even drinks that {water}. So great, too, is the irksomeness for the wretched {creatures} of their hated beds, {that} they leap out, or, if their strength forbids them standing, they roll their bodies upon the ground, and every man flies from his own dwelling; each one's house seems fatal to him: and since the cause of the calamity is unknown, the place that is known is blamed. You might see persons, half dead, wandering about the roads, as long as they were able to stand; others, weeping and lying about on the ground, and rolling their wearied eyes with the dying movement. They stretch, too, their limbs towards the stars of the overhanging heavens, breathing forth their lives here and there, where death has overtaken them.

"What were my feelings then? Were they not such as they ought to be, to hate life, and to desire to be a sharer with my people? On whichever side my eyes were turned, there was the multitude strewed {on the earth}, just as when rotten apples fall from the moved branches, and acorns from the shaken holm-oak. Thou seest[103] a lofty temple, opposite {thee}, raised on high with long steps: Jupiter has it {as his own}. Who did not offer incense at those altars in vain? how often did the husband, while he was uttering words of entreaty for his wife, {or} the father for his son, end his life at the altars without prevailing? in his hand, too, was part of the frankincense found unconsumed! How often did the bulls, when brought to the temples, while the priest was making his supplications, and pouring the pure wine between their horns, fall without waiting for the wound! While I myself was offering sacrifice to Jupiter, for myself, and my country, and my three sons, the victim sent forth dismal lowings, and suddenly falling down without any blow, stained the knives thrust into it, with its scanty blood; the diseased entrails, too, had lost {all} marks of truth, and the warnings of the Gods. The baneful malady penetrated to the entrails. I have seen the carcases lying, thrown out before the sacred doors; before the very altars, {too}, that death might become more odious[104] {to the Gods}. Some finish their lives with the halter, and by death dispel the apprehension of death, and voluntarily invite approaching fate. The bodies of the dead are not borne out with any funeral rites, according to the custom; for the {city} gates cannot receive {the multitude of} the processions. Either

unburied they lie upon the ground, or they are laid on the lofty pyres without the usual honors. And now there is no distinction, and they struggle for the piles; and they are burnt on fires that belong to others. They who should weep are wanting; and the souls of sons, and of husbands, of old and of young, wander about unlamented: there is not room sufficient for the tombs, nor trees for the fires."

[Footnote 90: *Oliaros*.--Ver. 469. This was one of the Cyclades, in the Ægean sea; it was colonized by the Sidonians.]

[Footnote 91: *Tenos*.--Ver. 469. This island was famous for a temple there, sacred to Neptune.]

[Footnote 92: *Andros*.--Ver. 469. This was an island in the Ægean Sea, near Eubœa. It received its name from Andros, the son of Anius. The Andrian slave, who gives his name to one of the comedies of Terence, was supposed to be a native of this island.]

[Footnote 93: *Gyaros*.--Ver. 470. This was a sterile island among the Cyclades; in later times, the Romans made it a penal settlement for their criminals. The mice of this island were said to be able to gnaw iron; perhaps, because they were starved by reason of its unfruitfulness.]

[Footnote 94: *Smooth olive*.--Ver. 470. Clarke translates 'nitidæ olivæ' 'the neat olive.' 'Nitidus' here means 'smooth and shining.']

[Footnote 95: *Œnopia*.--Ver. 473. This was the ancient name of the isle of Ægina, in the Saronic Gulf, famous as being the native place of the family of the Æacidæ. It obtained its later name from Ægina, the daughter of Asopus, and the mother of Æacus, whom Jupiter carried thither.]

[Footnote 96: *Telamon*.--Ver. 476. Telamon, Peleus, and Phocus, were the three sons of Æacus.]

[Footnote 97: *Lyctian*.--Ver. 490. Lyctus was the name of one of the cities of Crete.]

[Footnote 98: *Pallas*.--Ver. 500. This was either Pallas the son of Pandion, king of Athens, or of Neleus, the brother of Theseus. This Pallas, together with his sons, was afterwards slain by Theseus.]

[Footnote 99: *Cephalus*.--Ver. 512. He was the son of Deioneus, or according to some writers, of Mercury and Herse, the daughter of Cecrops.]

[Footnote 100: *Long preamble*.--Ver. 520. Clarke translates 'neu longâ ambage morer vos,' 'that I may not detain you with a long-winded detail of it.']

[Footnote 101: *Country named*.--Ver. 524. This was the island of Ægina, so called from the Nymph who was carried thither by Jupiter.]

[Footnote 102: *Bowels are scorched*.--Ver. 554. Clarke quaintly renders the words ‘viscera torrentur primo.’ ‘first people’s bowels are searched;’ perhaps, however, the latter word is a misprint for ‘scorched.’]

[Footnote 103: *Thou seest*.--Ver. 587. As Æacus says this, he must be supposed to point with his finger towards the temple.]

[Footnote 104: *More odious*.--Ver. 603. Dead bodies were supposed to be particularly offensive to the Gods.]

## Riley’s Explanation

Minos (most probably the second prince that bore that name), upon his accession to the throne, after the death of his father, Lycastus, made several conquests in the islands adjoining Crete, where he reigned, and, at last, became master of those seas. The strength of his fleet is particularly remarked by Thucydides, Apollodorus, and Diodorus Siculus.

The Feast of the Panathenæa being celebrated at Athens, Minos sent his son Androgeus to it, who joined as a combatant in the games, and was sufficiently skilful to win all the prizes. The glory which he thereby acquired, combined with his polished manners, obtained him the friendship of the sons of Pallas, the brother of Ægeus. This circumstance caused Ægeus to entertain jealous feelings, the more especially as he knew that his nephews were conspiring against him. Being informed that Androgeus was about to take a journey to Thebes, he caused him to be assassinated near Œnoë, a town on the confines of Attica. Apollodorus, indeed, says that he was killed by the Bull of Marathon, which was then making great ravages in Greece; but it is very possible that the Athenians encouraged this belief, with the view of screening their king from the infamy of an action so inhuman and unjust. Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch agree in stating that Ægeus himself caused Androgeus to be murdered.

On hearing the news of his son’s death, Minos resolved on revenge. He ordered a strong fleet to be fitted out, and went in person to several courts, to contract alliances, and engage other powers to assist him; and this, with the history of the plague at Ægina, forms the subject of the present narrative.

## Book VII, Fable VI (lines 614–660)

*Jupiter, at the prayer of his son Æacus, transforms the ants that are in the hollow of an old oak into men; these, from the Greek name of those insects, are called Myrmidons.*

“Stupefied by so great an outburst of misery, I said, ‘O Jupiter! if stories do not falsely say that thou didst come into the embraces of Ægina, the daughter of Asopus, and thou art not ashamed, great Father, to be the parent of myself; either restore my people to me, or else bury me, as well, in the sepulchre.’ He gave a signal by lightnings, and by propitious thunders. I accepted {the omen}, and I said, ‘I pray that these may be happy signs of thy intentions: the omen which thou givest me, I accept as a pledge.’ By chance there was close by, an oak sacred to Jupiter, of seed from Dodona,[105] but thinly covered with wide-spreading boughs. Here we beheld some ants, the gatherers of corn, in a long train, carrying a heavy burden in their little mouths, and keeping their track in the wrinkled bark. While I was wondering at their numbers, I said, ‘Do thou, most gracious Father, give me citizens as many in number, and replenish my empty walls.’ The lofty oak trembled, and made a noise in its boughs, moving without a breeze. My limbs quivered, with trembling fear, and my hair stood on an end; yet I gave kisses to the earth and to the oak, nor did I confess that I had any hopes; {and} yet I did hope, and I cherished my own wishes in my mind. Night came on, and sleep seized my body wearied with anxiety. Before my eyes the same oak seemed to be present, and to bear as many branches, and as many animals in its branches, and to be trembling with a similar motion, and to be scattering the grain-bearing troop on the fields below. These suddenly grew, and seemed greater and greater, and raised themselves from the ground, and stood with their bodies upright; and laid aside their leanness, and the {former} number of their feet, and their sable hue, and assumed in their limbs the human shape.

“Sleep departs. When {now} awake, I censured the vision, and complained that there was no help for me from the Gods above. But within my palace there was a great murmur, and I seemed to be hearing the voices of men, to which I had now become unaccustomed. While I was supposing that these, too, were {a part} of my dream, lo! Telamon came in haste, and, opening the door, said, ‘Father, thou wilt see things beyond thy hopes or expectations. Do come out.’ I did go out, and I beheld and recognized such men, each in his turn, as I had seemed to behold in the vision of my sleep. They approached, and saluted me as their king. I offered up vows to Jupiter, and divided the city and the lands void of their former tillers, among this new-made people, and I called them Myrmidons,[106] and did not deprive their name {of the marks} of their origin. Thou hast beheld their persons. Even still do they retain the manners which they formerly had; and they are a thrifty race, patient of toil, tenacious of what they get, and what they get they lay up. These, alike in years and in courage, will attend thee to the war, as soon as

the East wind, which brought thee prosperously hither (for the East wind had brought him), shall have changed to the South."

[Footnote 105: *From Dodona*.--Ver. 623. Dodona was a town of Chaonia, in Epirus, so called from Dodone, the daughter of Jupiter and Europa. Near it was a temple and a wood sacred to Jupiter, which was famous for the number and magnitude of its oaks. Doves were said to give oracular responses there, probably from the circumstance that the female soothsayers of Thessaly were called πελειαδαι. Some writers, however, say that the oaks had the gift of speech, combined with that of prophesying.]

[Footnote 106: *Myrmidons*.--Ver. 654. From the Greek word μὐρμηξ, 'an ant;' according to this version of the story.]

## Riley's Explanation

This fable, perhaps, has no other foundation than the retreat of the subjects of Æacus into woods and caverns, whence they returned, when the contagion had ceased with which their country had been afflicted, and when he had nearly lost all hopes of seeing them again. It is probable that the old men were carried off by the plague, while the young, who had more strength, resisted its power, which circumstance would fully account for the active habits of the remaining subjects of Æacus. Some writers, however, suppose that the Myrmidons were a barbarous, but industrious people of Thessaly, who usually dwelt in caves, and who were brought thence by Æacus to people his island, which had been made desolate by a pestilence. The similarity of their name to the Greek word μὐρμηξ, signifying 'an ant,' most probably gave occasion to the report that Jupiter had changed ants into men.

## Book VII, Fable VII (lines 661–793)

*Cephalus, having resisted the advances of Aurora, who has become enamoured of him while hunting, returns in disguise to his wife, Procris, to try if her affection for him is sincere. She, discovering his suspicions, flies to the woods, and becomes a huntress, with the determination not to see him again. Afterwards, on becoming reconciled to him, she bestows on him a dog and a dart, which Diana had once given her. The dog is turned into stone, while hunting a wild beast, which Themis has sent to ravage the territories of Thebes, after the interpretation of the riddle of the Sphinx, by Œdipus.*

In these and other narratives they passed the day. The last part of the day was spent in feasting, and the night in sleep. The golden Sun had {now} shed his beams, {when} the East wind was still blowing, and detained the sails about to return. The sons of Pallas repair to Cephalus, who was stricken in years. Cephalus and the sons of Pallas, together {with him}, {come} to the king; but a sound sleep still possessed the monarch. Phocus, the son of Æacus, received them at the threshold; for Telamon and his brother were levying men for the war. Phocus conducted the citizens of Cecrops into an inner room, and a handsome apartment. Soon as he had sat down with them, he observed that the grandson of Æolus[107] was holding in his hand a javelin made of an unknown wood, the point of which was of gold.

Having first spoken a few words in promiscuous conversation, he said, “I am fond of the forests, and of the chase of wild beasts; still, from what wood the shaft of the javelin, which thou art holding, is cut, I have been for some time in doubt; certainly, if it were of wild ash, it would be of brown color; if of cornel-wood, there would be knots in it. Whence it comes I am ignorant, but my eyes have not looked upon a weapon used for a javelin, more beautiful than this.” One of the Athenian brothers replied, and said, “In it, thou wilt admire its utility, {even} more than its beauty. Whatever it is aimed at, it strikes; chance does not guide it when thrown, and it flies back stained with blood, no one returning it.” Then, indeed, does the Nereian youth[108] inquire into all particulars, why it was given, and whence {it came}? who was the author of a present of so great value? What he asks, {Cephalus} tells him; but as to what he is ashamed to tell, {and} on what condition he received it, he is silent; and, being touched with sorrow for the loss of his wife, he thus speaks, with tears bursting forth: “Son of a Goddess, this weapon (who could have believed it?) makes me weep, and long will make me do so, if the Fates shall grant me long to live. ’Twas this that proved the destruction of me and of my dear wife. Would that I had ever been without this present! Procris was (if perchance {the fame of} Orithyïa[109] may have more probably reached thy ears) the sister of Orithyïa, the victim of violence. If you should choose to compare the face and the manners of the two, she was the more worthy to be carried off. Her

father Erectheus united her to me; love, {too}, united her to me. I was pronounced happy, and {so} I was. Not thus did it seem {good} to the Gods; or even now, perhaps, I should be {so}. The second month was now passing, after the marriage rites, when the saffron-colored Aurora, dispelling the darkness in the morn, beheld me, as I was planting nets for the horned deer, from the highest summit of the ever-blooming Hymettus,[110] and carried me off against my will. By the permission of the Goddess, let me relate what is true; though she is comely with her rosy face, {and} though she possesses the confines of light, and possesses {the confines} of darkness, though she is nourished with the draughts of nectar, {still} I loved Procris; Procris was {ever} in my thoughts, Procris was ever on my lips. I alleged the sacred ties of marriage, our late embraces, and our recent union, and the prior engagements of my forsaken bed. The Goddess was provoked, and said, 'Cease thy complaints, ungrateful man; keep thy Procris; but, if my mind is gifted with foresight, thou wilt wish that thou hadst not had her;'" and {thus}, in anger, she sent me back to her.

"While I was returning, and was revolving the sayings of the Goddess within myself, there began to be apprehensions that my wife had not duly observed the laws of wedlock. Both her beauty and her age bade me be apprehensive of her infidelity; {yet} her virtue forbade me to believe it. But yet, I had been absent; and besides, she, from whom I was {just} returning, was an example of {such} criminality: but we that are in love, apprehend all {mishaps}. I {then} endeavored to discover that, by reason of which I must feel anguish, and by bribes to make attempts[111] upon her chaste constancy. Aurora encouraged this apprehension, and changed my shape, {as} I seemed {then} to perceive. I entered Athens, the city of Pallas, unknown {to any one}, and I went into my own house. The house itself was without fault, and gave indications of chastity, and was in concern for the carrying off of its master.

"Having, with difficulty, made my way to the daughter of Erectheus by means of a thousand artifices, soon as I beheld her, I was amazed, and was nearly abandoning my projected trial of her constancy; with difficulty did I restrain myself from telling the truth, with difficulty from giving her the kisses which I ought. She was in sorrow; but yet no one could be more beautiful than she, {even} in her sadness; and she was consuming with regret for her husband, torn from her. {Only} think, Phocus, how great was the beauty of her, whom even sorrow did so much become. Why should I tell how often her chaste manners repulsed {all} my attempts? How often she said, 'I am reserved for {but} one, wherever he is; for that one do I reserve my joys.' For whom, in his senses, would not that trial of her fidelity have been sufficiently great? {Yet} I was not content; and I strove to wound myself, while I was promising to give vast sums for {but one} night, and forced her at last to waver, by increasing the reward. {On this} I cried out, 'Lo! I, the gallant in disguise, to my sorrow, {and} lavish in promises, to my misery, am thy real husband; thou treacherous woman! thou art caught, {and} I the witness.' She said nothing: only,

overwhelmed with silent shame, she fled from the house of treachery, together with her wicked husband; and from her resentment against me, abhorring the whole race of men, she used to wander[112] on the mountains, employed in the pursuits of Diana. Then, a more violent flame penetrated to my bones, thus deserted. I begged forgiveness, and owned myself in fault; and that I too might have yielded to a similar fault, on presents being made; if presents so large had been offered. Upon my confessing this, having first revenged her offended modesty, she was restored to me, and passed the pleasant years in harmony with me. She gave me, besides, as though in herself she had given me but a small present, a dog as a gift, which when her own Cynthia had presented to her, she had said, 'He will excel all dogs in running.' She gave her, too, a javelin, which, as thou seest, I am carrying in my hand.

"Dost thou inquire what was the fortune of the other present--hear {then}. Thou wilt be astonished at the novelty of the wondrous fact. The son of Laius[113] had solved the verses not understood by the wit of others before him; and the mysterious propounder lay precipitated, forgetful of her riddle. But the genial Themis,[114] forsooth, did not leave such things unrevenged. Immediately another plague was sent forth against Aonian Thebes; and many of the peasants fed the savage monster, both by the destruction of their cattle, and their own as well. We, the neighboring youth, came together, and enclosed the extensive fields with toils. With a light bound it leaped over the nets, and passed over the topmost barriers of the toils that were set. The couples were taken off the dogs, from which, as they followed, it fled, and eluded them, no otherwise than as a winged bird. I myself, too, was requested, with eager demands, for my {dog} Lælaps [{Tempest}]; that was the name of {my wife's} present. For some time already had he been struggling to get free from the couples, and strained them with his neck, as they detained him. Scarce was he well let loose; and {yet} we could not now tell where he was; the warm dust had the prints of his feet, {but} he himself was snatched from our eyes. A spear does not fly swifter than he {did}, nor pellets whirled from the twisted sling, nor the light arrow from the Gortynian bow.[115] The top of a hill, {standing} in the middle, looks down upon the plains below. Thither I mount, and I enjoy the sight of an unusual chase; wherein the wild beast[116] one while seemed to be caught, at another to elude his very bite; and it does not fly in a direct course, and straight onward, but deceives his mouth, as he pursues it, and returns in circles, that its enemy may not have his full career against it. He keeps close to it, and pursues it, a match for him; and {though} like as if he has caught it, {still} he fails to catch it, and vainly snaps at the air. I was {now} turning to the resources of my javelin; while my right hand was poising it, {and} while I was attempting to insert my fingers in the thongs {of it}, I turned away my eyes; and again I had directed them, recalled to the same spot, when, {most} wondrous, I beheld two marble statues in the middle of the plain; you would think the one was flying, the other barking {in pursuit}. Some God undoubtedly, if any God {really} did attend to them, desired them both to remain unconquered in this contest of speed."

[Footnote 107: *Æolus*.--Ver. 672. Apollodorus reckons Deioneus, the parent of Cephalus, among the children of Apollo.]

[Footnote 108: *Nereian youth*.--Ver. 685. Phocus, who was the son of Æacus, by Psamathe, the daughter of Nereus.]

[Footnote 109: *Orithyïa*.--Ver. 695. She was the daughter of Erectheus, king of Athens, and was carried off by Boreas, as already stated.]

[Footnote 110: *Hymettus*.--Ver. 702. This was a mountain of Attica, famous for its honey and its marble.]

[Footnote 111: *To make attempts*.--Ver. 721. Tzetzes informs us that she was found by her husband in company with a young man named Pteleon, who had made her a present of a golden wreath. Antoninus Liberalis says, that her husband tried her fidelity by offering her a bribe, through the medium of a slave.]

[Footnote 112: *Used to wander*.--Ver. 746. Some writers say that she fled to Crete, on which, Diana, who was aware of the attachment of Aurora for her husband, made her a present of a javelin, which no person could escape; and gave her the dog Lælaps, which no wild beast could outrun. Such is the version given by Hyginus. But Apollodorus and Antoninus Liberalis say, that she fled to Minos, who, prevailing over her virtue, made her a present of the dog and the javelin. Afterwards, presenting herself before her husband, disguised as a huntress, she gave him proofs of the efficacy of them; and upon his requesting her to give them to him, she exacted, as a condition, what must, apparently, have resulted in a breach of the laws of conjugal fidelity. On his assenting to the proposal, she discovered herself, and afterwards made him the presents which he desired.]

[Footnote 113: *The son of Laius*.--Ver. 759. Œdipus was the son of Laius, king of Thebes. The Sphinx was a monster, the offspring of Typhon and Echidna, which haunted a mountain near Thebes. Œdipus solved the riddle which it proposed for solution, on which the monster precipitated itself from a rock. It had the face of a woman, the wings of a bird, and the extremities of a lion.]

[Footnote 114: *Genial Themis*.--Ver. 762. Themis had a very ancient oracle in Bœotia.]

[Footnote 115: *Gortynian bow*.--Ver. 778. Crete was called Gortynian, from Gortys or Gortyna, one of its cities, which was famous for the skill of its inhabitants in archery.]

[Footnote 116: *The wild beast*.--Ver. 782. Antoninus Liberalis and Apollodorus say that this was a fox, which was called 'the Teumesian,' from Teumesus, a mountain of Bœotia, and that the

Thebans, to appease its voracity, were wont to give it a child to devour every month. Palæphatus says that it was not a wild beast, but a man called Alopis.]

### Riley's Explanation

There were two princes of the name of Cephalus; one, the son of Mercury and Herse, the daughter of Cecrops; the other, the son of Deïoneus, king of Phocis, and Diomeda, the daughter of Xuthus. The first was carried off by Aurora, and went to live with her in Syria; the second married Procris, the daughter of Erectheus, king of Athens. Though Apollodorus seems, in the first instance, to follow this genealogy, in his third book he confounds the actions of those two princes. Ovid and other writers have spoken only of the son of Deïoneus, who was carried off by Aurora, and having left her, according to them, returned to Procris.

## Book VII, Fable VIII (lines 794–865)

*Procris, jealous of Cephalus, in her turn, goes to the forest, which she supposes to be the scene of his infidelity, to surprise him. Hearing the rustling noise which she makes in the thicket, where she lies concealed, he imagines it is a wild beast, and, hurling the javelin, which she has formerly given to him, he kills her.*

Thus far {did he speak}; and {then} he was silent. “But,” said Phocus, “what fault is there in that javelin?” {whereupon} he thus informed him of the demerits of the javelin. “Let my joys, Phocus, be the first portion of my sorrowful story. These will I first relate. O son of Æacus, I delight to remember the happy time, during which, for the first years {after my marriage}, I was completely blessed in my wife, {and} she was happy in her husband. A mutual kindness and social love possessed us both. Neither would she have preferred the bed of Jupiter before my love; nor was there any woman that could have captivated me, not {even} if Venus herself had come. Equal flames fired the breasts {of us both}. The Sun striking the tops of the mountains with his early rays, I was wont generally to go with youthful ardor into the woods, to hunt; but I neither suffered my servants, nor my horses, nor my quick-scented hounds to go {with me}, nor the knotty nets to attend me; I was safe with my javelin. But when my right hand was satiated with the slaughter of wild beasts, I betook myself to the cool spots and the shade, and the breeze which was breathing forth from the cool valleys. The gentle breeze was sought by me, in the midst of the heat. For the breeze was I awaiting; that was a refreshment after my toils: ‘Come, breeze,’ I was wont to sing, for I remember it {full well}, ‘and, most grateful, refresh me, and enter my breast; and, as thou art wont, be willing to assuage the heat with which I am parched.’ Perhaps I may have added ({for} so my destiny prompted me) many words of endearment, and I may have been accustomed to say, ‘Thou art my great delight; thou dost refresh and cherish me; thou makest me to love the woods and lonely haunts, and thy breath is ever courted by my face.’ I was not aware that some one was giving an ear, deceived by these ambiguous words; and thinking the name of the breeze, so often called upon by me, to be that of a Nymph, he believed some Nymph was beloved by me.

“The rash informer of an imaginary crime immediately went to Procris, and with his whispering tongue related what he had heard. Love is a credulous thing. When it was told her, she fell down fainting, with sudden grief; and coming to, after a long time, she declared that she was wretched, and {born} to a cruel destiny; and she complained about my constancy. Excited by a groundless charge,[117] she dreads that which, {indeed}, is nothing; {and} fears a name without a body; and, in her wretchedness, grieves as though about a real rival. Yet she is often in doubt, and, in her extreme wretchedness, hopes she may be deceived, and denies credit to the information; and

unless she beholds it herself, will not pass sentence upon the criminality of her husband. The following light of the morning had banished the night, when I sallied forth, and sought the woods; and being victorious in the fields, I said, 'Come, breeze, and relieve my pain;' and suddenly I seemed to hear I know not what groans in the midst of my words; yet I said, 'Come hither, most delightful {breeze}.' Again, the falling leaves making a gentle noise, I thought it was a wild beast, and I discharged my flying weapon. It was Procris; and receiving the wound in the middle of her breast, she cried out, 'Ah, wretched me!' When the voice of my attached wife was heard, headlong and distracted, I ran towards {that} voice. I found her dying, and staining her scattered vestments with blood, and drawing her own present (ah, wretched me!) from out of her wound; I lifted up her body, dearer to me than my own, in my guilty arms, and I bound up her cruel wounds with the garments torn from my bosom; and I endeavored to stanch the blood, and besought her that she would not forsake me, {thus} criminal, by her death. She, wanting strength, and now expiring, forced herself to utter these few words:

"'I suppliantly beseech thee, by the ties of our marriage, and by the Gods above, and my own Gods, and if I have deserved anything well of thee, by that {as well}, and by the cause of my death, my love even now enduring, while I am perishing, do not allow the Nymph Aura [{breeze}] to share with thee my marriage ties.' She {thus} spoke; and then, at last, I perceived the mistake of the name, and informed her of it. But what avails informing her? She sinks; and her little strength flies, together with her blood. And so long as she can look on anything, she gazes on me, and breathes out upon me, on my face,[118] her unhappy life; but she seems to die free from care, and with a more contented look."

In tears, the hero is relating these things to them, as they weep, and, lo! Æacus enters, with his two sons,[119] and his soldiers newly levied; which Cephalus received, {furnished} with valorous arms.

[Footnote 117: *Groundless charge*.--Ver. 829. Possibly, Ovid may intend to imply that her jealousy received an additional stimulus from the similarity of the name 'Aura' to that of her former rival, Aurora.]

[Footnote 118: *On my face*.--Ver. 861. He alludes to the prevalent custom of catching the breath of the dying person in the mouth.]

[Footnote 119: *His two sons*.--Ver. 864. These were Telamon and Peleus, who had levied these troops.]

## Riley's Explanation

The love which Cephalus, the son of Deïoneus, bore for the chase, causing him to rise early in the morning for the enjoyment of his sport, was the origin of the story of his love for Aurora. His wife, Procris, as Apollodorus tells us, carried on an amour with Pteleon, and, probably, caused that report to be spread abroad, to divert attention from her own intrigue. Cephalus, suspecting his wife's infidelity, she fled to the court of the second Minos, king of Crete, who fell in love with her. Having, thereby, incurred the resentment of Pasiphaë, who adopted several methods to destroy her rival, and, among others, spread poison in her bed, she left Crete, and returned to Thoricus, the place of her former residence, where she was reconciled to Cephalus, and gave him the celebrated dog and javelin mentioned by Ovid.

The poets tell us, that this dog was made by Vulcan, and presented by him to Jupiter, who gave him to Europa; and that coming to the hands of her son Minos, he presented it to Procris. The wild beast, which ravaged the country, and was pursued by the dog of Procris, and which some writers tell us was a monstrous fox, was probably a pirate or sea robber; and being, perhaps, pursued by some Cretan officer of Minos, who escorted Procris back to her country, on their vessels being shipwrecked near some rocks, it gave occasion to the story that the dog and the monster had been changed into stone. Indeed, Tzetzes says distinctly, that the dog was called Cyon, and the monster, or fox, Alopis; and he also says that Cyon was the captain who brought Procris back from Crete. It being believed that resentment had some share in causing the death of Procris, the court of the Areiopagus condemned Cephalus to perpetual banishment. The island of Cephalenia, which received its name from him, having been given to him by Amphitryon, he retired to it, where his son Celeus afterwards succeeded him.

## Book VIII, Fable I (lines 1–151)

*Minos commences the war with the siege of Megara. The preservation of the city depends on a lock of the hair of its king, Nisus. His daughter, Scylla, falling in love with Minos, cuts off the fatal lock, and gives it to him. Minos makes himself master of the place; and, abhorring Scylla and the crime she has been guilty of, he takes his departure. In despair, she throws herself into the sea, and follows his fleet. Nisus, being transformed into a sea eagle, attacks her in revenge, and she is changed into a bird called Ciris.*

Now, Lucifer unveiling the day and dispelling the season of night, the East wind[1] fell, and the moist vapours arose. The favourable South winds gave a passage to the sons of Æacus,[2] and Cephalus returning; with which, being prosperously impelled, they made the port they were bound for, before it was expected.

In the meantime Minos is laying waste the Lelegeian coasts,[3] and previously tries the strength of his arms against the city Alcathoë, which Nisus had; among whose honoured hoary hairs a lock, distinguished by its purple colour, descended from the middle of his crown, the safeguard of his powerful kingdom. The sixth horns of the rising Phœbe were {now} growing again, and the fortune of the war was still in suspense, and for a long time did victory hover between them both with uncertain wings. There was a regal tower built with vocal walls, on which the son of Latona[4] is reported to have laid his golden harp; {and} its sound adhered to the stone. The daughter of Nisus was wont often to go up thither, and to strike the resounding stones with a little pebble, when it was a time of peace. She used, likewise, often to view the fight, and the contests of the hardy warfare, from that tower. And now, by the continuance of the hostilities, she had become acquainted with both the names of the chiefs, their arms, their horses, their dresses, and the Cydonean[5] quivers.

Before the rest, she had observed the face of the chieftain, the son of Europa; even better than was enough for merely knowing him. In her opinion, Minos, whether it was that he had enclosed his head in a helm crested with feathers, was beauteous in a helmet; or whether he had taken up a shield shining with gold, it became him to assume that shield. Drawing his arm back, did he hurl the slender javelin; the maiden commended his skill, joined with strength. Did he bend the wide bow with the arrow laid upon it; she used to swear that thus Phœbus stood, when assuming his arrows. But when he exposed his face, by taking off the brazen {helmet}, and, arrayed in purple, pressed the back of a white horse, beauteous with embroidered housings, and guided his foaming mouth; the virgin daughter of Nisus was hardly mistress of herself, hardly able to control a sound mind. She used to call the javelin happy which he touched, and the reins happy which he was pressing with his hand. She had an impulse (were it only possible) to direct her

virgin footsteps through the hostile ranks; she had an impulse to cast her body from the top of the towers into the Gnossian camp, or to open the gates, strengthened with brass, to the enemy; or, {indeed}, anything else, if Minos should wish it. And as she was sitting, looking at the white tents of the Dictæan king, she said, “I am in doubt whether I should rejoice, or whether I should grieve, that this mournful war is carried on. I grieve that Minos is the enemy of the person who loves him; but unless there had been a war, would he have been known to me? yet, taking me for a hostage, he might cease the war, and have me for his companion, me as a pledge of peace. If, most beauteous of beings, she who bore thee, was such as thou art thyself, with reason was the God {Jupiter} inflamed with {love for} her. Oh! thrice happy were I, if, moving upon wings through the air, I could light upon the camp of the Gnossian king, and, owning myself and my flame, could ask him with what dowry he could wish to be purchased; provided only, that he did not ask the city of my father. For, perish rather the desired alliance, than that I should prevail by treason; although the clemency of a merciful conqueror has often made it of advantage to many, to be conquered. He certainly carries on a just war for his slain son,[6] and is strong both in his cause, and in the arms that defend his cause.

“We shall be conquered, as I suppose. If this fate awaits this city, why should his own arms, and not my love, open the walls to him? It will be better for him to conquer without slaughter and delay, and the expense of his own blood. How much, indeed, do I dread, Minos, lest any one should unknowingly wound thy breast! for who is so hardened as to dare, unless unknowingly, to direct his cruel lance against thee? The design pleases me; and my determination is to deliver up my country as a dowry, together with myself, and {so} to put an end to the war. But to be willing, is too little; a guard watches the approaches, and my father keeps the keys of the gates. Him alone, in my wretchedness, do I dread; he alone obstructs my desires. Would that the Gods would grant I might be without a father! Every one, indeed, is a God to himself. Fortune is an enemy to idle prayers. Another woman, inflamed with a passion so great, would long since have taken a pleasure in destroying whatever stood in the way of her love. And why should any one be bolder than myself? I could dare to go through flames, {and} amid swords. But in this case there is no occasion for any flames or {any} swords; I {only} want the lock of my father. That purple lock is more precious to me than gold; it will make me happy, and mistress of my own wish.”

As she is saying such things, the night draws on, the greatest nurse of cares, and with the darkness her boldness increases. The first slumbers are now come, in which sleep takes possession of the breast wearied with the cares of the day. She silently enters the chamber of her father, and ({O abominable} crime!) the daughter despoils the father of his fatal lock, and having got the prize of crime, carries with her the spoil of her impiety; and issuing forth by the gate, she goes through the midst of the enemy, (so great is her confidence in her deserts) to the king, whom, in astonishment, she thus addresses: “’Twas love that urged the deed. I {am} Scylla, the

royal issue of Nisus; to thee do I deliver the fortunes of my country and my own, {as well}; I ask for no reward, but thyself. Take this purple lock, as a pledge of my love; and do not consider that I am delivering to thee a lock of hair, but the life of my father." And {then}, in her right hand, she holds forth the infamous present. Minos refuses it, {thus} held out; and shocked at the thought of so unheard of a crime, he says, "May the Gods, O thou reproach of our age, banish thee from their universe; and may both earth and sea be denied to thee. At least, I will not allow so great a monster to come into Crete, the birth-place of Jupiter, which is my realm." He {thus} spoke;[7] and when, {like} a most just lawgiver, he had imposed conditions on the vanquished, he ordered the halsers of the fleet to be loosened, and the brazen {beaked} ships to be impelled with the oars. Scylla, when she beheld the launched ships sailing on the main, and {saw} that the prince did not give her the {expected} reward of her wickedness, having spent {all} her entreaties, fell into a violent rage, and holding up her hands, with her hair dishevelled, in her frenzy she exclaimed,

"Whither dost thou fly, the origin of thy achievements {thus} left behind, O thou preferred before my country, preferred before my father? Whither dost thou fly, barbarous {man}? whose victory is both my crime and my merit. Has neither the gift presented to thee, nor yet my passion, moved thee? nor yet {the fact} that all my hopes were centred in thee alone? For whither shall I return, forsaken {by thee}? To my country? Subdued, it is ruined. But suppose it were {still} safe; by my treachery, it is shut against me. To the face of my father, that I have placed in thy power. My fellow-citizens hate me deservedly; the neighbours dread my example. I have closed the whole world against me, that Crete alone might be open {to me}. And dost thou thus forbid me that as well? Is it thus, ungrateful one, that thou dost desert me? Europa was not thy mother, but the inhospitable Syrtis,[8] or Armenian[9] tigresses, or Charybdis disturbed by the South wind. Nor wast thou the son of Jupiter; nor was thy mother beguiled by the {assumed} form of a bull. That story of thy birth is false. He was both a fierce bull, and one charmed with the love of no heifer, that begot thee. Nisus, my father, take vengeance upon me. Thou city so lately betrayed, rejoice at my misfortunes; for I have deserved them, I confess, and I am worthy to perish. Yet let some one of those, whom I have impiously ruined, destroy me. Why dost thou, who hast conquered by means of my crime, chastise that crime? This, which was treason to my country and to my father, was an act of kindness to thee. She is truly worthy[10] of thee for a husband, who, adulterously {enclosed} in wood, deceived the fierce-looking bull, and bore in her womb an offspring of shape dissimilar {to herself}. And do my complaints reach thy ears? Or do the same winds bear away my fruitless words, and thy ships, ungrateful man? Now, {ah!} now, it is not to be wondered at that Pasiphaë preferred the bull to thee; thou didst have the more savage nature {of the two}. Wretch that I am! He joys in speeding onward, and the waves resound, cleaved by his oars. Together with myself, alas! my {native} land recedes from him.

Nothing dost thou avail; oh thou! forgetful to no purpose of my deserts. In spite of thee, will I follow thee, and grasping thy crooked stern, I will be dragged through the long seas."

Scarce has she said {this, when} she leaps into the waves, and follows the ships, Cupid giving her strength, and she hangs, an unwelcome companion, to the Gnossian ship. When her father beholds her, (for now he is hovering in the air, and he has lately been made a sea eagle, with tawny wings), he is going to tear her in pieces with his crooked beak. Through fear she quits the stern; but the light air seems to support her as she is falling, that she may not touch the sea. It is feathers {that support her}. With feathers, being changed into a bird, she is called Ciris;[11] and this name does she obtain from cutting off the lock.

[Footnote 1: *The East wind*.--Ver. 2. Eurus, or the East wind, while blowing, would prevent the return of Cephalus from the island of Ægina to Athens.]

[Footnote 2: *The sons of Æacus*.--Ver. 4. 'Æacidis' may mean either the forces sent by Æacus, or his sons Telamon and Peleus, in command of those troops. It has been well observed, that 'redeuntibus,' 'returning,' is here somewhat improperly applied to the troops of Æacus, for they were not, strictly speaking, returning to Athens although Cephalus was.]

[Footnote 3: *Lelegeian coasts*.--Ver. 6. Of Megara, which is also called Alcathoë, from Alcathoüs, its restorer.]

[Footnote 4: *Of Latona*.--Ver. 15. The story was, that when Alcathoüs was rebuilding the walls of Megara, Apollo assisted him, and laying down his lyre among the stones, its tones were communicated to them.]

[Footnote 5: *Cydonean*.--Ver 22. From Cydon, a city of Crete.]

[Footnote 6: *His slain son*.--Ver. 58. Namely, his son Androgeus, who had been put to death, as already mentioned.]

[Footnote 7: *He thus spoke*.--Ver. 101. The poet omits the continuation of the siege by Minos, and how he took Megara by storm, as not pertaining to the developement of his story.]

[Footnote 8: *Inhospitable Syrtis*.--Ver. 120. There were two famous quicksands, or 'Syrtes,' in the Mediterranean Sea, near the coast of Africa; the former near Cyrene, and the latter near Byzacium, which were known by the name of 'Syrtis Major' and 'Syrtis Minor.' The inhabitants of the neighbouring coasts were savage and inhospitable, and subsisted by plundering the shipwrecked vessels.]

[Footnote 9: *Armenian*.--Ver. 121. Armenia was a country of Asia, lying between Mount Taurus and the Caucasian chain, and extending from Cappadocia to the Caspian Sea. It was divided into the greater and the less Armenia, the one to the East, the other to the West. Its tigers were noted for their extreme fierceness.]

[Footnote 10: *She is truly worthy*.--Ver. 131. Pasiphaë, who was the mother of the Minotaur.]

[Footnote 11: *She is called Ciris*.--Ver. 151. From the Greek word κείρω, 'to clip,' or 'cut.' According to Virgil, who, in his Ciris, describes this transformation, this bird was of variegated colours, with a purple breast, and legs of a reddish hue, and lived a solitary life in retired spots. It is uncertain what kind of bird it was; some think it was a hawk, some a lark, and others a partridge. It has been suggested that Ovid did not enter into the details of this transformation, because it had been so recently depicted in beautiful language by Virgil. Hyginus says that the 'Ciris' was a fish.]

## Riley's Explanation

Minos, having raised an army and received auxiliary troops from his allies, made war upon the Athenians, to revenge the death of his son, Androgeus. Having conquered Nisea, he laid siege to Megara, which was betrayed by the perfidy of Scylla, the daughter of its king, Nisus. Pausanias and other historians say that the story here related by the Poet is based on fact; and that Scylla held a secret correspondence with Minos during the siege of Megara, and, at length, introduced him into the town, by opening the gates to him with the keys which she had stolen from her father, while he was asleep. This is probably alluded to under the allegorical description of the fatal lock of hair, though why it should be depicted in that form especially, it is difficult to guess. The change of Scylla into a lark, or partridge, and of her father into a sea eagle, are poetical fictions based on the equivocal meanings of their names, the one Greek and the other Hebrew; for the name 'Ciris' resembles the Greek verb κείρω, which signifies 'to clip,' or 'cut short.' 'Nisus,' too, resembles the Hebrew word 'Netz,' which means a bird resembling the osprey, or sea eagle. Apollodorus says, that Minos ordered Scylla to be thrown into the sea; and Zenodotus, that he caused her to be hanged at the mainmast of his ship.

## Book VIII, Fable II (lines 152–182)

*Minos, having overcome the Athenians, obliges them to pay a tribute of youths and virgins of the best families, to be exposed to the Minotaur. The lot falls on Theseus, who, by the assistance of Ariadne, kills the monster, escapes from the labyrinth, which Dædalus made, and carries Ariadne to the island of Naxos, where he abandons her. Bacchus wooes her, and, to immortalize her name, he transforms the crown which he has given her into a Constellation.*

Minos paid, as a vow to Jupiter, the bodies of a hundred bulls, as soon as, disembarking from his ships, he reached the land of the Curetes; and his palace was decorated with the spoils there hung up. The reproach of his family had {now} grown up, and the shameful adultery of his mother was notorious, from the unnatural shape of the two-formed monster. Minos resolves to remove the disgrace from his abode, and to enclose it in a habitation of many divisions, and an abode full of mazes. Dædalus, a man very famed for his skill in architecture, plans the work, and confounds the marks {of distinction}, and leads the eyes into mazy wanderings, by the intricacy of its various passages. No otherwise than as the limpid Mæander sports in the Phrygian fields, and flows backwards and forwards with its varying course, and, meeting itself, beholds its waters that are to follow, and fatigues its wandering current, now {pointing} to its source, and now to the open sea. Just so, Dædalus fills innumerable paths with windings; and scarcely can he himself return to the entrance, so great are the intricacies of the place. After he has shut up here the double figure of a bull and of a youth;[12] and the third supply, chosen by lot each nine years, has subdued the monster twice {before} gorged with Athenian blood; and when the difficult entrance, retraced by none of those {who have entered it} before, has been found by the aid of the maiden, by means of the thread gathered up again; immediately, the son of Ægeus, carrying away the daughter of Minos, sets sail for Dia,[13] and barbarously deserts his companion on those shores.

Her, {thus} deserted and greatly lamenting, Liber embraces and aids; and, that she may be famed by a lasting Constellation, he places in the heavens the crown taken from off her head. It flies through the yielding air, and, as it flies, its jewels are suddenly changed into fires, and they settle in their places, the shape of the crown {still} remaining; which is in the middle,[14] between {the Constellation} resting on his knee,[15] and that which holds the serpents.

[Footnote 12: *Of a youth*.--Ver. 169. Clarke translates this line, ‘In which, after he had shut the double figure of a bull and a young fellow.’]

[Footnote 13: *Sets sail for Dia*.--Ver. 174. Dia was another name of the island of Naxos, one of the Cyclades, where Theseus left Ariadne. Commentators have complained, with some justice,

that Ovid has here omitted the story of Ariadne; but it should be remembered that he has given it at length in the third book of the Fasti, commencing at line 460.]

[Footnote 14: *In the middle*.--Ver. 182. The crown of Ariadne was made a Constellation between those of Hercules and Ophiuchus. Some writers say, that the crown was given by Bacchus to Ariadne as a marriage present; while others state that it was made by Vulcan of gold and Indian jewels, by the light of which Theseus was aided in his escape from the labyrinth, and that he afterwards presented it to Ariadne. Some authors, and Ovid himself, in the Fasti, represent Ariadne herself as becoming a Constellation.]

[Footnote 15: *Resting on his knee*.--Ver. 182. Hercules, as a Constellation, is represented in the attitude of kneeling, when about to slay the dragon that watched the gardens of the Hesperides.]

### Riley's Explanation

Oppressed with famine, and seeing the enemy at their gates, the Athenians went to consult the oracle at Delphi; and were answered, that to be delivered from their calamities, they must give satisfaction to Minos. They immediately sent ambassadors to him, humbly suing for peace, which he granted them, on condition that each year, according to Apollodorus and Diodorus Siculus, or every nine years, according to Plutarch and Ovid, they should send him seven young men and as many virgins. The severity of these conditions provoked the Athenians to render Minos as odious as possible; whereupon, they promulgated the story, that he destined the youths that were sent to him, to fight in the Labyrinth against the Minotaur, which was the fruit of an intrigue of his wife Pasiphaë with a white bull which Neptune had sent out of the sea. They added, that Dædalus favoured this extraordinary passion of the queen; and that Venus inspired Pasiphaë with it, to be revenged for having been surprised with Mars by Apollo, her father. Plato, Plutarch, and other writers acknowledge that these stories were invented from the hatred which the Greeks bore to the king of Crete.

As, however, these extravagant fables have generally some foundation in fact, we are informed by Servius, Tzetzes, and Zenobius, that, in the absence of Minos, Pasiphaë fell in love with a young noble of the Cretan court, named Taurus, who, according to Plutarch, was the commander of the fleet of Minos; that Dædalus, their confidant, allowed their assignations to take place in his house, and that the queen was afterwards delivered of twins, of which the one resembled Minos, and the other Taurus. This, according to those authors, was the foundation of the story as to the fate for which the young Athenians were said to be destined. Philochorus, quoted by Plutarch, says that Minos instituted funeral games in honour of his son Androgeus, and that those who were vanquished became the slaves of the conquerors. That author adds, that Taurus was the first who won all the prizes in these games, and that he used the unfortunate Athenians, who became his slaves, with great barbarity. Aristotle tells us that the tribute was paid three

times by the Athenians, and that the lives of the captives were spent in the most dreadful servitude.

Dædalus, on returning into Crete, built a labyrinth there, in which, very probably, these games were celebrated. Palæphatus, however, says that Theseus fought in a cavern, where the son of Taurus had been confined. Plutarch and Catullus say, that Theseus voluntarily offered to go to Crete with the other Athenians, while Diodorus Siculus says that the lot fell on him to be of the number. His delivery by Ariadne, through her giving him the thread, is probably a poetical method of informing us that she gave her lover the plan of the labyrinth where he was confined, that he might know its windings and the passage out. Eustathius, indeed, says, that Ariadne received a thread from Dædalus; but he must mean a plan of the labyrinth, which he himself had designed. The story of Ariadne's intercourse with Bacchus is most probably founded on the fact, that on arriving at the Isle of Naxos, when she was deserted by Theseus, she became the wife of a priest of Bacchus.

## Book VIII, Fable III (lines 183–259)

*Dædalus, weary of his exile, finds means, by making himself wings, to escape out of Crete. His son Icarus, forgetting the advice of his father, and flying too high, the Sun melts his wings, and he perishes in the sea, which afterwards bore his name. The sister of Dædalus commits her son Perdix to his care, for the purpose of being educated. Dædalus, being jealous of the talent of his nephew, throws him from a tower, with the intention of killing him; but Minerva supports him in his fall, and transforms him into a partridge.*

In the meantime, Dædalus, abhorring Crete and his prolonged exile,[16] and inflamed by the love of his native soil, was enclosed {there} by the sea. “Although Minos,” said he, “may beset the land and the sea, still the skies, at least, are open. By that way will we go: let Minos possess everything {besides}: he does not sway the air.” {Thus} he spoke; and he turned his thoughts to arts unknown {till then}; and varied {the course} {of} nature. For he arranges feathers in order, beginning from the least, the shorter one succeeding the longer; so that you might suppose they grew on an incline. Thus does the rustic pipe sometimes rise by degrees, with unequal straws. Then he binds those in the middle with thread, and the lowermost ones with wax; and, thus ranged, with a gentle curvature, he bends them, so as to imitate real {wings of} birds. His son Icarus stands together with him; and, ignorant that he is handling {the source of} danger to himself, with a smiling countenance, he sometimes catches at the feathers which the shifting breeze is ruffling; and, at other times, he softens the yellow wax with his thumb; and, by his playfulness, he retards the wondrous work of his father.

After the finishing hand was put to the work, the workman himself poised his own body upon the two wings, and hung suspended in the beaten air. He provided his son {with them} as well; and said to him, “Icarus, I recommend thee to keep the middle tract; lest, if thou shouldst go too low, the water should clog thy wings; if too high, the fire {of the sun} should scorch them. Fly between both; and I bid thee neither to look at Boötes, nor Helice,[17] nor the drawn sword of Orion. Under my guidance, take thy way.” At the same time, he delivered him rules for flying, and fitted the untried wings to his shoulders. Amid his work and his admonitions, the cheeks of the old man were wet, and the hands of the father trembled. He gives kisses to his son, never again to be repeated; and, raised upon his wings, he flies before, and is concerned for his companion, just as the bird which has led forth her tender young from the lofty nest into the air. And he encourages him to follow, and instructs him in the fatal art, and both moves his own wings himself, and looks back on those of his son. A person while he is angling for fish with his quivering rod, or the shepherd leaning on his crook, or the ploughman on the plough tail, when he beholds them, is astonished, and believes them to be Divinities, who thus can cleave the air.

And now Samos,[18] sacred to Juno, and Delos, and Paros, were left behind to the left hand. On the right were Lebynthus,[19] and Calymne,[20] fruitful in honey; when the boy began to be pleased with a bolder flight, and forsook his guide; and, touched with a desire of reaching heaven, pursued his course still higher. The vicinity of the scorching Sun softened the fragrant wax that fastened his wings. The wax was melted; he shook his naked arms, and, wanting his oar-like wings, he caught no {more} air. His face, too, as he called on the name of his father, was received in the azure water, which received its name[21] from him.

But the unhappy father, now no more a father, said, "Icarus, where art thou? In what spot shall I seek thee, Icarus?" did he say; {when} he beheld his wings in the waters, and {then} he cursed his own arts; and he buried his body in a tomb, and the land was called from the name of him buried there. As he was laying the body of his unfortunate son in the tomb, a prattling partridge beheld him from a branching holm-oak,[22] and, by its notes, testified its delight. 'Twas then but a single bird {of its kind}, and never seen in former years, and, lately made a bird, was a grievous reproof, Dædalus, to thee. For, ignorant {of the decrees} of fate, his sister had entrusted her son to be instructed by him, a boy who had passed twice six birthdays, with a mind eager for instruction. 'Twas he, too, who took the backbones observed in the middle of the fish, for an example, and cut {a} continued {row of} teeth in iron, with a sharp edge, and {thus} discovered the use of the saw.

He was the first, too, that bound two arms of iron to one centre, that, being divided {and} of equal length, the one part might stand fixed, {and} the other might describe a circle. Dædalus was envious, and threw him headlong from the sacred citadel of Minerva, falsely pretending that he had fallen {by accident}. But Pallas, who favours ingenuity, received him, and made him a bird; and, in the middle of the air, he flew upon wings. Yet the vigour of his genius, once so active, passed into his wings and into his feet; his name, too, remained the same as before. Yet this bird does not raise its body aloft, nor make its nest in the branches and the lofty tops {of trees, but} flies near the ground, and lays its eggs in hedges: and, mindful of its former fall, it dreads the higher regions.

[Footnote 16: *His prolonged exile*.--Ver. 184. Dædalus had been exiled for murdering one of his scholars in a fit of jealousy; probably Perdix, his nephew, whose story is related by Ovid.]

[Footnote 17: *Helice*.--Ver. 207. This was another name of the Constellation called the Greater Bear, into which Calisto had been changed.]

[Footnote 18: *Samos*.--Ver. 220. This island, off the coast of Caria in Asia Minor, was famous as the birth-place of Juno, and the spot where she was married to Jupiter. She had a famous temple there.]

[Footnote 19: *Lebynthus*.--Ver. 222. This island was one of the Cyclades, or, according to some writers, one of the Sporades, a group that lay between the Cyclades and Crete.]

[Footnote 20: *Calymne*.--Ver. 222. This island was near Rhodes. Its honey is praised by Strabo.]

[Footnote 21: *Received its name*.--Ver. 230. The island of Samos being near the spot where he fell, received the name of Icaria.]

[Footnote 22: *Branching holm oak*.--Ver. 237. Ovid here forgot that partridges do not perch in trees; a fact, which, however, he himself remarks in line 257.]

## Riley's Explanation

Dædalus was a talented Athenian, of the family of Erechtheus; and he was particularly famed for his skill in statuary and architecture. He became jealous of the talents of his nephew, Talos, whom Ovid here calls Perdix; and, envying his inventions of the saw, the compasses, and the art of turning, he killed him privately. Flying to Crete, he was favourably received by Minos, who was then at war with the Athenians. He there built the Labyrinth, as Pliny the Elder asserts, after the plan of that in Egypt, which is described by Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo. Philochorus, however, as quoted by Plutarch, says that it did not resemble the Labyrinth of Egypt, and that it was only a prison in which criminals were confined.

Minos, being informed that Dædalus had assisted Pasiphaë in carrying out her criminal designs, kept him in prison; but escaping thence, by the aid of Pasiphaë, he embarked in a ship which she had prepared for him. Using sails, which till then, according to Pausanias and Palæphatus, were unknown, he escaped from the galleys of Minos, which were provided with oars only. Icarus, either fell into the sea, or, overpowered with the fatigues of the voyage, died near an island in the Archipelago, which afterwards received his name. These facts have been disguised by the poets under the ingenious fiction of the wings, and the neglect of Icarus to follow his father's advice, as here related.

## Book VIII, Fable IV (lines 260–546)

*Diana, offended at the neglect of Œneus, king of Calydon, when performing his vows to the Gods, sends a wild boar to ravage his dominions; on which Œneus assembled the princes of the country for its pursuit. His son Meleager leads the chase, and, having killed the monster, presents its head to his mistress, Atalanta, the daughter of the king of Arcadia. He afterwards kills his two uncles, Plexippus and Toxeus, who would deprive her of this badge of his victory. Their sister Althæa, the mother of Meleager, filled with grief at their death, loads her son with execrations; and, remembering the torch which she received from the Fates at his birth, and on which the preservation of his life depends, she throws it into the fire. As soon as it is consumed, Meleager expires in the greatest torments. His sisters mourn over his body, until Diana changes them into birds.*

And now the Ætnæan land received Dædalus in his fatigue; and Cocalus,[23] taking up arms for him as he entreated, was commended for his kindness. {And} now Athens has ceased to pay her mournful tribute, through the exploits of Theseus. The temples are decked with garlands, and they invoke warlike Minerva, with Jupiter and the other Gods, whom they adore with the blood {of victims} vowed, and with presents offered, and censers[24] of frankincense. Wandering Fame had spread the renown of Theseus throughout the Argive cities, and the nations which rich Achaia contained, implored his aid amid great dangers. Calydon, {too}, although it had Meleager,[25] suppliantly addressed him with anxious entreaties. The occasion of asking {aid} was a boar, the servant and the avenger of Diana in her wrath.

For they say that Œneus, for the blessings of a plenteous year, had offered the first fruits of the corn to Ceres, to Bacchus his wine, and the Palladian juice[26] {of olives} to the yellow-haired Minerva. These invidious honours commencing with the rural {Deities}, were continued to all the Gods above; they say that the altars of the daughter of Latona, who was omitted, were alone left without frankincense. Wrath affects even the Deities. “But {this},” says she, “I will not tamely put up with; and I, who am thus dishonoured, will not be said to be unrevenged {as well}:” and she sends a boar as an avenger throughout the lands of Œneus, than which not even does verdant Epirus[27] possess bulls of greater size; even the fields of Sicily have them of less magnitude. His eyes shine with blood and flames, his rough neck is stiff; bristles, too,[28] stand up, like spikes, thickly set; like palisades[29] do those bristles project, just like high spikes. Boiling foam, with a harsh noise, flows down his broad shoulders; his tusks rival the tusks of India. Thunders issue from his mouth; the foliage is burnt up with the blast. One while he tramples down the corn in the growing blade, and crops the expectations of the husbandman, doomed to lament, as yet unripe, and he intercepts the corn in the ear. In vain does the

threshing floor, and in vain do the barns await the promised harvest. The heavy grapes, with the long branches of the vine, are scattered about, and the berries with the boughs of the ever-green olive. He vents his fury, too, upon the flocks. These, neither dogs nor shepherds {can protect}; not {even} the fierce bulls are able to defend the herds. The people fly in all directions, and do not consider themselves safe, but in the walls of a city, until Meleager, and, together {with him}, a choice body of youths, unite from a desire for fame.

The two sons of Tyndarus,[30] the one famous for boxing, the other for his skill in horsemanship; Jason, too, the builder of the first ship, and Theseus, with Pirithoüs,[31] happy unison, and the two sons of Thestius,[32] and Lynceus,[33] the son of Aphareus, and the swift Idas, and Cæneus,[34] now no longer a woman; and the valiant Leucippus,[35] and Acastus,[36] famous for the dart, and Hippothoüs,[37] and Dryas,[38] and Phœnix,[39] the son of Amyntor, and the two sons of Actor,[40] and Phyleus,[41] sent from Elis, {are there}. Nor is Telamon[42] absent; the father, too, of the great Achilles;[43] and with the son of Pheres,[44] and the Hyantian Iolaüs,[45] the active Eurytion,[46] and Echion,[47] invincible in the race, and the Narycian Lelex,[48] and Panopeus,[49] and Hyleus,[50] and bold Hippasus,[51] and Nestor,[52] now but in his early years. Those, too, whom Hippocoön[53] sent from ancient Amyclæ,[54] and the father-in-law of Penelope,[55] with the Parrhasian Ancæus,[56] and the sage son of Ampycus,[57] and the descendant of Œclus,[58] as yet safe from his wife, and Tegeæan[59] {Atalanta}, the glory of the Lycæan groves. A polished buckle fastened the top of her robe; her plain hair was gathered into a single knot. The ivory keeper of her weapons rattled, hanging from her left shoulder; her left hand, too, held a bow. Such was her dress, and her face such as you might say, with reason, was that of a maid in a boy, that of a boy in a maid. Her the Calydonian hero both beheld, and at the same moment sighed for her, against the will of the God; and he caught the latent flame, and said, “Oh, happy {will he be}, if she shall vouchsafe {to make} any one her husband.” The occasion and propriety allow him to say no more; the greater deeds of the mighty contest {now} engage him.

A wood, thick with trees, which no age has cut down, rises from a plain, and looks down upon the fields below. After the heroes are come there, some extend the nets; some take the couples off the dogs, some follow close the traces of his feet, and are anxious to discover their own danger. There is a hollow channel, along which rivulets of rain water are wont to discharge themselves. The bending willows cover the lower parts of the cavity, and smooth sedges, and marshy rushes, and oziers, and thin reeds with their long stalks. Aroused from this spot, the boar rushes violently into the midst of the enemy, like lightning darted from the bursting clouds. In his onset the grove is laid level, and the wood, borne down, makes a crashing noise. The young men raise a shout, and with strong right hands hold their weapons extended before them, brandished with their broad points. Onward he rushes, and disperses the dogs, as any one {of

them} opposes his career; and scatters them, as they bark {at him}, with sidelong wounds. The spear that was first hurled by the arm of Echion, was unavailing, and made a slight incision in the trunk of a maple tree. The next, if it had not employed too much of the strength of him who threw it, seemed as if it would stick in the back it was aimed at: it went beyond. The owner of the weapon was the Pagasæan Jason. “Phœbus,” said the son of Ampycus,[60] “if I have worshipped thee, and if I do worship thee, grant me {the favour} to reach what is {now} aimed at, with unerring weapon.” The God consented to his prayer, so far as he could. The boar was struck by him, but without a wound; Diana took the steel head from off the flying weapon; the shaft reached him without the point. The rage of the monster was aroused, and not less violently was he inflamed than the lightnings; light darted from his eyes, and flame was breathed from his breast. As the stone flies, launched by the tightened rope, when it is aimed[61] at either walls, or towers filled with soldiers, with the like unerring onset is the destroying boar borne on among the youths, and lays upon the ground Eupalamus and Pelagon,[62] who guard the right wing. {Thus} prostrate, their companions bear them off. But Enæsimus, the son of Hippocoön, does not escape a deadly wound. The sinews of his knee, cut {by the boar}, fail him as he trembles, and prepares to turn his back.

Perhaps, too, the Pylian {Nestor} would have perished[63] before the times of the Trojan {war}: but taking a spring, by means of his lance, planted {in the ground}, he leaped into the branches of a tree that was standing close by, and, safe in his position, looked down upon the enemy which he had escaped. He, having whetted his tusk on the trunk of an oak, fiercely stood, ready for their destruction; and, trusting to his weapons newly pointed, gored the thigh of the great Othriades[64] with his crooked tusks. But the two brothers, not yet made Constellations of the heavens, distinguished from the rest, were borne upon horses whiter than the bleached snow; {and} both were brandishing the points of their lances, poised in the air, with a tremulous motion. They would have inflicted wounds, had not the bristly {monster} entered the shady wood, a place penetrable by neither weapons nor horses. Telamon pursues him; and, heedless in the heat of pursuit, falls headlong, tripped up by the root of a tree. While Peleus[65] is lifting him up, the Tegeæan damsel fits a swift arrow to the string, and, bending the bow, lets it fly. Fixed under the ear of the beast, the arrow razes the surface of the skin, and dyes the bristles red with a little blood. And not more joyful is she at the success of her aim than Meleager is.

He is supposed to have observed it first, and first to have pointed out the blood to his companions, and to have said, “Thou shalt receive due honour for thy bravery.” The heroes blush {in emulation}; and they encourage one another, and raise their spirits with shouts, and discharge their weapons without any order. Their {very} multitude is a hindrance to those that are thrown, and it baffles the blow for which it is designed. Behold! the Arcadian,[66] wielding his battle-axe, rushing madly on to his fate, said, “Learn, O youths, how much the weapons of

men excel those of women, and give way for my achievement. Though the daughter of Latona herself should protect him by her own arms, still, in spite of Diana, shall my right hand destroy him." Such words did he boastingly utter with self-confident lips; and lifting his double-edged axe with both hands, he stood erect upon tiptoe. The beast seized him {thus} bold, and, where there is the nearest way to death, directed his two tusks to the upper part of his groin. Ancæus fell; and his bowels, twisted, rush forth, falling with plenteous blood, and the earth was soaked with gore. Pirithoüs, the son of Ixion, was advancing straight against the enemy, shaking his spear in his powerful right hand. To him the son of Ægeus, at a distance, said, "O thou, dearer to me than myself; stop, thou better part of my soul; we may be valiant at a distance: his rash courage was the destruction of Ancæus." {Thus} he spoke, and he hurled his lance of cornel wood, heavy with its brazen point; which, well poised, and likely to fulfil his desires, a leafy branch of a beech-tree opposed.

The son of Æson, too, hurled his javelin, which {unlucky} chance turned away from {the beast}, to the destruction of an unoffending dog, and running through his entrails, it was pinned through {those} entrails into the earth. But the hand of the son of Œneus has different success; and of two discharged by him, the first spear is fastened in the earth, the second in the middle of his back. There is no delay; while he rages, while he is wheeling his body round, and pouring forth foam, hissing with the fresh blood, the giver of the wound comes up, and provokes his adversary to fury, and buries his shining hunting spear in his opposite shoulder. His companions attest their delight in an encouraging shout, and in their right hands endeavour to grasp the conquering right hand; and with wonder they behold the huge beast as he lies upon a large space of ground, and they do not deem it safe as yet to touch him; but yet they, each of them, stain their weapons with his blood. {Jason} himself, placing his foot upon it, presses his frightful head, and thus he says: "Receive, Nonacrian Nymph, the spoil that is my right; and let my glory be shared by thee." Immediately he gives her the skin as the spoil, thick with the stiffening bristles, and the head remarkable for the huge tusks. The giver of the present, as well as the present, is a {source} of pleasure to her. The others envy her, and there is a murmuring throughout the whole company. Of these, stretching out their arms, with a loud voice, the sons of Thestius cry out, "Come, lay them down, and do not thou, a woman, interfere with our honours; let not thy confidence in thy beauty deceive thee, and let the donor, seized with this passion for thee, keep at a distance." And {then} from her they take the present, {and} from him the right {of disposing} of the present.

The warlike[67] {prince} did not brook it, and, indignant with swelling rage, he said, "Learn, ye spoilers of the honour that belongs to another, how much deeds differ from threats;" and, with his cruel sword, he pierced the breast of Plexippus, dreading no such thing. Nor suffered he Toxeus, who was doubtful what to do, and both wishful to avenge his brother, and fearing his

brother's fate, long to be in doubt; but a second time warmed his weapon, reeking with the former slaughter, in the blood of the brother.

Althæa was carrying gifts to the temples of the Gods, her son being victorious, when she beheld her slain brothers carried off {from the field}: uttering a shriek, she filled the city with her sad lamentations, and assumed black garments in exchange for her golden ones. But soon as the author of their death was made known, all grief vanished; and from tears it was turned to a thirst for vengeance. There was a billet, which, when the daughter of Thestius was lying in labour {with her son}, the three Sisters, {the Fates}, placed in the flames, and spinning the fatal threads, with their thumbs pressed upon them, they said, "We give to thee, O new-born {babe}, and to this wood, the same period {of existence}." Having uttered this charm, the Goddesses departed; {and} the mother snatched the flaming brand from the fire, and sprinkled it with flowing water. Long had it been concealed in her most retired apartment; and being {thus} preserved, had preserved, O youth, thy life. This {billet} the mother {now} brings forth, and orders torches to be heaped on broken pieces {of wood}; and when heaped, applies to them the hostile flames. Then four times essaying to lay the branch upon the flames, four times does she pause in the attempt. Both the mother and the sister struggle hard, and the two different titles influence her breast in different ways. Often is her countenance pale with apprehension of the impending crime; often does rage, glowing in her eyes, produce its red colour. And one while is her countenance like that of one making some cruel threat or other; at another moment, such as you could suppose to be full of compassion. And when the fierce heat of her feelings has dried up her tears, still are tears found {to flow}. Just as the ship, which the wind and a tide running contrary to the wind, seize, is sensible of the double assault, and unsteadily obeys them both; no otherwise does the daughter of Thestius fluctuate between {two} varying affections, and in turn lays by her anger, and rouses it again, {when thus} laid by. Still, the sister begins to get the better of the parent; and that, with blood she may appease the shades of her relations, in her unnatural conduct she proves affectionate.

For after the pernicious flames gained strength, she said, "Let this funeral pile consume my entrails." And as she was holding the fatal billet in her ruthless hand, she stood, in her wretchedness, before the sepulchral altars,[68] and said, "Ye Eumenides,[69] the three Goddesses of punishment, turn your faces towards these baleful rites; I am both avenging and am committing a crime. With death must death be expiated; crime must be added to crime, funeral to funeral; by accumulated calamities, let this unnatural race perish. Shall Œneus, in happiness, be blessed in his victorious son; and shall Thestius be childless? It is better that you both should mourn. Only do ye, ghosts of my brothers, phantoms newly made, regard this my act of affection, and receive this funeral offering,[70] provided at a cost so great, the guilty pledge of my womb. Ah, wretched me! Whither am I hurried away? Pardon, my brothers, {the

feelings of} a mother. My hands fail me in my purpose, I confess that he deserves to die; but the author of his death is repugnant to me. Shall he then go unpunished? Alive and victorious, and flushed with his success, shall he possess the realms of Calydon? {And} shall you lie, a little heap of ashes, and {as} lifeless phantoms? For my part, I will not endure this. Let the guilty wretch perish, and let him carry along with him the hopes of his father,[71] and the ruin of his kingdom and country. {But} where are the feelings of a mother, where are the affectionate ties of the parent? Where, too, are the pangs which for twice five months[72] I have endured? Oh, that thou hadst been burnt, when an infant, in that first fire! And would that I had allowed it! By my aid hast thou lived; now, for thy own deserts, shalt thou die. Take the reward of thy deeds; and return to me that life which was twice given thee, first at thy birth, next when the billet was rescued; or else place me as well in the tomb of my brothers. I both desire {to do it}, and I am unable. What shall I do? one while the wounds of my brothers are before my eyes, and the form of a murder so dreadful; at another time, affection and the name of mother break my resolution. Wretch that I am! To my sorrow, brothers, will you prevail; but {still} prevail; so long as I myself shall follow the appeasing sacrifice that I shall give you, and you yourselves;" she {thus} said, and turning herself away, with trembling right hand she threw the fatal brand into the midst of the flames.

That billet either utters, or seems to utter, a groan, and, caught by the reluctant flames, it is consumed. Unsuspecting, and at a distance, Meleager is burned by that flame, and feels his entrails scorched by the secret fires; but with fortitude he supports the mighty pain. Still, he grieves that he dies by an inglorious death, and without {shedding his} blood, and says that the wounds of Ancæus were a happy lot. And while, with a sigh, he calls upon his aged father, and his brother, and his affectionate sisters, and with his last words the companion of his bed,[73] perhaps, too, his mother {as well}; the fire and his torments increase; and {then} again do they diminish. Both of them are extinguished together, and by degrees his spirit vanishes into the light air.

Lofty Calydon {now} lies prostrate. Young and old mourn, both people and nobles lament; and the Calydonian matrons of Evenus,[74] tearing their hair, bewail him. Lying along upon the ground, his father pollutes his white hair and his aged features with dust, and chides his prolonged existence. But her own hand, conscious to itself of the ruthless deed, exacted punishment of the mother, the sword piercing her entrails.[75] If a God had given me a mouth sounding with a hundred tongues, and an enlarged genius, and the whole of Helicon {besides}; {still} I could not enumerate the mournful expressions of his unhappy sisters. Regardless of shame, they beat their livid bosoms, and while the body {still} exists, they embrace it, and embrace it again; they give kisses to it, {and} they give kisses to the bier {there} set. After {he is reduced to} ashes, they pour them, when gathered up, to their breasts; and they lie prostrate

around the tomb, and kissing his name cut out in the stone, they pour their tears upon his name. Them, the daughter of Latona, at length satiated with the calamities of the house of Parthaon, [76] bears aloft on wings springing from their bodies, except Gorge,[77] and the daughter-in-law of noble Alcmena; and she stretches long wings over their arms, and makes their mouths horny, and sends them, {thus} transformed, through the air.

[Footnote 23: *Cocalus*.--Ver. 261. He was the king of Sicily, who received Dædalus with hospitality.]

[Footnote 24: *And censers*.--Ver. 265. Acerris. The 'acerra' was properly a box used for holding incense for the purposes of sacrifice, which was taken from it, and placed on the burning altar. According to Festus, the word meant a small altar, which was placed before the dead, and on which perfumes were burnt. The Law of the Twelve Tables restricted the use of 'acerræ' at funerals.]

[Footnote 25: *Meleager*.--Ver. 270. He was the son of Œneus, king of Calydon, a city of Ætolia, who had offended Diana by neglecting her rites.]

[Footnote 26: *Palladian juice*.--Ver. 275. Oil, the extraction of which, from the olive, Minerva had taught to mortals.]

[Footnote 27: *Epirus*.--Ver. 283. This country, sometimes also called Chaonia, was on the north of Greece, between Macedonia, Thessaly, and the Ionian sea, comprising the greater part of what is now called Albania. It was famous for its oxen. According to Pliny the Elder, Pyrrhus, its king, paid particular attention to improving the breed.]

[Footnote 28: *Bristles too*.--Ver. 285. This line, or the following one, is clearly an interpolation, and ought to be omitted.]

[Footnote 29: *Palisades*.--Ver. 286. The word 'vallum' is found applied either to the whole, or a portion only, of the fortifications of a Roman camp. It is derived from 'vallus,' 'a stake;' and properly means the palisade which ran along the outer edge of the 'agger,' or 'mound:' but it frequently includes the 'agger' also. The 'vallum,' in the latter sense, together with the 'fossa,' or 'ditch,' which surrounded the camp outside of the 'vallum,' formed a complete fortification.]

[Footnote 30: *Sons of Tyndarus*.--Ver. 301. These were Castor and Pollux, the putative sons of Tyndarus, but really the sons of Jupiter, who seduced Leda under the form of a swan. According to some, however, Pollux only was the son of Jupiter. Castor was skilled in horsemanship, while Pollux excelled in the use of the cestus.]

[Footnote 31: *Pirithoüs*.--Ver. 303. He was the son of Ixion of Larissa, and the bosom friend of Theseus.]

[Footnote 32: *Sons of Thestius*.--Ver. 304. These were Toxeus and Plexippus, the uncles of Meleager, and the brothers of Althæa, who avenged their death in the manner afterwards described by Ovid. Pausanias calls them Prothoüs and Cometes. Lactantius adds a third, Agenor.]

[Footnote 33: *Lynceus*.--Ver. 304. Lynceus and Idas were the sons of Aphareus. From his skill in physical science, the former was said to be able to see into the interior of the earth.]

[Footnote 34: *Cæneus*.--Ver. 305. This person was originally a female, by name Cænis. At her request, she was changed by Neptune into a man, and was made invulnerable. Her story is related at length in the 12th book of the Metamorphoses.]

[Footnote 35: *Leucippus*.--Ver. 306. He was the son of Perieres, and the brother of Aphareus. His daughters were Elaira, or Ilaira, and Phœbe, whom Castor and Pollux attempted to carry off.]

[Footnote 36: *Acastus*.--Ver. 306. He was the son of Pelias, king of Thessaly.]

[Footnote 37: *Hippothoüs*.--Ver. 307. According to Hyginus, he was the son of Geryon, or rather, according to Pausanias, of Cercyon.]

[Footnote 38: *Dryas*.--Ver. 307. The son of Mars, or, according to some writers, of Iapetus.]

[Footnote 39: *Phœnix*.--Ver. 307. He was the son of Amyntor. Having engaged in an intrigue, by the contrivance of his mother, with his father's mistress, he fled to the court of Peleus, king of Thessaly, who entrusted to him the education of Achilles, and the command of the Dolopians. He attended his pupil to the Trojan war, and became blind in his latter years.]

[Footnote 40: *Two sons of Actor*.--Ver. 308. These were Eurytus and Cteatus, the sons of Actor, of Elis. They were afterwards slain by Hercules.]

[Footnote 41: *Phyleus*.--Ver. 308. He was the son of Augeas, king of Elis, whose stables were cleansed by Hercules.]

[Footnote 42: *Telamon*.--Ver. 309. He was the son of Æacus. Ajax Telamon was his son.]

[Footnote 43: *Great Achilles*.--Ver. 309. His father was Peleus, the brother of Ajax, and the son of Æacus and Ægina. Peleus was famed for his chastity.]

[Footnote 44: *The son of Pheres.*--Ver. 310. This was Admetus, the son of Pheres, of Pheræ, in Thessaly.]

[Footnote 45: *Hyantian Iolaüs.*--Ver. 310. Iolaüs, the Bœotian, the son of Iphiclus, aided Hercules in slaying the Hydra.]

[Footnote 46: *Eurytion.*--Ver. 311. He was the son of Irus, and attended the Argonautic expedition.]

[Footnote 47: *Echion.*--Ver. 311. He was an Arcadian, the son of Mercury and the Nymph Antianira, and was famous for his speed.]

[Footnote 48: *Narycian Lelex.*--Ver. 312. So called from Naryx, a city of the Locrians.]

[Footnote 49: *Panopeus.*--Ver. 312. He was the son of Phocus, who built the city of Panopæa, in Phocis, and was the father of Epytus, who constructed the Trojan horse.]

[Footnote 50: *Hyleus.*--Ver. 312. According to Callimachus, he was slain, together with Rhœtus, by Atalanta, for making an attempt upon her virtue.]

[Footnote 51: *Hippasus.*--Ver. 313. He was a son of Eurytus.]

[Footnote 52: *Nestor.*--Ver. 313. He was the son of Neleus and Chloris. He was king of Pylos, and went to the Trojan war in his ninetieth, or, as some writers say, in his two hundredth year.]

[Footnote 53: *Hippocoön.*--Ver. 314. He was the son of Amycus. He sent his four sons, Enæsimus, Alcon, Amycus, and Dexippus, to hunt the Calydonian boar. The first was killed by the monster, and the other three, with their father, were afterwards slain by Hercules.]

[Footnote 54: *Amyclæ.*--Ver. 314. This was an ancient city of Laconia, built by Amycla, the son of Lacedæmon.]

[Footnote 55: *Of Penelope.*--Ver. 315. This was Laërtes, the father of Ulysses, the husband of Penelope, and king of Ithaca.]

[Footnote 56: *Ancæus.*--Ver. 315. He was an Arcadian, the son of Lycurgus.]

[Footnote 57: *Son of Ampycus.*--Ver. 316. Ampycus was the son of Titanor, and the father of Mopsus, a famous soothsayer.]

[Footnote 58: *Descendant Œclus.*--Ver. 317. This was Amphiaraüs, who, having the gift of prophecy, foresaw that he would not live to return from the Theban war; and, therefore, hid himself, that he might not be obliged to join in the expedition. His wife, Eriphyle, being bribed

by Adrastus with a gold necklace, betrayed his hiding-place; on which, proceeding to Thebes, he was swallowed up in the earth, together with his chariot. Ovid refers here to the treachery of his wife.]

[Footnote 59: *Tegeæan*.--Ver. 317. Atalanta was the daughter of Iasius, and was a native of Tegeæa, in Arcadia. She was the mother of Parthenopæus, by Meleager. She is thought, by some, to have been a different person from Atalanta, the daughter of Schœneus, famed for her swiftness in running, who is mentioned in the tenth book of the Metamorphoses.]

[Footnote 60: *Son of Ampycus*.--Ver. 350. Mopsus was a priest of Apollo.]

[Footnote 61: *When it is aimed*.--Ver. 357. When discharged from the 'balista,' or 'catapulta,' or other engine of war.]

[Footnote 62: *Eupalamus and Pelagon*.--Ver. 360. They are not previously named in the list of combatants; and nothing further is known of them.]

[Footnote 63: *Would have perished*.--Ver. 365. What is here told of Nestor, one of the Commentators on Homer attributes to Thersites, who, according to him, being the son of Agrius, the uncle of Meleager, was present on this occasion.]

[Footnote 64: *Othriades*.--Ver. 371. Nothing further is known of him.]

[Footnote 65: *Peleus*.--Ver. 375. According to Apollodorus, Peleus accidentally slew Eurytion on this occasion.]

[Footnote 66: *The Arcadian*.--Ver. 391. This was Ancæus, who is mentioned before, in line 215.]

[Footnote 67: *Warlike*.--Ver. 437. 'Mavortius' may possibly mean 'the son of Mars,' as, according to Hyginus, Mars was engaged in an intrigue with Althæa.]

[Footnote 68: *Sepulchral altars*.--Ver. 480. The 'sepulchralis ara' is the funeral pile, which was built in the form of an altar, with four equal sides. Ovid also calls it 'funeris ara,' in the Tristia, book iii. Elegy xiii. line 21.]

[Footnote 69: *Eumenides*.--Ver. 482. This name properly signifies 'the well-disposed,' or 'wellwishers,' and was applied to the Furies by way of euphemism, it being deemed unlucky to mention their names.]

[Footnote 70: *Funeral offering*.--Ver. 490. The 'inferiæ' were sacrifices offered to the shades of the dead. The Romans appear to have regarded the souls of the departed as Gods; for which reason they presented them wine, milk, and garlands, and offered them victims in sacrifice.]

[Footnote 71: *Hopes of his father*.--Ver. 498. Œneus had other sons besides Meleager, who were slain in the war that arose in consequence of the death of Plexippus and Toxeus. Nicander says they were five in number; Apollodorus names but three, Toxeus, Tyreus, and Clymenus.]

[Footnote 72: *Twice five months*.--Ver. 500. That is, lunar months.]

[Footnote 73: *Of his bed*.--Ver. 521. Antoninus Liberalis calls her Cleopatra, but Hyginus says that her name was Alcyone. Homer, however, reconciles this discrepancy, by saying that the original name of the wife of Meleager was Cleopatra, but that she was called Alcyone, because her mother had the same fate as Alcyone, or Halcyone.]

[Footnote 74: *Evenus*.--Ver. 527. Evenus was a river of Ætolia.]

[Footnote 75: *Piercing her entrails*.--Ver. 531. Hyginus says that she hanged herself.]

[Footnote 76: *Parthaon*.--Ver. 541. Parthaon was the grandfather of Meleager and his sisters, Œneus being his son.]

[Footnote 77: *Gorge*.--Ver. 542. Gorge married Andræmon, and Deïanira was the wife of Hercules, the son of Alcmena. The two sisters of Meleager who were changed into birds were Eurymede and Melanippe.]

### Riley's Explanation

It is generally supposed that the story of the chase of the Calydonian boar, though embracing much of the fabulous, is still based upon historical facts. Homer, in the 9th book of the Iliad, alludes to it, though in somewhat different terms from the account here given by Ovid; and from the ancient historians we learn, that Œneus, offering the first fruits to the Gods, forgot Diana in his sacrifices. A wild boar, the same year having ravaged some part of his dominions, and particularly a vineyard, on the cultivation of which he had bestowed much pains, these circumstances, combined, gave occasion for saying that the boar had been sent by Diana. As the wild beast had killed some country people, Meleager collected the neighbouring nobles, for the purpose of destroying it. Plexippus and Toxeus, having been killed, in the manner mentioned by the Poet, Althæa, their sister, in her grief, devoted her son to the Furies; and, perhaps, having used some magical incantations, the story of the fatal billet was invented.

Homer does not mention the death of Meleager; but, on the contrary, says that his mother, Althæa, was pacified. Some writers, however, think that he really was poisoned by his mother. The story of the change of the sisters of Meleager into birds is only the common poetical fiction, denoting the extent of their grief at the untimely death of their brother.

## Book VIII, Fable V (lines 547–610)

*Theseus, returning from the chase of the Calydonian boar, is stopped by an inundation of the river Acheloüs, and accepts of an invitation from the God of that river, to come to his grotto. After the repast, Acheloüs gives him the history of the five Naiads, who had been changed into the islands called Echinades, and an account of his own amour with the Nymph Perimele, whom, being thrown by her father into the sea, Neptune had transformed into an island.*

In the meantime, Theseus having performed his part in the joint labour, was going to the Erecthean towers of Tritonis. {But} Acheloüs, swollen with rains, opposed his journey,[78] and caused him delay as he was going. “Come,” said he, “famous Cecropian, beneath my roof; and do not trust thyself to the rapid floods. They are wont to bear away strong beams, and to roll down stones, as they lie across, with immense roaring. I have seen high folds, contiguous to my banks, swept away, together with the flocks; nor was it of any avail there for the herd to be strong, nor for the horses to be swift. Many bodies, too, of young men has this torrent overwhelmed in its whirling eddies, when the snows of the mountains dissolved. Rest is the safer {for thee}; until the river runs within its usual bounds, until its own channel receives the flowing waters.”

To {this} the son of Ægeus agreed; and replied, “I will make use of thy dwelling and of thy advice, Acheloüs;” and both he did make use of. He entered an abode built of pumice stone with its many holes, and the sand-stone far from smooth. The floor was moist with soft moss, shells with alternate {rows of} murex arched the roof. And now, Hyperion having measured out two parts of the light, Theseus and the companions of his labours lay down upon couches; on the one side the son of Ixion,[79] on the other, Lelex, the hero of Trœzen, having his temples now covered with thin grey hairs; and some others whom the river of the Acarnanians, overjoyed with a guest so great, had graced with the like honour. Immediately, some Nymphs, barefoot, furnished with the banquet the tables that were set before them; and the dainties being removed, they served up wine in {bowls adorned with} gems. Then the mighty hero, surveying the seas that lay beneath his eyes, said, “What place is this?” and he pointed with his finger; “and inform me what name that island bears; although it does not seem to be one only?” In answer to these words, the River said, “It is not, indeed, one object that we see; five countries lie {there}; they deceive through their distance. And that thou mayst be the less surprised at the deeds of the despised Diana, these were Naiads; who, when they had slain twice five bullocks, and had invited the Gods of the country to a sacrifice, kept a joyous festival, regardless of me. {At this} I swelled, and I was as great as I ever am, in my course, when I am the fullest; and, redoubled both in rage and in flood, I tore away woods from woods, and fields from fields; and together with the spot, I hurled the Nymphs[80] into the sea, who then, at last, were mindful of me. My

waves and those of the main divided the land, {before} continuous, and separated it into as many parts, as thou seest {islands, called} Echinades, in the midst of the waves.

“But yet, as thou thyself seest from afar, one island, see! was withdrawn far off from the rest, {an island} pleasing to me. The mariner calls it Perimele.[81] This beloved Nymph did I deprive of the name of a virgin. This her father, Hippodamas, took amiss, and pushed the body of his daughter, when about to bring forth, from a rock, into the sea. I received her; and bearing her up when swimming, I said, ‘O thou bearer of the Trident, who hast obtained, by lot, next in rank to the heavens, the realms of the flowing waters, in which we sacred rivers end, {and} to which we run; come hither, Neptune, and graciously listen to me, as I pray. Her, whom I am bearing up, I have injured. If her father, Hippodamas, had been mild and reasonable, or if he had been less unnatural, he ought to have pitied her, and to have forgiven me. Give thy assistance; and grant a place, Neptune, I beseech thee, to her, plunged in the waters by the cruelty of her father; or allow her to become a place herself. Her, even, {thus} will I embrace.’ The King of the ocean moved his head, and shook all the waters with his assent. The Nymph was afraid; but yet she swam. Her breast, as she was swimming, I myself touched, as it throbbed with a tremulous motion; and while I felt it, I perceived her whole body grow hard, and her breast become covered with earth growing over it. While I was speaking, fresh earth enclosed her floating limbs, and a heavy island grew upon her changed members.”

[Footnote 78: *Opposed his journey*.--Ver. 548. It has been objected to this passage, that the river Acheloüs, which rises in Mount Pindus, and divides Acarnania from Ætolia, could not possibly lie in the road of Theseus, as he returned from Calydon to Athens.]

[Footnote 79: *Son of Ixion*.--Ver. 566. Pirithoüs lay on the one side, and Lelex on the other; the latter is called ‘Trœzenius,’ from the fact of his having lived with Pittheus, the king of Trœzen.]

[Footnote 80: *I hurled the Nymphs*.--Ver. 585. Clarke translates ‘Nymphas in freta provolvi,’ ‘I tumbled the nymphs into the sea.’]

[Footnote 81: *Perimele*.--Ver. 590. According to Apollodorus, the name of the wife of Acheloüs was Perimede; and she bore him two sons, Hippodamas and Orestes. The Echinades were five small islands in the Ionian Sea, near the coast of Acarnania, which are now called Curzolari.]

## Riley’s Explanation

This story is simply based upon physical grounds. The river Acheloüs, running between Acarnania and Ætolia, and flowing into the Ionian Sea, carried with it a great quantity of sand and mud, which probably formed the islands at its mouth, called the Echinades. The same solution probably applies to the narrative of the fate of the Nymph Perimele.

## Book VIII, Fable VI (lines 611–737)

*Jupiter and Mercury, disguised in human shape, are received by Philemon and Baucis, after having been refused admittance by their neighbours. The Gods, in acknowledgment of their hospitality, transform their cottage into a temple, of which, at their own request, they are made the priest and priestess; and, after a long life, the worthy couple are changed into trees. The village where they live is laid under water, on account of the impiety of the inhabitants, and is turned into a lake. Acheloüs here relates the surprising changes of Proteus.*

After these things the river was silent. The wondrous deed had astonished them all. The son of Ixion laughed at them,[82] believing {the story}; and as he was a despiser of the Gods, and of a haughty disposition, he said, “Acheloüs, thou dost relate a fiction, and dost deem the Gods more powerful than they are, if they both give and take away the form {of things}.” {At this} all were amazed, and did not approve of such language; and before all, Lelex, ripe in understanding and age, spoke thus: “The power of heaven is immense, and has no limits; and whatever the Gods above will, ’tis done.

“And that thou mayst the less doubt {of this}, there is upon the Phrygian hills, an oak near to the lime tree, enclosed by a low wall.[83] I, myself, have seen the spot; for Pittheus sent me into the land of Pelops, once governed by his father, {Pelops}. Not far thence is a standing water, formerly habitable ground, but now frequented by cormorants and coots, that delight in fens. Jupiter came hither in the shape of a man, and together with his parent, the grandson of Atlas, {Mercury}, the bearer of the Caduceus, having laid aside his wings. To a thousand houses did they go, asking for lodging and for rest. A thousand houses did the bolts fasten {against them}. Yet one received them, a small one indeed, thatched with straw,[84] and the reeds of the marsh. But a pious old woman {named} Baucis, and Philemon of a like age, were united in their youthful years in that {cottage}, and in it, they grew old together; and by owning their poverty, they rendered it light, and not to be endured with discontented mind. It matters not, whether you ask for the masters there, or for the servants; the whole family are but two; the same persons both obey and command. When, therefore, the inhabitants of heaven reached this little abode, and, bending their necks, entered the humble door, the old man bade them rest their limbs on a bench set {there}; upon which the attentive Baucis threw a coarse cloth. Then she moves the warm embers on the hearth, and stirs up the fire they had had the day before, and supplies it with leaves and dry bark, and with her aged breath kindles it into a flame; and brings out of the house faggots split into many pieces, and dry bits of branches, and breaks them, and puts them beneath a small boiler. Some pot-herbs, too, which her husband has gathered in the well-watered garden, she strips of their leaves.

“With a two-pronged fork {Philemon} lifts down[85] a rusty side of bacon, that hangs from a black beam; and cuts off a small portion from the chine that has been kept so long; and when cut, softens it in boiling water. In the meantime, with discourse they beguile the intervening hours; and suffer not the length of time to be perceived. There is a beechen trough there, that hangs on a peg by its crooked handle; this is filled with warm water, and receives their limbs to refresh them. On the middle of the couch, its feet and frame[86] being made of willow, is placed a cushion of soft sedge. This they cover with cloths, which they have not been accustomed to place there but on festive occasions; but even these cloths are coarse and old, {though} not unfitting for a couch of willow. The Gods seat themselves. The old woman, wearing an apron, and shaking {with palsy}, sets the table {before them}. But the third leg of the table is too short; a potsherd, {placed beneath}, makes it equal. After this, being placed beneath, has taken away the inequality, green mint rubs down the table {thus} made level. Here are set the double-tinted berries[87] of the chaste Minerva, and cornel-berries, gathered in autumn, {and} preserved in a thin pickle; endive, too, and radishes, and a large piece of curdled milk, and eggs, that have been gently turned in the slow embers; all {served} in earthenware. After this, an embossed goblet of similar clay is placed {there}; cups, too, made of beech wood, varnished, where they are hollowed out, with yellow wax.

“There is {now} a short pause;[88] the fire {then} sends up the warm repast; and wine kept no long time, is again put on; and {then}, set aside for a little time, it gives place to the second course. Here are nuts, {and} here are dried figs mixed with wrinkled dates, plums too, and fragrant apples in wide baskets, and grapes gathered from the purple vines. In the middle there is white honey-comb. Above all, there are welcome looks, and no indifferent and niggardly feelings. In the meanwhile, as oft as Baucis and the alarmed Philemon behold the goblet, {when} drunk off, replenish itself of its own accord, and the wine increase of itself, astonished at this singular event, they are frightened, and, with hands held up, they offer their prayers, and entreat pardon for their entertainment, and their want of preparation. There was a single goose, the guardian of their little cottage, which its owners were preparing to kill for the Deities, their guests. Swift with its wings, it wearied them, {rendered} slow by age, and it escaped them a long time, and at length seemed to fly for safety to the Gods themselves. The immortals forbade it[89] to be killed, and said, ‘We are Divinities, and this impious neighbourhood shall suffer deserved punishment. To you it will be allowed to be free from this calamity; only leave your habitation, and attend our steps, and go together to the summit of the mountain.’

“They both obeyed; and, supported by staffs, they endeavoured to place their feet {on the top} of the high hill. They were {now} as far from the top, as an arrow discharged can go at once, {when} they turned their eyes, and beheld the other parts sinking in a morass, {and} their own abode alone remaining. While they were wondering at these things, {and} while they were

bewailing the fate of their {fellow countrymen}, that old cottage of {theirs}, {too} little for even two owners, was changed into a temple. Columns took the place of forked stakes, the thatch grew yellow, and the earth was covered with marble; the doors appeared carved, and the roof to be of gold. Then, the son of Saturn uttered such words as these with benign lips: 'Tell us, good old man, and thou, wife, worthy of a husband {so} good, what it is you desire?' Having spoken a few words to Baucis, Philemon discovered their joint request to the Gods: 'We desire to be your priests, and to have the care of your temple; and, since we have passed our years in harmony, let the same hour take us off both together; and let me not ever see the tomb of my wife, nor let me be destined to be buried by her.' Fulfilment attended their wishes. So long as life was granted, they were the keepers of the temple; and when, enervated by years and old age, they were standing, by chance, before the sacred steps, and were relating the fortunes of the spot, Baucis beheld Philemon, and the aged Philemon saw Baucis, {too}, shooting into leaf. And now the tops of the trees growing above their two faces, so long as they could they exchanged words with each other, and said together, 'Farewell! my spouse;' and at the same moment the branches covered their concealed faces. The inhabitants of Tyana[90] still shew these adjoining trees, made of their two bodies. Old men, no romancers, (and there was no reason why they should wish to deceive me) told me this. I, indeed, saw garlands hanging on the branches, and placing {there} some fresh ones {myself}, I said, 'The good are the {peculiar} care of the Gods, and those who worshipped {the Gods}, are {now} worshipped {themselves}.'"

He had {now} ceased; and the thing {itself} and the relator {of it} had astonished them all; {and} especially Theseus, whom, desiring to hear of the wonderful actions of the Gods, the Calydonian river leaning on his elbow, addressed in words such as these: "There are, O most valiant {hero}, some things, whose form has been once changed, and {then} has continued under that change. There are some whose privilege it is to pass into many shapes, as thou, Proteus, inhabitant of the sea that embraces the earth. For people have seen thee one while a young man, and again a lion; at one time thou wast a furious boar, at another a serpent, which they dreaded to touch; {and} sometimes, horns rendered thee a bull. Ofttimes thou mightst be seen as a stone; often, too, as a tree. Sometimes imitating the appearance of flowing water, thou wast a river; sometimes fire, the {very} contrary of water."

[Footnote 82: *Laughed at them.*--Ver. 612. The Centaurs, from one of whom Pirithoüs was sprung, were famed for their contempt of, and enmity to, the Gods.]

[Footnote 83: *By a low wall.*--Ver. 620. As a memorial of the wonderful events here related by Lelex.]

[Footnote 84: *Thatched with straw.*--Ver. 630. It was the custom with the ancients, when reaping, to take off only the heads of the corn, and to leave the stubble to be reaped at another

time. From this passage, we see that straw was used for the purpose of thatching.]

[Footnote 85: *Lifts down*.--Ver. 647. The lifting down the flitch of bacon might induce us to believe that the account of this story was written yesterday, and not nearly two thousand years since. So true is it, that there is nothing new under the sun.]

[Footnote 86: *Feet and frame*.--Ver. 659. 'Sponda.' This was the frame of the bedstead, and more especially the sides of it. In the case of a bed used for two persons, the two sides were distinguished by different names; the side at which they entered was open, and was called 'sponda:' the other side, which was protected by a board, was called 'pluteus.' The two sides were also called 'torus exterior,' or 'sponda exterior,' and 'torus interior,' or 'sponda interior.']

[Footnote 87: *Double-tinted berries*.--Ver. 664. Green on one side, and swarthy on the other.]

[Footnote 88: *A short pause*.--Ver. 671. This was the second course. The Roman 'cœna,' or chief meal, consisted of three stages. First, the 'promulsis,' 'antecœna,' or 'gustatio,' when they ate such things as served to stimulate the appetite. Then came the first course, which formed the substantial part of the meal; and next the second course, at which the 'bellaria,' consisting of pastry and fruits, such as are now used at dessert, were served.]

[Footnote 89: *Immortals forbade it*.--Ver. 688. This act of humanity reflects credit on the two Deities, and contrasts favourably with their usual cruel and revengeful disposition, in common with their fellow Divinities of the heathen Mythology.]

[Footnote 90: *Of Tyana*.--Ver. 719. This was a city of Cappadocia, in Asia Minor.]

## Riley's Explanation

The story of Baucis and Philemon, which is here so beautifully related by the Poet, is a moral tale, which shows the merit of hospitality, and how, in some cases at least, virtue speedily brings its own reward. If the story is based upon any actual facts, the history of its origin is entirely unknown. Huet, the theologian, indeed, supposes that it is founded on the history of the reception of the Angels by Abraham. This is a bold surmise, but entirely in accordance with his position, that the greatest part of the fictions of the heathen mythology were mere glosses or perversions of the histories of the Old Testament. If derived from Scripture, the story is just as likely to be founded on the hospitable reception of the Prophet Elijah by the woman of Zarephath; and the miraculous increase of the wine in the goblet, calls to mind 'the barrel of meal that wasted not, and the cruse of oil that did not fail.' The story of the wretched fate of the inhospitable neighbours of Baucis and Philemon is thought, by some modern writers, to be founded upon the Scriptural account of the destruction of the wicked cities of the plain.

Ancient writers have made many attempts to solve the wondrous story of Proteus. Some say that he was an elegant orator, who charmed his auditors by the force of his eloquence. Lucian says that he was an actor of pantomime, so supple that he could assume various postures. Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Clement of Alexandria, assert that he was an ancient king of Egypt, successor to Pheron, and that he lived at the time, of the Trojan war. Herodotus, who represents him as a prince of great wisdom and justice, does not make any allusion to his powers of transformation, which was his great merit in the eyes of the poets. Diodorus Siculus says that his alleged changes may have had their rise in a custom which Proteus had of adorning his helmet, sometimes with the skin of a panther, sometimes with that of a lion, and sometimes with that of a serpent, or of some other animal. When Lycophron states that Neptune saved Proteus from the fury of his children, by making him go through caverns from Pallene to Egypt, he follows the tradition which says that he originally came from that town in Thessaly, and that he retired thence to Egypt. Virgil, and Servius, his Commentator, assert that Proteus returned to Thessaly after the death of his children, who were slain by Hercules; in which assertion, however, they are not supported by Homer or Herodotus.

## Book VIII, Fable VII (lines 738–884)

*Acheloüs continues his narrative with the story of Metra, the daughter of Erisicthon, who is attacked with insatiable hunger, for having cut down an oak, in one of the groves of Ceres. Metra begs of Neptune, who was formerly in love with her, the power of transforming herself into different shapes; that she may be enabled, if possible, to satisfy the voracious appetite of her father. By these means, Erisicthon, being obliged to expose her for sale, in order to purchase himself food, always recovers her again; until, by his repeated sale of her, the fraud is discovered. He at last becomes the avenger of his own impiety, by devouring his own limbs.*

"Nor has the wife of Autolycus,[91] the daughter of Erisicthon, less privileges {than he}. Her father was one who despised the majesty of the Gods; and he offered them no honours on their altars. He is likewise said to have profaned with an axe a grove of Ceres, and to have violated her ancient woods with the iron. In these there was standing an oak with an ancient trunk, a wood {in itself} alone, fillets and tablets, {as} memorials,[92] and garlands, proofs of wishes that had been granted, surrounded the middle of it. Often, beneath this {tree}, did the Dryads lead up the festive dance; often, too, with hands joined in order, did they go round the compass of its trunk; and the girth of the oak made up three times five ells. The rest of the wood, too, lay as much under this oak as the grass lay beneath the whole of the wood. Yet not on that account {even} did the son of Triopas[93] withhold the axe from it; and he ordered his servants to cut down the sacred oak; and when he saw them hesitate, {thus} ordered, the wicked {wretch}, snatching from one of them an axe, uttered these words: 'Were it not only beloved by a Goddess, but even were it a Goddess itself, it should now touch the ground with its leafy top.' {Thus} he said; and while he was poising his weapon for a side stroke, the Deoïan oak[94] shuddered, and uttered a groan; and at once, its green leaves, and, with them, its acorns began to turn pale; and the long branches to be moistened with sweat. As soon as his impious hand had made an incision in its trunk, the blood flowed from the severed bark no otherwise than, as, at the time when the bull, a large victim, falls before the altars, the blood pours forth from his divided neck. All were amazed and one of the number attempted to hinder the wicked design, and to restrain the cruel axe. The Thessalian eyes him, and says, 'Take the reward of thy pious intentions,' and turns the axe from the tree upon the man, and hews off his head; and {then} hacks at the oak again; when such words as these are uttered from the middle of the oak: 'I, a Nymph,[95] most pleasing to Ceres, am beneath this wood; I, {now} dying, foretell to thee that the punishment of thy deeds, the solace of my death, is at hand.'

"He pursued his wicked design; and, at last, weakened by numberless blows, and pulled downward with ropes, the tree fell down, and with its weight levelled a great part of the wood.

All her sisters, the Dryads, being shocked at the loss of the grove and their own, in their grief repaired to Ceres, in black array,[96] and requested the punishment of Erisicthon. She assented to their {request}, and the most beauteous Goddess, with the nodding of her head, shook the fields loaded with the heavy crops; and contrived {for him} a kind of punishment, lamentable, if he had not, for his crimes, been deserving of the sympathy of none, {namely}, to torment him with deadly Famine. And since that Goddess could not be approached by herself (for the Destinies do not allow Ceres and Famine to come together), in such words as these she addressed rustic Oreas, one of the mountain Deities: 'There is an icy region in the extreme part of Scythia, a dreary soil, a land, desolate, without corn {and} without trees; there dwell drowsy Cold, and Paleness, and Trembling, and famishing Hunger; order her to bury herself in the breast of this sacrilegious {wretch}. Let no abundance of provisions overcome her; and let her surpass my powers in the contest. And that the length of the road may not alarm thee, take my chariot, take the dragons, which thou mayst guide aloft with the reins;' and {then} she gave them to her.

"She, borne through the air on the chariot {thus} granted, arrived in Scythia; and, on the top of a steep mountain (they call it Caucasus), she unyoked the neck of the dragons, and beheld Famine, whom she was seeking, in a stony field, tearing up herbs, growing here and there, with her nails and with her teeth. Rough was her hair, her eyes hollow, paleness on her face, her lips white with scurf,[97] her jaws rough with rustiness; her skin hard, through which her bowels might be seen; her dry bones were projecting beneath her crooked loins; instead of a belly, there was {only} the place for a belly. You would think her breast was hanging, and was only supported from the chine[98] of the back. Leanness had, {to appearance}, increased her joints, and the caps of her knees were stiff, and excrescences projected from her overgrown ancles. Soon as {Oreas} beheld her at a distance (for she did not dare come near her), she delivered the commands of the Goddess; and, staying for so short a time, although she was at a distance from her, {and} although she had just come thither, still did she seem to feel hunger; and, turning the reins, she drove aloft the dragon's back to Hæmonia.

"Famine executes the orders of Ceres (although she is ever opposing her operations), and is borne by the winds through the air to the assigned abode, and immediately enters the bedchamber of the sacrilegious {wretch}, and embraces him, sunk in a deep sleep ({for} it is night-time), with her two wings. She breathes herself into the man, and blows upon his jaws, and his breast, and his face; and she scatters hunger through his empty veins. And having {thus} executed her commission, she forsakes the fruitful world, and returns to her famished abode, her wonted fields. Gentle sleep is still soothing[99] Erisicthon with its balmy wings. In a vision of his sleep he craves for food, and moves his jaws to no purpose, and tires his teeth {grinding} upon teeth, and wearies his throat deluded with imaginary food; and, instead of victuals, he

devours in vain the yielding air. But when sleep is banished, his desire for eating is outrageous, and holds sway over his craving jaws, and his insatiate entrails. And no delay {is there}; he calls what the sea, what the earth, what the air produces, and complains of hunger with the tables set before him, and requires food in {the midst of} food. And what might be enough for {whole} cities, and what {might be enough} for a {whole} people, is not sufficient for one man. The more, too, he swallows down into his stomach, the more does he desire. And just as the ocean receives rivers from the whole earth, and {yet} is not satiated with water, and drinks up the rivers of distant countries, and as the devouring fire never refuses fuel, and burns up beams of wood without number, and the greater the quantity that is given to it, the more does it crave, and it is the more voracious through the very abundance {of fuel}; so do the jaws of the impious Erisicthon receive all victuals {presented}, and at the same time ask for {more}. In him all food is {only} a ground for {more} food, and there is always room vacant for eating {still more}.

"And now, through his appetite, and the voracity of his capacious stomach, he had diminished his paternal estate; but yet, even then, did his shocking hunger remain undiminished, and the craving of his insatiable appetite continued in full vigour. At last, after he has swallowed down his estate into his paunch,[100] his daughter {alone} is remaining, undeserving of him for a father; her, too, he sells, pressed by want. Born of a noble race, she cannot brook a master; and stretching out her hands, over the neighbouring sea, she says, 'Deliver me from a master, thou who dost possess the prize of my ravished virginity.' This {prize} Neptune had {possessed himself of}. He, not despising her prayer, although, the moment before, she has been seen by her master in pursuit of her, both alters her form, and gives her the appearance of a man, and a habit befitting such as catch fish. Looking at her, her master says, 'O thou manager of the rod, who dost cover the brazen {hook}, as it hangs, with tiny morsels, even so may the sea be smooth {for thee}, even so may the fish in the water be {ever} credulous for thee, and may they perceive no hook till caught; tell me where she is, who this moment was standing upon this shore (for standing on the shore I saw her), with her hair dishevelled, {and} in humble garb; for no further do her footsteps extend.' She perceives that the favour of the God has turned to good purpose, and, well pleased that she is inquired after of herself, she replies to him, as he inquires, in these words: 'Whoever thou art, excuse me, {but} I have not turned my eyes on any side from this water, and, busily employed, I have been attending to my pursuit. And that thou mayst the less disbelieve {me}, may the God of the sea so aid this employment of mine, no man has been for some time standing on this shore, myself only excepted, nor has any woman been standing {here}.' Her master believed her, and, turning his feet {to go away}, he paced the sands, and, {thus} deceived, withdrew. Her own shape was restored to her.

"But when her father found that his {daughter} had a body capable of being transformed, he often sold the grand-daughter of Triopas to {other} masters. But she used to escape, sometimes

as a mare, sometimes as a bird, now as a cow, now as a stag; and {so} provided a dishonest maintenance for her hungry parent. Yet, after this violence of his distemper had consumed all his provision, and had added fresh fuel to his dreadful malady: he himself, with mangling bites, began to tear his own limbs, and the miserable {wretch} used to feed his own body by diminishing it. {But} why do I dwell on the instances of others? I, too, O youths,[101] have a power of often changing my body, {though} limited in the number {of those changes}. For, one while, I appear what I now am, another while I am wreathed as a snake; then {as} the leader of a herd, I receive strength in my horns. In my horns, {I say}, so long as I could. Now, one side of my forehead is deprived of its weapons, as thou seest thyself." Sighs followed his words.

[Footnote 91: *Autolycus*.--Ver. 738. He was the father of Anticlea, the mother of Ulysses, and was instructed by Mercury in the art of thieving. His wife was Metra, whose transformations are here described by the Poet.]

[Footnote 92: *Tablets as memorials*.--Ver. 744. That is, they had inscribed on them the grateful thanks of the parties who placed them there to Ceres, for having granted their wishes.]

[Footnote 93: *Son of Triopas*.--Ver. 751. Erisicthon was the son of Triopas.]

[Footnote 94: *Deoïan oak*.--Ver. 758. Belonging to Ceres. See Book vi. line 114.]

[Footnote 95: *I, a Nymph*.--Ver. 771. She was one of the Hamadryads, whose lives terminated with those of the trees which they respectively inhabited.]

[Footnote 96: *In black array*.--Ver. 778. The Romans wore mourning for the dead; which seems, in the time of the Republic, to have been black or dark blue for either sex. Under the Empire, the men continued to wear black, but the women wore white. On such occasions all ornaments were laid aside.]

[Footnote 97: *With scurf*.--Ver. 802. Clarke gives this translation of 'Labra incana situ:' 'Her lips very white with nasty stuff.']

[Footnote 98: *From the chine*.--Ver. 806. 'A spinæ tantummodo crate teneri,' is translated by Clarke, 'Was only supported by the wattling of her backbone.']

[Footnote 99: *Is still soothing*.--Ver. 823. Clarke renders the words 'Lenis adhuc somnus--Erisicthona pennis mulcebat;' 'Gentle sleep as yet clapped Erisicthon with her wings.']

[Footnote 100: *Into his paunch*.--Ver. 846. Clarke translates 'Tandem, demisso in viscera censu;' 'at last, after he had swallowed down all his estate into his g--ts.']

[Footnote 101: *I too, O youths.*--Ver. 880. Acheloüs is addressing Theseus, Pirithoüs, and Lelex. The words, 'Etiam mihi sæpe novandi Corporis, O Juvenes,' is rendered by Clarke, 'I too, gentlemen, have the power of changing my body.']

## Riley's Explanation

The story of Metra and Erisicthon has no other foundation, in all probability, than the diligent care which she took, as a dutiful daughter, to support her father, when he had ruined himself by his luxury and extravagance. She, probably, was a young woman, who, in the hour of need, could, in common parlance, 'turn her hand' to any useful employment. Some, however, suppose that, by her changes are meant the wages she received from those whom she served in the capacity of a slave, and which she gave to her father; and it must be remembered that, in ancient times, as money was scarce, the wages of domestics were often paid in kind. Other writers again suggest, less to the credit of the damsel, that her changes denote the price she received for her debaucheries. Ovid adds, that she married Autolycus, the robber, who stole the oxen of Eurytus. Callimachus also, in his Hymn to Ceres, gives the story of Erisicthon at length. He was the great grandfather of Ulysses, and was probably a man noted for his infidelity and impiety, as well as his riotous course of life. The story is probably of Eastern origin, and if a little expanded might vie with many of the interesting fictions which we read in the Arabian Night's Entertainments.

## Book IX, Fable I (lines 1–100)

*Deïanira, the daughter of Œneus, having been wooed by several suitors, her father gives his consent that she shall marry him who proves to be the bravest of them. Her other suitors, having given way to Hercules and Acheloüs, they engage in single combat. Acheloüs, to gain the advantage over his rival, transforms himself into various shapes, and, at length, into that of a bull. These attempts are in vain, and Hercules overcomes him, and breaks off one of his horns. The Naiads, the daughters of Acheloüs, take it up, and fill it with the variety of fruits which Autumn affords; on which it obtains the name of the Horn of Plenty.*

Theseus, the Neptunian hero,[1] inquires what is the cause of his sighing, and of his forehead being mutilated; when thus begins the Calydonian river, having his unadorned hair crowned with reeds:

"A mournful task thou art exacting; for who, when overcome, is desirous to relate his own battles? yet I will relate them in order; nor was it so disgraceful to be overcome, as it is glorious to have engaged; and a conqueror so mighty affords me a great consolation. If, perchance, Deïanira,[2] by her name, has at last reached thy ears, once she was a most beautiful maiden, and the envied hope of many a wooer; together with these, when the house of him, whom I desired as my father-in-law, was entered by me, I said, 'Receive me, O son of Parthaon,[3] for thy son-in-law.' Alcides, too, said {the same}; the others yielded to {us} two. He alleged that he was offering {to the damsel} both Jupiter as a father-in-law, and the glory of his labours; the orders, too, of his step-mother, successfully executed. On the other hand (I thought it disgraceful for a God to give way to a mortal, for then he was not a God), I said, 'Thou beholdest me, a king of the waters, flowing amid thy realms,[4] with my winding course; nor {am I some} stranger sent thee for a son-in-law, from foreign lands, but I shall be one of thy people, and a part of thy state. Only let it not be to my prejudice, that the royal Juno does not hate me, and that all punishment, by labours enjoined, is afar from me. For, since thou, {Hercules}, dost boast thyself born of Alcmena for thy mother; Jupiter is either thy pretended sire, or thy real one through a criminal deed: by the adultery of thy mother art thou claiming a father. Choose, {then}, whether thou wouldst rather have Jupiter {for thy} pretended {father}, or that thou art sprung {from him} through a disgraceful deed?'

"While I was saying such things as these, for some time he looked at me with a scowling eye, and did not very successfully check his inflamed wrath; and he returned me just as many words {as these}: 'My right hand is better than my tongue. If only I do but prevail in fighting, do thou get the better in talking;' and {then} he fiercely {attacked} me. I was ashamed, after having so lately spoken big words, to yield. I threw on one side my green garment from off my body, and

opposed my arms {to his}, and I held my hands bent inwards,[5] from before my breast, on their guard, and I prepared my limbs for the combat. He sprinkled me with dust, taken up in the hollow of his hands, and, in his turn, grew yellow with the casting of yellow sand[6] {upon himself}. And at one moment he aimed at my neck, at another my legs, as they shifted about, or you would suppose he was aiming {at them}; and he assaulted me on every side. My bulk defended me, and I was attacked in vain; no otherwise than a mole, which the waves beat against with loud noise: it remains {unshaken}, and by its own weight is secure.

"We retire a little, and {then} again we rush together in conflict, and we stand firm, determined not to yield; foot, too, is joined to foot; and {then} I, bending forward full with my breast, press upon his fingers with my fingers, and his forehead with my forehead. In no different manner have I beheld the strong bulls engage, when the most beauteous mate[7] in all the pasture is sought as the reward of the combat; the herds look on and tremble, uncertain which the mastery of so great a domain awaits. Thrice without effect did Alcides attempt to hurl away from him my breast, as it bore hard against him; the fourth time, he shook off my hold, and loosened my arms clasped around him; and, striking me with his hand, (I am resolved to confess the truth) he turned me quite round, and clung, a mighty load, to my back. If any credit {is to be given me}, (and, indeed, no glory is sought by me through an untrue narration) I seemed to myself {as though} weighed down with a mountain placed upon me. Yet, with great difficulty, I disengaged my arms streaming with much perspiration, {and}, with great exertion, I unlocked his firm grasp from my body. He pressed on me as I panted for breath, and prevented me from recovering my strength, and {then} seized hold of my neck. Then, at last, was the earth pressed by my knee, and with my mouth I bit the sand. Inferior in strength, I had recourse to my arts,[8] and transformed into a long serpent, I escaped from the hero.

"After I had twisted my body into winding folds, and darted my forked tongue with dreadful hissings, the Tirynthian laughed, and deriding my arts, he said, 'It was the labour of my cradle to conquer serpents;[9] and although, Acheloüs, thou shouldst excel other snakes, how large a part wilt thou, {but} one serpent, be of the Lernæan Echidna? By her {very} wounds was she multiplied, and not one head of her hundred in number[10] was cut off {by me} without danger {to myself}; but rather so that her neck became stronger, with two successors {to the former head}. {Yet} her I subdued, branching with serpents springing from {each} wound, and growing stronger by her disasters; and, {so} subdued, I slew her. What canst thou think will become of thee, who, changed into a fictitious serpent, art wielding arms that belong to another, and whom a form, obtained as a favour, is {now} disguising?' {Thus} he spoke; and he planted the grip of his fingers on the upper part of my neck. I was tortured, just as though my throat was squeezed with pincers; and I struggled hard to disengage my jaws from his fingers.

“Thus vanquished, too, there still remained for me my third form, {that} of a furious bull; with my limbs changed into {those of} a bull I renewed the fight. He threw his arms over my brawny neck, on the left side, and, dragging {at me}, followed me in my onward course; and seizing my horns, he fastened them in the hard ground, and felled me upon the deep sand. And that was not enough; while his relentless right hand was holding my stubborn horn, he broke it, and tore it away from my mutilated forehead. This, heaped with fruit and odoriferous flowers, the Naiads have consecrated, and the bounteous {Goddess}, Plenty, is enriched by my horn.” {Thus} he said; but a Nymph, girt up after the manner of Diana, one of his handmaids, with her hair hanging loose on either side, came in, and brought the whole {of the produce} of Autumn in the most plentiful horn, and choice fruit for a second course.

Day comes on, and the rising sun striking the tops of the hills, the young men depart; nor do they stay till the stream has quiet {restored to it}, and a smooth course, and {till} the troubled waters subside. Acheloüs conceals his rustic features, and his mutilated horn, in the midst of the waves; yet the loss of this honour, taken from him, {alone} affects him; in other respects, he is unhurt. The injury, too, which has befallen his head, is {now} concealed with willow branches, or with reeds placed upon it.

[Footnote 1: *The Neptunian hero*.--Ver. 1. Theseus was the grandson of Neptune, through his father Ægeus.]

[Footnote 2: *Deïanira*.--Ver. 9. She was the daughter of Œneus, king of Ætolia, and became the wife of Hercules.]

[Footnote 3: *Parthaon*.--Ver. 12. He was the son of Agenor and Epicaste. Homer, however, makes Portheus, and not Parthaon, to have been the father of Œneus.]

[Footnote 4: *Amid thy realms*.--Ver. 18. The river Acheloüs flowed between Ætolia and Acarnania.]

[Footnote 5: *Bent inwards*.--Ver. 33. ‘Varus,’ which we here translate ‘bent inwards,’ according to some authorities, means ‘bent outwards.’]

[Footnote 6: *Casting of yellow sand*.--Ver. 35. It was the custom of wrestlers, after they had anointed the body with ‘ceroma’ or wrestler’s oil, in order to render the body supple and pliant, to sprinkle the body with sand, or dust, to enable the antagonist to take a firm hold. It was, however, considered more praiseworthy to conquer in a contest which was ἀκονιτὶ ‘without the use of sand.’]

[Footnote 7: *Most beauteous mate*.--Ver. 47. Clarke translates ‘nitidissima conjux,’ ‘the neatest cow.’]

[Footnote 8: *Recourse to my arts*.--Ver. 62. 'Devertor ad artes,' is rendered by Clarke, 'I fly to my tricks.']

[Footnote 9: *To conquer serpents*.--Ver. 67. Hercules, while an infant in his cradle, was said to have strangled two serpents, which Juno sent for the purpose of destroying him.]

[Footnote 10: *Hundred in number*.--Ver. 71. The number of heads of the Hydra varies in the accounts given by different writers. Seven, nine, fifty, and a hundred are the numbers mentioned. This, however, is not surprising, as we are told that where one was cut off, two sprang up in their place, until Hercules, to prevent such consequences, adopted the precaution of searing the neck, where the head had been cut off, with a red hot iron.]

### Riley's Explanation

The river Acheloüs, which ran between Acarnania and Ætolia, often did considerable damage to those countries by its inundations, and, at the same time, by confounding or sweeping away the limits which separated those nations, it engaged them in continual warfare with each other. Hercules, who seems really to have been a person of great scientific skill, which he was ever ready to employ for the service of his fellow men, raised banks to it, and made its course so uniform and straight, that he was the means of establishing perpetual peace between these adjoining nations.

The early authors who recorded these events have narrated them under a thick and almost impenetrable veil of fiction. They say that Hercules engaged in combat with the God of that river, who immediately transformed himself into a serpent, by which was probably meant merely the serpentine windings of its course. Next they say, that the God changed himself into a bull, under which allegorical form they refer to the rapid and impetuous overflowing of its banks, ever rushing onwards, bearing down everything in its course, and leaving traces of its ravages throughout the country in its vicinity. This mode of description the more readily occurred to them in the case of Acheloüs, as from the roaring noise which they often make in their course, rivers in general were frequently represented under the figure of a bull, and, of course, as wearing horns, the great instruments of the havoc which they created.

It was said, then, that Hercules at length overcame this bull, and broke off one of his horns; by which was meant, according to Strabo, that he brought both the branches of the river into one channel. Again, this horn became the Horn of Plenty in that region; or, in other words, being withdrawn from its bed, the river left a large track of very fertile ground for agricultural purposes. As to the Cornucopia, or Horn of Plenty of the heathen Mythology, there is some variation in the accounts respecting it. Some writers say that by it was meant the horn of the goat Amalthea, which suckled Jupiter, and that the Nymphs gave it to Acheloüs, who again gave

it in exchange for that of which Hercules afterwards deprived him. Deïanira, having given her hand to Hercules, as the recompense of the important services which he had rendered to her father, Œneus, it was fabled that she had been promised to Acheloüs, who was vanquished by his rival; and on this foundation was built the superstructure of the famous combat which the Poet here describes. After having remained for some time at the court of his father-in-law, Hercules was obliged to leave it, in consequence of having killed the son of Architritilus, who was the cupbearer of that prince.

## Book IX, Fable II (lines 101–272)

*Hercules, returning with Deïanira, as the prize of his victory, entrusts her to the Centaur Nessus, to carry her over the river Evenus. Nessus seizes the opportunity of Hercules being on the other side of the river, and attempts to carry her off; on which Hercules, perceiving his design, shoots him with an arrow, and thus prevents its execution. The Centaur, when expiring, in order to gratify his revenge, gives Deïanira his tunic dipped in his blood, assuring her that it contains an effectual charm against all infidelity on the part of her husband. Afterwards, on hearing that Hercules is in love with Iole, Deïanira sends him the tunic, that it may have the supposed effect. As soon as he puts it on, he is affected with excruciating torments, and is seized with such violent fits of madness, that he throws Lychas, the bearer of the garment, into the sea, where he is changed into a rock. Hercules, then, in obedience to a response of the oracle, which he consults, prepares a funeral pile, and laying himself upon it, his friend Philoctetes applies the torch to it, on which the hero, having first recounted his labours, expires in the flames. After his body is consumed, Jupiter translates him to the heavens, and he is placed in the number of the Gods.*

But a passion for this same maiden proved fatal to thee, fierce Nessus,[11] pierced through the back with a swift arrow. For the son of Jupiter, as he was returning to his native city with his new-made wife, had {now} come to the rapid waters of {the river} Evenus.[12] The stream was swollen to a greater extent than usual with the winter rains, and was full of whirlpools, and impassable. Nessus came up to him, regardless of himself, {but} feeling anxiety for his wife, both strong of limb,[13] and well acquainted with the fords, and said, “Alcides, she shall be landed on yonder bank through my services, do thou employ thy strength in swimming;” and the Aonian {hero} entrusted to Nessus the Calydonian damsel full of alarm, and pale with apprehension, and {equally} dreading both the river and {Nessus} himself. Immediately, just as he was, loaded both with his quiver and the spoil of the lion, (for he had thrown his club and his crooked bow to the opposite side), he said, “Since I have undertaken it, the stream must be passed.”

And he does not hesitate; nor does he seek out where the stream is the smoothest, and he spurns to be borne over by the compliance of the river. And now having reached the bank, and as he is taking up the bow which he had thrown over, he recognizes the voice of his wife; and as Nessus is preparing to rob him of what he has entrusted to his care, he cries out, “Whither, thou ravisher, does thy vain confidence in thy feet hurry thee? to thee am I speaking, Nessus, thou two-shaped {monster}. Listen; and do not carry off my property. If no regard for myself influences thee, still the wheel of thy father[14] might have restrained thee from forbidden embraces. Thou shall not escape, however, although thou dost confide[15] in thy powers of a

horse; with a wound, {and} not with my feet, will I overtake thee." {These} last words he confirms by deeds, and pierces him through the back, as he is flying, with an arrow discharged {at him}. The barbed steel stands out from his breast; soon as it is wrenched out, the blood gushes forth from both wounds, mingled with the venom of the Lernæan poison. Nessus takes it out, and says to himself, "And yet I shall not die unrevenged;" and gives his garment, dyed in the warm blood, as a present to her whom he is carrying off, as though an incentive to love.

Long was the space of intervening time, and the feats of the mighty Hercules and the hatred of his step-mother had filled the earth. {Returning} victorious from Œchalia, he is preparing a sacrifice which he had vowed to Cenæan Jupiter,[16] when tattling Rumour (who takes pleasure in adding false things to the truth, and from a very little {beginning}, swells to a great bulk by her lies) runs before to thy ears, Deïanira, {to the effect} that the son of Amphitryon is seized with a passion for Iole. As she loves him, she believes it; and being alarmed with the report of this new amour, at first she indulges in tears and in her misery gives vent to her grief in weeping. Soon, however, she says, "But why do I weep? My rival will be delighted with these tears; and since she is coming I must make haste, and some contrivance must be resolved on while it is {still} possible, and while, as yet, another has not taken possession of my bed. Shall I complain, or shall I be silent? Shall I return to Calydon, or shall I stay here? Shall I depart from this abode? or, if nothing more, shall I oppose {their entrance}? What if, O Meleager, remembering that I am thy sister, I resolve on a desperate deed, and testify, by murdering my rival, how much, injury and a woman's grief can effect?"

Her mind wavers, amid various resolves. Before them all, she prefers to send the garment dyed in the blood of Nessus, to restore strength to his declining love. Not knowing herself what she is giving, she delivers {the cause of} her own sorrows to the unsuspecting Lichas,[17] and bids him, in gentle words, to deliver this most fatal gift to her husband. In his ignorance, the hero receives it, and places upon his shoulders the venom of the Lernæan Echidna. He is placing frankincense on the rising flames, and {is offering} the words of prayer, and pouring wine from the bowl upon the marble altars. The virulence of the bane waxes warm, and, melted by the flames, it runs, widely diffused over the limbs of Hercules. So long as he is able, he suppresses his groans with his wonted fortitude. After his endurance is overcome by his anguish, he pushes down the altars, and fills the woody Œta with his cries. There is no {further} delay; he attempts to tear off the deadly garment; {but} where it is torn off, it tears away the skin, and, shocking to relate, it either sticks to his limbs, being tried in vain to be pulled off, or it lays bare his mangled limbs, and his huge bones. The blood itself hisses, just as when a red hot plate {of metal is} dipped in cold water; and it boils with the burning poison. There is no limit {to his misery}; the devouring flames prey upon his entrails, and a livid perspiration flows from his whole body; his half-burnt sinews also crack; and his marrow being {now} dissolved by the subtle poison, lifting his hands

towards the stars {of heaven}, he exclaims, “Daughter of Saturn, satiate thyself with my anguish; satiate thyself, and look down from on high, O cruel {Goddess}, at this {my} destruction, and glut thy relentless heart. Or, if I am to be pitied even by an enemy (for an enemy I am to thee), take away a life insupportable through these dreadful agonies, hateful, too, {to myself}, and {only} destined to trouble. Death will be a gain to me. It becomes a stepmother to grant such a favour.

“And was it for this that I subdued Busiris, who polluted the temples {of the Gods} with the blood of strangers? And did I {for this}, withdraw from the savage Antæus[18] the support given him by his mother? Did neither the triple shape of the Iberian shepherd[19], nor thy triple form, O Cerberus, alarm me? And did you, my hands, seize the horns of the mighty bull? Does Elis, {too}, possess {the result} of your labours, and the Stymphalian waters, and the Parthenian[20] grove {as well}? By your valour was it that the belt, inlaid with the gold of Thermodon[21], was gained, the apples too, guarded in vain by the wakeful dragon? And could neither the Centaurs resist me, nor yet the boar, the ravager of Arcadia? And was it not of no avail to the Hydra to grow through {its own} loss, and to recover double strength? And what besides? When I beheld the Thracian steeds fattened with human blood, and the mangers filled with mangled bodies, did I throw them down when {thus} beheld, and slay both the master and {the horses} themselves? {And} does the carcass of the Nemean {lion} lie crushed by these arms? With this neck did I support the heavens?[22] The unrelenting wife of Jupiter[23] was weary of commanding, {but} I was {still} unwearied with doing. But {now} a new calamity is come upon me, to which resistance can be made neither by valour, nor by weapons, nor by arms. A consuming flame is pervading the inmost recesses of my lungs, and is preying on all my limbs. But Eurystheus {still} survives. And are there,” says he, “any who can believe that the Deities exist?”

And {then}, racked with pain, he ranges along the lofty Œta, no otherwise than if a tiger should chance to carry the hunting spears fixed in his body, and the perpetrator of the deed should be taking to flight. Often might you have beheld him uttering groans, often shrieking aloud, often striving to tear away the whole of his garments, and levelling trees, and venting his fury against mountains, or stretching out his arms towards the heaven of his father. Lo! he espies Lichas, trembling and lying concealed in a hollow rock, and, as his pain has summoned together all his fury, he says, “Didst thou, Lichas, bring {this} fatal present; and shalt thou be the cause of my death?” He trembles, and {turning} pale, is alarmed, and timorously utters some words of excuse. As he is speaking, and endeavouring to clasp his knees with his hands, Alcides seizes hold of him, and whirling him round three or four times, he hurls him into the Eubœan waves, with greater force than {if sent} from an engine of war. As he soars aloft in the aerial breeze he grows hard; and as they say that showers freeze with the cold winds, {and} that thence snow is formed, and that from the snow, revolving {in its descent}, the soft body is compressed, and is

{then} made round in many a hailstone,[24] so have former ages declared, that, hurled through the air by the strong arms {of Hercules}, and bereft of blood through fear, and having no moisture left in him, he was transformed into hard stone. Even to this day, in the Eubœan sea, a small rock projects to a height, and retains the traces of the human form. This, the sailors are afraid to tread upon, as though it could feel it; and they call it Lichas.

But thou, the famous offspring of Jupiter, having cut down, trees which lofty Œta bore, and having raised them for a pile, dost order the son of Pœas[25] to take the bow and the capacious quiver, and the arrows which are again to visit[26] the Trojan realms; by whose assistance flames are put beneath the pile; and while the structure is being seized by the devouring fires, thou dost cover the summit of the heap of wood with the skin of the Nemean {lion}, and dost lie down with thy neck resting on thy club, with no other countenance than if thou art lying as a guest crowned with garlands, amid the full cups of wine.

And now, the flames, prevailing and spreading on every side, roared,[27] and reached the limbs {thus} undismayed, and him who despised them. The Gods were alarmed for {this} protector of the earth;[28] Saturnian Jupiter (for he perceived it) thus addressed them with joyful voice: "This fear of yours is my own delight, O ye Gods of heaven, and, with all my heart, I gladly congratulate myself that I am called the governor and the father of a grateful people, and that my progeny, too, is secure in your esteem. For, although this {concern} is given {in return} for his mighty exploits, {still} I myself am obliged {by} it. But, however, that your affectionate breasts may not be alarmed with vain fears, despise these flames of Œta. He who has conquered all things, shall conquer the fires which you behold; nor shall he be sensible of the potency of the flame, but in the part {of him} which he derived from his mother. {That part of him}, which he derived from me, is immortal, and exempt and secure from death, and to be subdued by no flames. This, too, when disengaged from earth, I will receive into the celestial regions, and I trust that this act of mine will be agreeable to all the Deities. Yet if any one, if any one, {I say}, perchance should grieve at Hercules being a Divinity, {and} should be unwilling that this honour should be conferred on him; still he shall know that he deserves it to be bestowed {on him}, and {even} against his will, shall approve of it."

{To this} the Gods assented; his royal spouse, too, seemed to bear the rest {of his remarks} with no discontented {air}, but only the last words with a countenance of discontent, and to take it amiss that she was {so plainly} pointed at. In the mean time, whatever was liable to be destroyed by flame, Mulciber consumed; and the figure of Hercules remained, not to be recognized; nor did he have anything derived from the form of his mother, and he only retained the traces of {immortal} Jupiter. And as when a serpent revived, by throwing off old age with his slough, is wont to be instinct with fresh life, and to glisten in his new-made scales; so, when the Tirynthian {hero} has put off his mortal limbs, he flourishes in his more æthereal part, and begins to appear

more majestic, and to become venerable in his august dignity. Him the omnipotent Father, taking up among encircling clouds, bears aloft amid the glittering stars, in his chariot drawn by {its} four steeds.

[Footnote 11: *Nessus*.--Ver. 101. He was one of the Centaurs which were begotten by Ixion the cloud sent by Jupiter, under the form of Juno.]

[Footnote 12: *Evenus*.--Ver. 104. This was a river of Ætolia, which was also called by the name of 'Lycormas.']

[Footnote 13: *Strong of limb*.--Ver. 108. 'Membrisque valens,' is rendered by Clarke, 'being an able-limbed fellow.']

[Footnote 14: *Wheel of thy father*.--Ver. 124. He alludes to the punishment of Ixion, the father of Nessus, who was fastened to a revolving wheel in the Infernal Regions, as a punishment for his attempt on the chastity of Juno.]

[Footnote 15: *Thou dost confide*.--Ver. 125. 'Quamvis ope fidis equinâ,' is translated by Clarke, 'Although thou trustest to the help of thy horse part.']

[Footnote 16: *Cenæan Jupiter*.--Ver. 136. Jupiter was called Cenæan, from Cenæum, a promontory of Eubœa, where Hercules, after having taken the town of Œchalia, built an altar in honour of Jupiter. Hercules slew Eurytus, the king of Œchalia, and carried away his daughter Iole.]

[Footnote 17: *Lichas*.--Ver. 155. This was the attendant of Hercules, whom he sent to Deïanira for the garment which he used to wear while performing sacrifice.]

[Footnote 18: *The savage Antæus*.--Ver. 183. He alludes to the fresh strength which the giant Antæus gained each time he touched the earth.]

[Footnote 19: *Iberian shepherd*.--Ver. 184. Allusion is here made to Geryon, who had three bodies, and whom Hercules slew, and then carried away his herds. It has been suggested that the story of his triple form originated in the fact that he and his two brothers reigned amicably in conjunction over some portion of Spain, or the islands adjoining to it.]

[Footnote 20: *Parthenian*.--Ver. 188. A part of Arcadia was so called from Parthenium, a mountain which divided it from Argolis; there was also, according to Pliny the Elder, a town of the same name in Arcadia.]

[Footnote 21: *Gold of Thermodon*.--Ver. 189. The Thermodon was a river of Scythia, near which the Amazons were said to dwell. Eurystheus ordered Hercules to bring to him the belt of

Hippolyta, the queen of the Amazons.]

[Footnote 22: *Support the heavens*.--Ver. 198. Atlas, king of Mauritania, was said to support the heavens on his shoulders, of which burden Hercules relieved him for a time, when he partook of his hospitality. It has been suggested that the meaning of this story is, that Hercules learned the study of astronomy from Atlas.]

[Footnote 23: *Wife of Jupiter*.--Ver. 199. Juno gave her commands to Hercules through Eurystheus, the son of Sthenelus, king of Mycenæ, who imposed upon him his various labours.]

[Footnote 24: *Many a hailstone*.--Ver. 222. Ovid here seems to think that snow is an intermediate state between rain and hail, and that hail is formed by the rapid motion of the snow as it falls.]

[Footnote 25: *The son of Pœas*.--Ver. 233. Philoctetes was the son of Pœas.]

[Footnote 26: *Again to visit*.--Ver. 232. It was decreed by the destinies that Troy should not be taken, unless the bow and arrows of Hercules were present; for which reason it was necessary to send for Philoctetes, who was the possessor of them. Troy had already seen them, when Hercules punished Laomedon, its king, for his perfidious conduct.]

[Footnote 27: *Roared*.--Ver. 239. 'Diffusa sonabat--flamma' is translated by Clarke, 'The flame, being diffused on all sides, rattled.']

[Footnote 28: *Protector of the earth*.--Ver. 241. Hercules merited this character, for having cleared the earth of monsters, robbers, and tyrants.]

## Riley's Explanation

Hercules, leaving the court of Calydon with his wife, proceeded on the road to the city of Trachyn, in Thessaly, to atone for the accidental death of Eunomus, and to be absolved from it by Ceyx, who was the king of that territory. Being obliged to cross the river Evenus, which had overflowed its banks, the adventure happened with the Centaur Nessus, which the Poet has here related. We learn from other writers, that after Nessus had expired, he was buried on Mount Taphiusa; and Strabo informs us, that his tomb (in which, probably, the ashes of other Centaurs were deposited) sent forth so offensive a smell, that the Locrians, who were the inhabitants of the adjacent country, were surnamed the 'Ozolæ,' that is, the 'ill-smelling,' or 'stinking,' Locrians. Although the river Evenus lay in the road between Calydon and Trachyn, still it did not run through the middle of the latter city, as some authors have supposed; for in such case Hercules would have been more likely to have passed it by the aid of a bridge or of a boat, than

to have recourse to the assistance of the Centaur Nessus, and to have availed himself of his acquaintance with the fords of the stream.

Hercules, in lapse of time, becoming tired of Deïanira, by whom he had one son, named Hyllus, fell in love with Iole, the daughter of Eurytus; and that prince, refusing to give her to him, he made war upon Œchalia, and, having slain Eurytus, he bore off his daughter. Upon his return from that expedition, he sent Lychas for the vestments which he had occasion to use in a sacrifice which it was his intention to offer. Deïanira, jealous on account of his passion for Iole, sent him either a philtre or love potion, which unintentionally caused his death, or else a tunic smeared on the inside with a certain kind of pitch, found near Babylon, which, when thoroughly warmed, stuck fast to his skin; and this it is, most probably, which has been termed by poets and historians, the tunic of Nessus. It seems, however, pretty clear that Hercules fell into a languishing distemper, without any hopes of recovery, and, probably, in a fit of madness, he threw Lychas into the sea, which circumstance was made by the poets to account for the existence there of a rock known by that name.

Proceeding afterwards to Trachyn, he caused Deïanira to hang herself in despair; and, having consulted the oracle concerning his distemper, he was ordered to go with his friends to Mount Œta, and there to raise a funeral pile. He understood the fatal answer, and immediately prepared to execute its commands. When the pile was ready, Hercules ascended it, and laid himself down with an air of resignation, on which Philoctetes kindled the fire, which consumed him. Some, however, of the ancient authors say, with more probability, that Hercules died at Trachyn, and that his corpse was burned on Mount Œta. His apotheosis commenced at the ceremonial of his funeral, and, from the moment of his death, he was worshipped as a Demigod. Diodorus Siculus says that it was Iolus who first introduced this worship. It was also said that, as soon as Philoctetes had applied fire to the pile, it thundered, and the lightnings descending from heaven immediately consumed Hercules. A tomb was raised for him on Mount Œta, with an altar, upon which a bull, a wild boar, and a he-goat were yearly sacrificed in his honour, at the time of his festival. The Thebans, and, after them, the other people of Greece, soon followed the example of the Trachinians, and temples and altars were raised to him in various places, where he was honoured as a Demigod.

## Book IX, Fable III (lines 273–323)

*Juno, to be revenged on Alcmena for her amour with Jupiter, desires Ilithyïa, the Goddess who presides over births, not to assist her on the occasion of the birth of Hercules. Lucina complies with her request, and places herself on an altar at the gate of Alcmena's abode, where, by a magic spell, she increases her pains and impedes her delivery. Galanthis, one of her maids, seeing the Goddess at the door, imagines that she may possibly exercise some bad influence on her mistress's labour, and, to make her retire, declares that Alcmena is already delivered. Upon Ilithyïa withdrawing, Alcmena's pains are assuaged, and Hercules is born. The Goddess, to punish Galanthis for her officiousness, transforms her into a weazel, a creature which was supposed to bring forth its young through its mouth.*

Atlas was sensible[29] of this burden. Nor, as yet, had Eurystheus, the son of Sthenelus, laid aside his wrath {against Hercules}; and, in his fury, he vented his hatred for the father against his offspring. But the Argive Alcmena, disquieted with prolonged anxieties {for her son} has Iole, to whom to disclose the complaints of her old age, to whom to relate the achievements of her son attested by {all} the world, or to whom {to tell} her own misfortunes. At the command of Hercules, Hyllus had received her both into his bed and his affections, and had filled her womb with a noble offspring. To her, thus Alcmena began {her story}:--

"May the Gods be propitious to thee at least; and may they shorten the tedious hours, at the hour when, having accomplished thy time, thou shalt be invoking Ilithyïa,[30] who presides over the trembling parturient women; her whom the influence of Juno rendered inexorable to myself. For, when now the natal hour of Hercules, destined for so many toils, was at hand, and the tenth sign {of the Zodiac} was laden with the {great} luminary, the heavy weight was extending my womb; and that which I bore was so great, that you might {easily} pronounce Jupiter to be the father of the concealed burden. And now I was no longer able to endure my labours: even now, too, as I am speaking, a cold shudder seizes my limbs, and a part of my pain is the remembrance of it. Tormented for seven nights, and during as many days, tired out with misery, and extending my arms towards heaven, with loud cries I used to invoke Lucina and the two Nixi.[31] She came, indeed, but corrupted beforehand, and she had the intention to give my life to the vengeful Juno. And when she heard my groans, she seated herself upon that altar before the door, and pressing her left knee with her right knee, her fingers being joined together in {form of} a comb,[32] she retarded my delivery; she uttered charms, too, in a low voice; and {those} charms impeded the birth {now} begun. I struggled hard, and, in my frenzy, I vainly uttered reproaches against the ungrateful Jupiter, and I desired to die, and complained in words that

would have moved {even} the hard stones. The Cadmeian matrons attended me, and offered up vows, and encouraged me in my pains.

“There was present one of my hand-maids of the lower class of people, Galanthis {by name}, with yellow hair, {and} active in the execution of my orders; one beloved for her good services. She perceived that something unusual[33] was being done by the resentful Juno; and, while she was often going in and out of the door, she saw the Goddess, sitting upon the altar, and supporting her arms upon her knees, linked by the fingers; and {then} she said, ‘Whoever thou art, congratulate my mistress; the Argive Alcmena is delivered, and, having brought forth, she has gained her wishes.’ The Goddess who presides[34] over pregnancy leaped up, and, struck with surprise, loosened her joined hands. I, myself, on the loosening of those bonds, was delivered. The story is, that Galanthis laughed, upon deceiving the Divinity. The cruel Goddess dragged her along {thus} laughing and seized by her very hair, and she hindered her as she attempted to raise her body from the earth, and changed her arms into fore feet.

“Her former activity {still} remains, and her back has not lost its colour; {but} her shape is different from her former one. Because she had assisted me in labour by a lying mouth, she brings forth from the mouth,[35] and, just as before, she frequents my house.”

[Footnote 29: *Atlas was sensible.*--Ver. 273. By reason of his supporting the heavens, to the inhabitants of which Hercules was now added.]

[Footnote 30: *Ilithyïa.*--Ver. 283. This Goddess is said by some to have been the daughter of Jupiter and Juno, while other writers consider her to have been the same either with Diana, or Juno Lucina.]

[Footnote 31: *The two Nixi.*--Ver. 294. Festus says, ‘the three statues in the Capitol, before the shrine of Minerva, were called the Gods Nixii.’ Nothing whatever is known of these Gods, who appear to have been obstetrical Divinities. It has been suggested, as there were three of them, that the reading should be, not ‘Nixosque pares,’ but ‘Nixosque Lares,’ ‘and the Lares the Nixi.’]

[Footnote 32: *Form of a comb.*--Ver. 299. This charm probably was suggestive of difficult or impeded parturition, the bones of the pelvis being firmly knit together in manner somewhat resembling the fingers when inserted one between the other, instead of yielding for the passage of the infant. Pliny the Elder informs us how parturition may be impeded by the use of charms.]

[Footnote 33: *Something unusual.*--Ver. 309. ‘Nescio quid.’ This very indefinite phrase is repeatedly used by Ovid; and in such cases, it expresses either actual doubt or uncertainty, as in the present instance; or it is used to denote something remarkable or indescribable, or to show that a thing is insignificant, mean, and contemptible.]

[Footnote 34: *Goddess who presides*.--Ver. 315. This was Ilithyïa, or Lucina, who was acting as the emissary of Juno.]

[Footnote 35: *From the mouth*.--Ver. 323. This notion is supposed to have been grounded on the fact of the weasel (like many other animals) carrying her young in her mouth from place to place.]

## Riley's Explanation

According to Diodorus Siculus and Apollodorus, Amphitryon was the son of Alceus, the son of Perseus, and his wife, Alcmena, was the daughter of Electryon, also the son of Perseus; and thus they were cousins. When their marriage was about to take place, an unforeseen accident prevented it. Electryon, who was king of Mycenæ, being obliged to revenge the death of his children, whom the sons of Taphius, king of the Teleboans, had killed in combat, returned victorious, and brought back with him his flocks, which he had recovered from Taphius. Amphitryon, who went to meet his uncle, to congratulate him upon the success of his expedition, throwing his club at a cow, which happened to stray from the herd, unfortunately killed him. This accidental homicide lost him the kingdom of Mycenæ, which was to have formed the dower of Alcmena. Sthenelus, the brother of Electryon, taking advantage of the public indignation, which was the result of the accident, drove Amphitryon out of the country of Argos, and made himself master of his brother's dominions, which he left, at his death, to his son Eurystheus, the inveterate persecutor of Hercules.

Amphitryon, obliged to retire to Thebes, was there absolved by Creon; but when, as he thought, he was about to receive the hand of Alcmena, who accompanied him to the court of that prince, she declared that, not being satisfied with the revenge which her father had taken on the Teleboans, she would consent to be the prize of him who would undertake to declare war against them. Amphitryon accepted these conditions, and, forming an alliance with Creon, Cephalus, and some other princes, made a descent upon the islands which the enemy possessed, and, making himself master of them, bestowed one of them on his ally, Cephalus.

It was during this war that Hercules came into the world; and whether Amphitryon had secretly consummated his marriage before his departure, or whether he had returned privately to Thebes, or to Tirynthus, where Hercules was said to have been born, it was published, that Jupiter, to deceive Alcmena, had taken the form of her husband, and was the father of the infant Hercules. If this is not the true explanation of the story, it may have been invented to conceal some intrigue in which Alcmena was detected; or, in process of time, to account for the extraordinary strength and valour of Hercules, it may have been said that Jupiter, and not Amphitryon, was the father of Hercules. Indeed, we find Seneca, in one of his Tragedies, putting these words into the mouth of Hercules:-- 'Whether all that has been said upon this subject be

held as undoubted truth, or whether it proves to be but a fable, and that my father was, after all, in reality, but a mortal; my mother's fault is sufficiently effaced by my valour, and I have merit sufficient to have had Jupiter for my father.' The more readily, perhaps, to account for the transcendent strength and prowess of Hercules, the story was invented, that Jupiter made the night on which he was received by Alcmena under the form of Amphitryon, as long as three, or, according to Plautus, Hyginus, and Seneca, nine nights. Some writers say that Alcmena brought forth twins, one of which, Iphiclus, was the son of Amphitryon, while Hercules had Jupiter for his father.

With respect to the metamorphosis of Galanthis, it is but a little episode here introduced by Ovid, to give greater plausibility to the other part of the story. It most probably originated in the resemblance of the names of that slave to that of the weazel, which the Greeks called γαλῆ. Ælian, indeed, tells us that the Thebans paid honour to that animal, because it had helped Alcmena in her labour. The more ancient poets also added, that Juno retarded the birth of Hercules till the mother of Eurystheus was delivered, which was the cause of his being the subject of that king; though others state that this came to pass by the command of the oracle of Delphi. This king of Mycenæ having ordered him to rid Greece of the numerous robbers and wild beasts that infested it, it is most probable that, as we learn from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, he performed this service at the head of the troops of Eurystheus. If this is the case, the persecutions which the poets have ascribed to the jealousy of Juno, really originated either in the policy or the jealousy of the court of Mycenæ.

As Ovid has here cursorily taken notice of the labours of Hercules, we may observe, that it is very probable that his history is embellished with the pretended adventures of many persons who bore his name, and, perhaps, with those of others besides. Cicero, in his 'Treatise on the Nature of the Gods,' mentions six persons who bore the name of Hercules; and possibly, after a minute examination, a much greater number might be reckoned, many nations of antiquity having given the name to such great men of their own as had rendered themselves famous by their actions. Thus, we find one in Egypt in the time of Osiris, in Phœnicia, among the Gauls, in Spain, and in other countries. Confining ourselves to the Grecian Hercules, surnamed Alcides, we find that his exploits have generally been sung of by the poets, under the name of the Twelve Labours; but, on entering into the detail of them, we find them much more numerous. Killing some serpents in his youth, it was published, not only that he had done so, but that they had been sent by Juno for the purpose of destroying him. The forest of Nemea serving as a retreat for a great number of lions that ravaged the country, Hercules hunted them, and, killing the most furious of them, always wore his skin.

Several thieves, having made the neighbourhood of Lake Stymphalus, in Arcadia, their resort, he freed the country of them; the nails and wings which the poets gave them, in representing them

as birds, being typical of their voracity and activity. The marshes of Lerna, near Argos, were infested by great numbers of serpents, which, as fast as they were destroyed, were replaced by new swarms; draining the marshes, and, probably, setting fire to the adjacent thickets or jungles, he destroyed these pestilent reptiles, on which it was fabled that he had destroyed the Hydra of Lerna, with its heads, which grew as fast as they were cut off. The forest of Erymanthus was full of wild boars, which laid waste all the neighbouring country: he destroyed them all, and brought one with him to the court of Eurystheus, of a size so monstrous, that the king was alarmed on seeing it, and was obliged to run and hide himself.

The stables of Augeas, king of Elis, were so filled with manure, by reason of the great quantity of oxen that he kept, that Hercules being called upon to cleanse them, employed his engineering skill in bringing the river Alpheus through them. Having pursued a hind for a whole year, which Eurystheus had commanded him to take, it was circulated, probably on account of her untiring swiftness, that she had feet of brass. The river Acheloüs having overflowed the adjacent country, he raised banks to it, as already mentioned. Theseus was a prisoner in Epirus, where he had been with Pirithous, to bring away the daughter of Aidoneus. Hercules delivered him; and that was the foundation of the Fable which said that he had gone down to Hades, or Hell. In the cavern of Tænarus there was a monstrous serpent; this he was ordered to kill, and, probably, this gave rise to the story of Cerberus being chained by him. Pelias having been killed by his daughters, his son Acastus pursued them to the court of Admetus, who, refusing to deliver up Alcestis, of whom he was enamoured, was taken prisoner in an engagement, and was delivered by that princess, who herself offered to be his ransom. Hercules being then in Thessaly, he took her away from Acastus, who was about to put her to death, and returned her to Admetus. This, probably, was the foundation of the fable which stated, that he had recovered her from the Infernal Regions, after having vanquished death, and bound him in chains.

The Amazons were a nation of great celebrity in the time of Hercules, and their frequent victories had rendered them very formidable to their neighbours. Eurystheus ordered him to go and bring away the girdle of Hippolyta, or, in other words, to make war upon them, and to pillage their treasures. Embarking on the Euxine Sea, Hercules arrived on the banks of the Thermodon, and, giving battle to the female warriors, defeated them; killing some, and putting the rest to flight. He took Antiope, or Hippolyta, prisoner, whom he gave to Theseus; but her sister, Menalippa, redeemed herself by giving up the famous girdle, or, in other words, by paying a large ransom. It is very probable, that in that expedition, he slew Diomedes, the barbarous king of Thrace, and brought away his mares, which were said to have been fed by him on human flesh. In returning by way of Thessaly, he embarked in the expedition of the Argonauts; but, leaving them soon afterwards, he went to Troy, and delivered Hesione from the monster which was to have devoured her; but not receiving from Laomedon, the king, the recompense which

had been promised him, he killed that prince, sacked the city, and brought away Hesione, whom he gave to Telamon, who had accompanied him on the expedition.

This is probably the extent of the labours of Hercules in Greece, Thrace, and Phrygia. The poets have made him engage in many other laborious undertakings in distant countries, which most probably ought not to be attributed to the Grecian Hercules. Among other stories told of him, it is said, that having set out to fight with Geryon, the king of Spain, he was so much incommoded by the heat of the sun, that his wrath was excited against the luminary, and he fired his arrows at it, on which, the Sun, struck with admiration at his spirited conduct, made him a present of a golden goblet. After this, embarking and arriving in Spain, he defeated Geryon, a prince who was famed for having three heads, which probably either meant that he reigned over the three Balearic islands of Maiorca, Minorca, and Iviza, or else that Hercules defeated three princes who were strictly allied. Having thence passed the straits of Gibraltar to go over to Africa, he fought with the Giant Antæus, who sought to oppose his landing. That prince was said to be a son of the Earth, and was reported to recover fresh strength every time he was thrown on the ground; consequently, Hercules was obliged to hold him in his arms, till he had squeezed him to death. The solution of this fable is most probably that Antæus, always finding succour in a country where he was known as a powerful monarch, Hercules took measures to deprive him of aid, by engaging him in a sea fight, and thereby defeated him, without much trouble, as well as the Pygmies, who were probably some African tribes of stunted stature, who came to his assistance.

Hercules, returning from these two expeditions, passed through Gaul with the herds of Geryon, and went into Italy, where Cacus, a celebrated robber, who had made the caverns of Mount Aventine his haunts, having stolen some of his oxen, he, with the assistance, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, of Evander and Faunus, destroyed him, and shared his spoils with his allies. In his journey from Africa, Hercules delivered Atlas from the enmity of Busiris, the tyrant of Egypt, whom he killed; and gave such good advice to the Mauritanian king, that it was said that he supported the heavens for some time on his own shoulders, to relieve those of Atlas. The latter, by way of acknowledgment of his services, made him a present of several fine sheep, or rather, according to Diodorus Siculus, of some orange and lemon trees, which he carried with him into Greece. These were represented as the golden apples watched by a dragon in the garden of the Hesperides. As the ocean there terminated the scene of his conquests, he was said to have raised two pillars on those shores, to signify the fact of his having been there, and the impossibility of proceeding any further.

The deliverance of Prometheus, as already mentioned; the death of the two brothers, the Cercopes, famous robbers; the defeat of the Bull of Marathon; the death of Lygis, who disputed the passage of the Alps with him; that of the giant Alcyaneus, who hurled at him a stone so vast that it crushed twenty-four men to death; that of Eryx, king of Sicily, whom he killed with a blow

of the cestus, for refusing to deliver to him the oxen which he had stolen; the combat with Cycnus, which was terminated by a peal of thunder, which separated the combatants; another combat against the Giants in Gaul, during which, as it was said, Jupiter rained down vast quantities of stones; all these are also attributed to Hercules, besides many more stories, which, if diligently collected, would swell to a large volume.

The foregoing remarks on the history of Hercules, give us an insight into the ideas which, based upon the explanations given by the authors of antiquity, the Abbè Banier, one of the most accomplished scholars of his age, entertained on this subject. We will conclude with some very able and instructive remarks on this mythus, which we extract from Mr. Keightley's Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy. He says--

"Various theories have been formed respecting the mythus of Hercules. It is evidently one of very remote antiquity, long perhaps, anterior to the times of Homer. We confess that we cannot see any very valid reason for supposing no such real personage to have existed; for it will, perhaps, be found that mythology not unfrequently prefers to absolute fiction, the assuming of some real historic character, and making it the object of the marvels devised by lively and exuberant imagination, in order thereby to obtain more ready credence for the strange events which it creates. Such, then, may the real Hercules have been,--a Dorian, a Theban, or an Argive hero, whose feats of strength lived in the traditions of the people, and whom national vanity raised to the rank of a son of Zeus [Jupiter], and poetic fancy, as geographic knowledge extended, sent on journies throughout the known world, and accumulated in his person the fabled exploits of similar heroes of other regions.

"We may perceive, by the twelve tasks, that the astronomical theory was applied to the mythus of the hero, and that he was regarded as a personification of the Sun, which passes through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. This, probably, took place during the Alexandrian period. Some resemblance between his attributes and those of the Deity, with whom the Egyptian priests were pleased to identify him, may have given occasion to this notion; and he also bore some similitude to the God whom the Phœnicians chiefly worshipped, and who, it is probable, was the Sun. But we must steadily bear in mind, that Hercules was a hero in the popular legend long before any intercourse was opened between Greece and Egypt; and that, however (which is certainly not very likely) a God might be introduced from Phœnicia, the same could hardly be the case with a popular hero.--A very ingenious theory on the mythus of Hercules is given by Buttmann (Mythologus, vol. i., p. 246). Though acknowledging that Perseus, Theseus, and Hercules may have been real persons, he is disposed, from an attentive consideration of all the circumstances in the mythus of the last, to regard him as one of those poetical persons or personifications, who, as he says, have obtained such firm footing in the dark periods of antiquity, as to have acquired the complete air of historic personages.

“In his view of the life of Hercules, it is a mythus of extreme antiquity and great beauty, setting forth the ideal of human perfection, consecrated to the weal of mankind, or rather, in its original form, to that of his own nation. This perfection, according to the ideas of the heroic age, consists in the greatest bodily strength, united with the advantages of mind and soul recognised by that age. Such a hero is, he says, a man; but these noble qualities in him are of divine origin. He is, therefore, the son of the king of the Gods by a mortal mother. To render his perfection the more manifest, the Poet makes him to have a twin brother, the child of a mortal sire. As virtue is not to be learned, Hercules exhibits his strength and courage in infancy; he strangles the snakes, which fills his brother with terror. The character of the hero throughout life, as that of the avenger of injustice and punisher of evil, must exhibit itself in the boy as the wild instinct of nature; and the mythus makes him kill his tutor Linus with a blow of the lyre. When sent away by Amphitryon, he prepares himself, in the stillness and solitude of the shepherd’s life, by feats of strength and courage, for his future task of purifying the earth of violence.

“--The number of tasks may not originally have been twelve, though most accounts agree in that number, but they were all of a nature agreeable to the ideas of an heroic age--the destruction of monsters, and bringing home to his own country the valuable productions of other regions. These are, however, regarded by Buttmann as being chiefly allegorical. The Hydra, for instance, he takes to have been meant to represent the evils of democratic anarchy, with its numerous heads, against which, though one may not be able to effect anything, yet the union of even two may suffice to become dominant over it.

“The toils of the hero conclude with the greatest and most rare of all in the heroic age--the conquest over death. This is represented by his descent into the under world, and dragging Cerberus to light is a proof of his victory. In the old mythus, he was made to engage with and wound Hades; and the Alcestis of Euripides exhibits him in conflict with Death. But virtue, to be a useful example, must occasionally succumb to human weakness in the power of the evil principle. Hence, Hercules falls into fits of madness, sent on him by Hera [Juno]; and hence--he becomes the willing slave of Omphale, the fair queen of Lydia, and changes his club and lion’s skin for the distaff and the female robe.

“The mythus concludes most nobly with the assumption of the hero into Olympus. His protecting Deity abandons him to the power of his persevering enemy; his mortal part is consumed by fire, the fiercest of elements; his shade (εἴδωλον), like those of other men, descends to the realms of Hades, while the divine portion himself (αὐτὸς) mounts from the pyre in a thunder-cloud, and the object of Hera’s persecution being now accomplished, espouses youth, the daughter of his reconciled foe.

“Muller (Dorians, vol. i. part ii. ch. 11, 12) is also disposed to view in Hercules a personification of the highest powers of man in the heroic age. He regards him as having been the national hero of the Dorian race, and appropriates to him all the exploits of the hero in Thessaly, Ætolia, and Epirus, which last place he supposes to have been the original scene of the Geryoneia, which was afterwards transformed to the western stream of the ocean. He thinks, however, that the Argives had an ancient hero of perhaps the same name, to whom the Peloponnesus adventures belong, and whom the Dorians combined with their own hero. The servitude to Eurystheus, and the enmity of Hera, he looks on as inventions of the Dorians to justify their own invasion of the Peloponnesus. This critic also proves that the Theban Hercules had nothing to do with the Gods and traditions of the Cadmeians; and he thinks that it was the Dorian Heracleides who introduced the knowledge of him into Thebes, or that he came from Delphi with the worship of Apollo, a Deity with whom, as the tutelar God of the Dorians, he supposes their national hero to have been closely connected.”

## Book IX, Fable IV (lines 324–425)

*The Nymph Lotis, pursued by Priapus, in her flight, is changed into a tree. Dryope, going to sacrifice to the Naiads at the same spot, and ignorant of the circumstance, breaks a branch off the tree for her child, which she is carrying with her, and is subjected to a similar transformation. While Iole is relating these circumstances to Alcmena, she is surprised to see her brother Iolaüs restored to youth. The Poet here introduces the prediction of Themis concerning the children of Calirrhoë.*

Thus she said; and, moved by the remembrance of her old servant, she heaved a deep sigh. Her daughter-in-law[36] addressed her, thus grieving. “Even her form being taken away from one that was an alien to thy blood, affects thee, O mother. What if I were to relate to thee the wondrous fate of my own sister? although tears and sorrow hinder me, and forbid me to speak. Dryope, the most remarkable for her beauty of the Œchalian maids, was the only daughter of her mother ({for} my father had me by another {wife}). Deprived of her virginity, and having suffered violence from the God that owns Delphi and Delos, Andræmon married her, and he was esteemed fortunate in his wife.

“There is a lake that gives the appearance of a sloping shore, by its shelving border; groves of myrtle crown the upper part. Hither did Dryope come, unsuspecting of her fate; and, that thou mayst be the more indignant {at her lot}, she was about to offer garlands to the Nymphs. In her bosom, too, she was bearing her son, who had not yet completed his first year, a pleasing burden; and she was nursing him, with the help of {her} warm milk. Not far from the lake was blooming a watery lotus that vied with the Tyrian tints, in hope of {future} berries. Dryope had plucked thence some flowers, which she might give as playthings to her child; and I, too, was just on the point of doing the same; for I was present. I saw bloody drops fall from the flower, and the boughs shake with a tremulous quivering; for, as the swains say, now, at length, too late {in their information}, the Nymph Lotis, flying from the lust of Priapus,[37] had transferred her changed form into this {plant}, her name being {still} preserved.

“Of this my sister was ignorant. When, in her alarm, she is endeavouring to retire and to depart, having adored the Nymphs, her feet are held fast by a root. She strives hard to tear them up, but she moves nothing except her upper parts. From below, a bark slowly grows up, and, by degrees, it envelopes the whole of her groin. When she sees this, endeavouring to tear her hair with her hands, she fills her hand with leaves, {for} leaves are covering all her head. But the boy Amphissos (for his grandfather Eurytus gave him this name) feels his mother’s breast growing hard; nor does the milky stream follow upon his sucking. I was a spectator of thy cruel destiny, and I could give thee no help, my sister; and {yet}, as long as I could, I delayed the growing

trunk and branches by embracing them; and, I confess it, I was desirous to be hidden beneath the same bark. Behold! her husband Andræmon and her most wretched father[38] appear, and inquire for Dryope: on their inquiring for Dryope, I show them the lotus. They give kisses to the wood {still} warm {with life}, and, extended {on the ground}, they cling to the roots of their own tree. {And} now, dear sister, thou hadst nothing except thy face, that was not tree. Tears drop upon the leaves made out of thy changed body; and, while she can, and {while} her mouth gives passage to her voice, she pours forth such complaints {as these} into the air:--

"'If any credit {is to be given} to the wretched, I swear by the Deities that I merited not this cruel usage. I suffer punishment without a crime. I lived in innocence; if I am speaking false, withered away, may I lose the leaves which I bear, and, cut down with axes, may I be burnt. Yet take this infant away from the branches of his mother, and give him to his nurse; and often, beneath my tree, make him drink milk, and beneath my tree let him play; and, when he shall be able to speak, make him salute his mother, and let him in sadness say, 'Beneath this trunk is my mother concealed.' Yet let him dread the ponds, and let him not pluck flowers from the trees; and let him think that all shrubs are the bodies of Goddesses. Farewell, dear husband; and thou, sister; and, {thou} my father; in whom, if there is any affection {towards me}, protect my branches from the wounds of the sharp pruning-knife, {and} from the bite of the cattle. And since it is not allowed me to bend down towards you, stretch your limbs up hither, and come near for my kisses, while they can {still} be reached, and lift up my little son. More I cannot say. For the soft bark is now creeping along my white neck, and I am being enveloped at the top of my head. Remove your hands from my eyes;[39] {and}, without your help, let the bark, closing over them, cover my dying eyes.' Her mouth ceased at once to speak, at once to exist; and long after her body was changed, were her newly formed branches {still} warm."

And {now}, while Iole was relating the wretched fate of her sister, and while Alcmena was drying away the tears of the daughter of Eurytus, with her fingers applied {to her face}, and still she herself was weeping, a novel event hushed all their sorrow; for Iolaüs[40] stood at the lofty threshold, almost a boy {again}, and covering his cheeks with a down almost imperceptible, having his visage changed to {that of} the first years {of manhood}. Hebe, the daughter of Juno had granted him this favour, overcome by the solicitations of her husband. When she was about to swear that she would hereafter grant such favours to no one, Themis did not allow her. "For now," said she, "Thebes is commencing civil warfare,[41] and Capaneus will not be able to be overcome, except by Jupiter, and the two brothers will engage in bloody combat, and the earth dividing, the prophet {Amphiaraüs} will see his {destined} shades, while he still lives;[42] and the son avenging one parent, by {the death of} the {other} parent, will be dutiful and wicked in the same action; and confounded by his misfortunes, deprived both of his reason and of his home, he will be persecuted both by the features of the Eumenides, and by the ghost of his

mother; until his wife shall call upon him for the fatal gold, and the Phegeïan sword shall stab the side of their kinsman. Then, at last, shall Calirrhoë, the daughter of Acheloüs, suppliantly ask of mighty Jupiter these years {of youth} for her infant sons. Jupiter, concerned {for them}, will prescribe for them the {peculiar} gift of her who is {both} his step-daughter and his daughter-in-law,[43] and will make them men in their years of childhood."

When Themis, foreseeing the future, had said these words with prophetic voice, the Gods above murmured in varying discourse; and the complaint was,[44] why it might not be allowed others to grant the same gifts. {Aurora}, the daughter of Pallas, complained of the aged years of her husband; the gentle Ceres complained that Iäsion[45] was growing grey; Mulciber demanded for Ericthonius a life to live over again; a concern for the future influenced Venus, too, and she made an offer to renew the years of Anchises.

[Footnote 36: *Her daughter-in-law*.--Ver. 325. Iole was the wife of Hyllus, the son of Deïanira, by Hercules.]

[Footnote 37: *Lust of Priapus*.--Ver. 347. 'Fugiens obscœna Priapi,' is rendered by Clarke, 'Flying from the nasty attempts of Priapus upon her.']

[Footnote 38: *Most wretched father*.--Ver. 363. Eurytus was the father of Dryope.]

[Footnote 39: *From my eyes*.--Ver. 390. This alludes to the custom among the ancients of closing the eyes of the dying, which duty was performed by the nearest relations, who, closing the eyes and mouth, called upon the dying person by name, and exclaimed 'Vale,' 'farewell.']

[Footnote 40: *Iolaüs*.--Ver. 399. He was the son of Iphiclus, the brother of Hercules. See the Explanation in the next page.]

[Footnote 41: *Civil warfare*.--Ver. 404. This alludes to the Theban war, carried on between Eteocles and Polynices, the sons of Œdipus and Jocasta. Agreeing to reign in alternate years, Eteocles refused to give place to his brother when his year had terminated, on which Polynices fled to the court of Adrastus, king of Argos, and raised troops against his brother.]

[Footnote 42: *While he still lives*.--Ver. 407. This was Amphiaraüs, the son of Œcleus, and Hypermnestra, who was betrayed by his wife Eriphyle.]

[Footnote 43: *Daughter-in-law*.--Ver. 415. Hebe, the Goddess of Youth, was the daughter of Juno alone, without the participation of Jupiter; and from this circumstance she is styled the step-daughter of Jupiter. She was also his daughter-in-law on becoming the wife of Hercules.]

[Footnote 44: *The complaint was.*--Ver. 420. ‘Murmur erat,’ is rendered by Clarke, ‘The grumbling was, why, &c.’]

[Footnote 45: *Iäsion.*--Ver. 422. Iäsius, or Iäsion, was the son of Jupiter and Electra, and was the father of Plutus, the God of Riches, by the Goddess Cybele.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The adventure of Dryope is one of those narratives which have no connexion with the main story which the Poet is relating, and, if really founded on fact, it would almost baffle any attempt to guess at its origin. It is, most probably, built entirely upon the name of the damsel who was said to have met with the untimely and unnatural fate so well depicted by the Poet.

The name of Dryope comes, very probably, from the Greek word Δρῦς, ‘an oak,’ which tree has a considerable resemblance to the lotus tree. If we seek for an historical solution, perhaps Dryope was punished for attempting to profane a tree consecrated to the Gods, a crime of which Erisicthon was guilty, and for which he was so signally punished. All the particulars that we know of Dryope are, that she was the daughter of Eurytus, and the sister of Iole; and that she was the wife of Andræmon.

Ovid says, that while Iole was relating this adventure to Alcmena, Iolaüs, who, according to some, was the son of Hercules, by Hebe, after his apotheosis, and, according to others, was the son of Iphiclus, the brother of Hercules, became young, at the intercession of that Goddess, who had appeased Juno. This was, probably, no other than a method of accounting for the great age to which and individual of the name of Iolaüs had lived.

Ovid then passes on to the surprising change in the children of Calirrhoë, the outline of which the story may be thus explained:--Amphiaraüs, foreseeing, (by the aid of the prophetic art, as we learn from Homer, Diodorus Siculus, Pliny and Statius), that the civil wars of Thebes, his native country, would prove fatal to him, retired from the court of Adrastus, King of Argos, whose sister he had married, to conceal himself in some place of safety. The Argives, to whom the oracle had declared, that Thebes could not be taken unless they had Amphiaraüs with their troops, searched for him in every direction; but their labour would have been in vain, if Eriphyle, his wife, gained by a necklace of great value, which her brother Adrastus gave her, had not discovered where he was. Discovered in his retreat, Amphiaraüs accompanied the Argives, and while, according to the rules of the soothsaying art, he was observing a flight of birds, in order to derive an augury from it, his horses fell down a precipice, and he lost his life. Statius and other writers, to describe this event in a poetical manner, say that the earth opened and swallowed up him and his chariot.

Amphiaraüs had engaged his son Alcmæon, in case he lost his life in the war, to kill Eriphyle; which injunction he performed as soon as he heard of the death of his father. Alcmæon, going to the court of Phegeus, to receive expiation for his crime, and to deliver himself from the persecution of the Furies, or, in other words, by the ceremonial of expiation, to tranquillize his troubled conscience, that prince received him with kindness, and gave him his daughter Alphesibæa in marriage. Alcmæon made her a present of his mother Eriphyle's necklace; but, having afterwards repudiated her to marry Calirrhoë, or Arsinoë, the daughter of Acheloüs, he went to demand the necklace from his brothers-in-law, who assassinated him. Amphiterus and Acarnanus, who were his sons by Calirrhoë, revenged the death of their father when they were very young; and this it is, possibly, which is meant by the Poet when he says that the Goddess Hebe augmented the number of their years, the purpose being, to put them speedily in a position to enable them to avenge the death of their father.

Thus we see, that Iolaüs was, like Æson, who also renewed his youth, a person who, in his old age, gave marks of unusual vigour; while in Amphiterus and Arcananus, to whom Hebe added years, are depicted two young men, who, by a deed of blood, exacted retribution for the death of their father, at a time when they were in general only looked upon as mere children.

## Book IX, Fable V (lines 426–665)

*Byblis falls in love with her brother Caunus, and her passion is inflamed to such a degree, that he is obliged to leave his native country, to avoid any encouragement of her incestuous flame. On this, she follows him; and, in her way through Caria, she is changed into a fountain.*

Every God has[46] some one to favour; and their jarring discord is increasing by their {various} interests, until Jupiter opens his mouth, and says, "O, if you have any regard for me, to what rash steps are you proceeding? Does any one {of you} seem to himself so powerful as to overcome even the Fates? By the Fates has Iolaüs returned to those years which he has spent; by the Fates ought the sons of Calirrhoë to become young men, {and} not by ambition or by dint of arms. And do you, too, endure this as well with more contented mind, {for} even me do the Fates govern; could I but change them, declining years should not be making my {son} Æacus to bend {beneath them}; and Rhadamanthus should have the everlasting flower of age, together with my {son}, Minos, who is {now} looked down upon on account of the grievous weight of old age, and does not reign with the dignity with which once {he did}."

The words of Jupiter influenced the Divinities; and no one continued to complain when they saw Rhadamanthus and Æacus, and Minos, weary with years; {Minos}, who, when he was in the prime of life, had alarmed great nations with his very name. Then, {however}, he was enfeebled by age, and was alarmed by Miletus, the son of Deione,[47] exulting in the strength of youth, and in Phœbus as his sire; and {though} believing that he was aiming at his kingdom, still he did not dare to drive him away from his native home. Of thy own accord, Miletus, thou didst fly, and in the swift ship thou didst pass over the Ægean waters, and in the land of Asia didst build a city, bearing the name of its founder. Here Cyane, the daughter of {the river} Mæander, that so often returns to the same place, while she was following the windings of her father's bank, of a body excelling in beauty, being known by thee, brought forth a double offspring, Byblis, with Caunus, {her brother}.

Byblis is an example that damsels {only} ought to love what it is allowed them {to love}; Byblis, seized with a passion for her brother, the descendant of Apollo, loved him not as a sister {loves} a brother, nor in such manner as she ought. At first, indeed, she understands nothing of the flame, and she does not think[48] that she is doing wrong in so often giving him kisses, {and} in throwing her arms round the neck of her brother; and for a long time she {herself} is deceived, by this resemblance of natural affection. By degrees this affection degenerates, and decked out, she comes to see her brother, and is too anxious to appear beautiful; and if there is any woman there more beautiful, she envies her. But, as yet she is not fully discovered to herself, and under that flame conceives no wishes; but still, inwardly she is agitated. At one moment she calls him

sweetheart,[49] at another, she hates the mention of his relationship; and now she prefers that he should call her Byblis, rather than sister. Still, while awake, she does not dare admit any criminal hopes into her mind; {but} when dissolved in soft sleep, she often sees the {object} which she is in love with. She seems to be even embracing her brother, and she blushes, though she is lying buried in sleep. Slumber departs; for a long time she is silent, and she recalls to {memory} the appearance of her dream, and thus she speaks with wavering mind:

"Ah, wretched me! What means this vision of the silent night? How far am I from wishing it real. Why have I seen this dream? He is, indeed, beautiful, even to envious eyes. He pleases me, too; and were he not my brother, I could love him, and he would be worthy of me. But it is my misfortune that I am his sister. So long as I strive, while awake, to commit no such {attempt}, let sleep often return with the like appearance. No witness is there in sleep; and yet there is the resemblance of the delight. O Venus and winged Cupid, together with thy voluptuous mother, how great the joys I experienced! how substantial the transport which affected me! How I lay dissolved {in delight} throughout my whole marrow! How pleasing to remember it; although short-lived was that pleasure, and the night sped onward rapidly, and was envious of my attempts {at bliss}. Oh, could I only be united {to thee}, by changing my name, how happily, Caunus, could I become the daughter-in-law of thy father! how happily, Caunus, couldst thou become the son-in-law of my father! O, that the Gods would grant that all things were in common with us, except our ancestors. Would that thou wast more nobly born than myself. For this reason then, most beauteous one, thou wilt make some stranger, whom I know not, a mother; but to me, who have unhappily got the same parents as thyself, thou wilt be nothing {more} than a brother. That {tie} alone we shall have, which bars all else. What, then, do my visions avail me? And what weight have dreams? And do dreams have any weight? The Gods {fare} better; for the Gods have their own sisters {in marriage}. Thus Saturn married Ops,[50] related to him by blood; Ocean Tethys, the ruler of Olympus Juno. The Gods above have their privileges. Why do I attempt to reduce human customs to the rule of divine ordinances, and those so different? Either this forbidden flame shall be expelled from my heart, or if I cannot effect that, I pray that I may first perish, and that when dead I may be laid out on my bed, and that my brother may give me kisses as I lie. And besides, this matter requires the inclination of us both; suppose it pleases me; to him it will seem to be a crime. But the sons of Æolus[51] did not shun the embraces of their sisters. But whence have I known of these? Why have I furnished myself with these precedents? Whither am I hurried onward? Far hence begone, ye lawless flames! and let not my brother be loved by me, but as it is lawful for a sister {to love him}. But yet, if he had been first seized with a passion for me, perhaps I might have indulged his desires. Am I then, myself, to court him, whom I would not have rejected, had he courted me? And canst thou speak out? And canst thou confess it? Love will compel me. I can. Or if shame shall restrain my lips, a private letter shall confess the latent flame."

This thought pleases her, this determines her wavering mind. She raises herself on her side, and leaning on her left elbow, she says, “He shall see it; let me confess my frantic passion. Ah, wretched me! How am I degrading myself! What flame is my mind {now} kindling!” And {then}, with trembling hand, she puts together the words well weighed. Her right hand holds the iron {pen}, the other, clean wax tablets.[52] She begins, and {then} she hesitates; she writes, and {then} corrects what is written; she marks, and {then} scratches out; she alters, and condemns, and approves; and one while she throws them down when taken up, and at another time, she takes them up again, when thrown aside. What she would have, she knows not. Whatever she seems on the point of doing, is not to her taste. In her features are assurance mingled with shame. {The word} ‘sister’ is written; it seems {as well} to efface {the word} ‘sister,’ and {then} to write such words as these upon the smoothed wax: “Thy lover wishes thee that health which she, herself, is not to enjoy, unless thou shalt grant it. I am ashamed! Oh, I am ashamed to disclose my name! and shouldst thou inquire what it is I wish; without my name[53] could I wish my cause to be pleaded, and that I might not be known as Byblis, until the hopes of {enjoying} my desires were realized. There might have been as a proof to thee of my wounded heart, my {pale} complexion, my falling away, my {downcast} looks, and my eyes often wet with tears, sighs, too, fetched without any seeming cause; frequent embraces too, and kisses, which, if perchance thou didst observe, could not be deemed to be those of a sister. Still I, myself, though I had a grievous wound in my soul, {and} although there was a raging fire within, have done everything, as the Gods are my witnesses, that at last I might be cured; and long, in my wretchedness, have I struggled to escape the ruthless weapon of Cupid; and I have endured more hardships than thou wouldst believe that a maiden could endure.

“Vanquished {at length}, I am forced to own {my passion}; and with timorous prayers, to entreat thy aid. Thou alone canst save, thou destroy, one who loves thee. Choose which thou wilt do. She is not thy enemy who begs this; but one who, though most nearly connected with thee, desires to be still more closely connected, and to be united to thee in a nearer tie. Let aged men be acquainted with ordinances, and make inquiry what is lawful, and what is wicked, and what is proper; and let them employ themselves in considering the laws. A passion that dares all consequences is suited to our years. As yet, we know not what is lawful, and we believe that all things are lawful, and {so} follow the example of the great Gods. Neither a severe father, nor regard for character, nor fear, shall restrain us, {if} only the cause for fearing is removed. Under a brother’s name will we conceal our stolen joys {so} sweet. I have the liberty of conversing with thee in private; and {even} before others do we give embraces, and exchange kisses. How little is it that is wanting! do have pity on the love of her who confesses it, and who would not confess it, did not extreme passion compel her; and merit not to be inscribed on my tomb as the cause {of my death}.”

The filled tablets fall short for her hand, as it vainly inscribes such words as these, and the last line is placed in the margin.[54] At once she seals up her own condemnation, with the impress of a signet, which she wets with her tears, {for} the moisture has deserted her tongue. Filled with shame, she {then} calls one of her male domestics, and gently addressing him in timorous tones, she said, “Carry these, most trusty one, to my,” and, after a long pause, she added, “brother.” While she was delivering them, the tablets, slipping from her hands, fell down. She was shocked by this omen, but still she sent them. The servant, having got a fit opportunity, goes {to her brother} and delivers the secret writing. The Mæandrian youth,[55] seized with sudden anger, throws away the tablets {so} received, when he has read a part; and, with difficulty withholding his hands from the face of the trembling servant, he says, “Fly hence, O thou accursed pander to forbidden lust, who shouldst have given me satisfaction by thy death, if {it was} not {that} thy destruction would bring disgrace on my character.” Frightened, he hastens away, and reports to his mistress the threatening expressions of Caunus. Thou, Byblis, on hearing of his refusal, turnest pale, and thy breast, beset with an icy chill, is struck with alarm; yet when thy senses return, so, too, does thy frantic passion return, and thy tongue with difficulty utters such words as these, the air being struck {by thy accents}:

“And deservedly {am I thus treated}; for why, in my rashness, did I make the discovery of this wound? why have I so speedily committed words to a hasty letter, which ought {rather} to have been concealed? The feelings of his mind ought first to have been tried beforehand by me, with ambiguous expressions. Lest he should not follow me in my course, I ought, with some part of my sail[56] {only}, to have observed what kind of a breeze it was, and to have scudded over the sea in safety; {whereas}, now, I have filled my canvass with winds {before} untried. I am driven upon rocks in consequence; and sunk, I am buried beneath the whole ocean, and my sails have {now} no retreat. And besides, was I not forbidden, by unerring omens, to indulge my passion, at the time when the waxen {tablets} fell, as I ordered him to deliver them, and made my hopes sink to the ground? and ought not either the day to have been changed, or else my whole intentions; but rather, {of the two},[57] the day? {Some} God himself warned me, and gave me unerring signs, if I had not been deranged; and yet I ought to have spoken out myself, and not to have committed myself to writing, and personally {I ought} to have discovered my passion; {then} he would have seen my tears, {then} he would have seen the features of her who loved him; I might have given utterance to more than what the letter contained. I might have thrown my arms around his reluctant neck, and have embraced his feet, and lying {on the ground}, I might have begged for life; and if I had been repelled, I might have seemed on the point of death. All this, {I say}, I might {then} have done; if each of these things could not {singly} have softened his obdurate feelings, {yet} all of them might.

“Perhaps, too, there may be some fault in the servant that was sent. He did not wait on him at a convenient moment; he did not choose, I suppose, a fitting time; nor did he request both the hour and his attention to be disengaged. ’Tis this that has undone me; for he was not born of a tigress, nor does he carry in his breast hard flints, or solid iron, or adamant; nor yet did he suck the milk of a lioness. He will {yet} be won. Again must he be attacked.[58] And no weariness will I admit of in {the accomplishment of} my design, so long as this breath {of mine} shall remain. For the best thing (if I could {only} recall what has been destined) would have been, not to have made the attempt; the next best thing is, to urge the accomplishment of what is begun; for he cannot (suppose I were to relinquish my design) ever be unmindful of this my attempt; and because I have desisted, I shall appear to have desired for but an instant, or even to have been trying him, and to have solicited him with the intention to betray; or, at least, I shall be thought not to have been overcome by this God, who with such intensity {now} burns, and has burnt my breast, but rather by lust. In fine, I cannot now be guiltless of a wicked deed; I have both written {to him}, and I have solicited {him}; my inclination has been defiled. Though I were to add nothing more, I cannot be pronounced innocent: as to what remains, {’twill add} much to {the gratifying of} my wishes, {but} little to my criminality.”

{Thus} she says; and (so great is the unsteadiness of her wavering mind) though she is loath to try him, she has a wish to try him, and she exceeds {all} bounds, and, to her misery, exposes herself to be often repulsed. At length, when there is {now} no end {to this}, he flies from his country and {the commission of} this crime, and founds a new city[59] in a foreign land. But then, they say that the daughter of Miletus, in her sadness, was bereft of all understanding. Then did she tear her garments away from her breast, and in her frenzy beat her arms. And now she is openly raving, and she proclaims the unlawful hopes of {unnatural} lust. Deprived of these {hopes}, she deserts her native land, and her hated home, and follows the steps of her flying brother. And as the Ismarian[60] Bacchanals, son of Semele, aroused by thy thyrsus, celebrate thy triennial festivals, as they return, no otherwise did the Bubasian matrons[61] see Byblis howling over the wide fields; leaving which, she wandered through {the country of} the Carians, and the warlike Leleges,[62] and Lycia.

And now she has left behind Cragos,[63] and Lymira,[64] and the waves of Xanthus, and the mountain in which the Chimæra had fire in its middle parts, the breast and the face of a lioness, and the tail of a serpent. The woods {at length} fail thee; when thou, Byblis, wearied with following him, dost fall down, and laying thy tresses upon the hard ground, art silent, and dost press the fallen leaves with thy face. Often, too, do the Lelegeïan Nymphs endeavour to raise her in their tender arms; often do they advise her to curb her passion, and they apply consolation to a mind insensible {to their advice}. Silent does Byblis lie, and she tears the green herbs with her nails, and waters the grass with the stream of her tears. They say that the Naiads placed beneath

these {tears} a channel which could never become dry; and what greater gift had they to bestow? Immediately, as drops from the cut bark of the pitch tree, or as the viscid bitumen distils from the impregnated earth, or as water which has frozen with the cold, at the approach of Favonius, gently blowing, melts away in the sun, so is Byblis, the descendant of Phœbus, dissolving in her tears, changed into a fountain, which even now, in those vallies, bears the name of its mistress, and flows beneath a gloomy oak.

[Footnote 46: *Every God has*.--Ver. 425-6. 'Cui studeat, Deus omnis habet crescitque favore Turbida seditio.' Clarke thus renders these words, 'Every God has somebody to stickle for, and a turbulent sedition arises by their favours for their darlings.']

[Footnote 47: *Son of Deione*.--Ver. 442. According to some writers, Miletus was the son of Apollo and Deione, though others say that Thia was the name of his mother. He was the founder of the celebrated city of Miletus, in Caria, a country of Asia Minor.]

[Footnote 48: *Does not think*.--Ver. 457. Clarke translates this line, 'Nor does she think she does amiss that she so often tips him a kiss.' Antoninus Liberalis says, that Eidothea, the daughter of the king of Paria, and not Cyane, was the mother of Byblis and Caunus.]

[Footnote 49: *Sweetheart*.--Ver. 465. The word 'dominus' was often used as a term of endearment between lovers.]

[Footnote 50: *Married Ops*.--Ver. 497. Ops, the daughter of Cœlus or Uranus, who was also called Cybele, Rhea, and 'the great Mother,' was fabled to have been the wife of her brother Saturn; while Oceanus, the son of Cœlus and Vesta, married his sister Tethys.]

[Footnote 51: *Sons of Æolus*.--Ver. 506. Æolus had six sons, to whom he was said to have given their sisters for wives. In the case, however, of his daughter Canace, who was pregnant by her brother Macareus, Æolus was more severe, as he sent her a sword, with which to put herself to death.]

[Footnote 52: *Clean wax tablets*.--Ver. 521. Before the tablet was written upon, the wax was 'vacua,' empty; or, as we say of writing-paper, 'clean.' There was a blunt end to the upper part of the 'stylus,' or iron pen, with which the wax was smoothed down when any writing was erased.]

[Footnote 53: *Without my name*.--Ver. 531-2. 'Sine nomine vellem Posset agi mea causa meo,' is rendered by Clarke, 'I could wish my business might be transacted without my name.']

[Footnote 54: *In the margin*.--Ver. 564. Clarke translates, 'Summusque in margine versus adhæsit,' 'And the last line was clapped into the margin.']

[Footnote 55: *Meandrian youth*.--Ver. 573. Caunus was the grandson of the river Mæander.]

[Footnote 56: *Part of my sail*.--Ver. 589. She borrows this metaphor from sailors, who, before setting out, sometimes unfurl a little portion of the sail, to see how the wind blows.]

[Footnote 57: *Rather of the two*.--Ver. 598. Willing to believe anything in the wrong rather than herself; she is sure that the day was an unlucky one.]

[Footnote 58: *Be attacked*.--Ver. 615. 'Repeteudas erit,' Clarke translates, 'I must at him again.']

[Footnote 59: *Founds a new city*.--Ver. 633. This was Caunus, a city of Caria.]

[Footnote 60: *Ismarian*.--Ver. 641. Ismarus was a mountain of Thrace. The festival here alluded to was the 'trieterica,' or triennial feast of Bacchus.]

[Footnote 61: *Bubasian matrons*.--Ver. 643. We learn from Pliny the Elder that Bubasus was a region of Caria.]

[Footnote 62: *Leleges*.--Ver. 644. The Leleges were a warlike people of Caria, in Asia Minor, who were supposed to have sprung from Grecian emigrants, who first inhabited the adjacent island, and afterwards the continent. They were said to have their name from the Greek word λελεγμένοι 'gathered,' because they were collected from various places.]

[Footnote 63: *Cragos*.--Ver. 645. Cragos was a mountain of Lycia.]

[Footnote 64: *Lymira*.--Ver. 645. This was a city of Lycia, near Cragos.]

## Riley's Explanation

This shocking story has been also recounted by Antoninus Liberalis and both he and Ovid have embellished it with circumstances, which are the fruit of a lively imagination. They make Byblis travel over several countries in search of her brother, who flies from her extravagant passion, and they both agree in tracing her to Caria. There, according to Antoninus Liberalis, she was transformed into a Hamadryad, just as she was on the point of throwing herself from the summit of a mountain. Ovid, on the other hand, says that she was changed into a fountain, which afterwards bore her name.

It is, however, most probable, that if the story is founded on truth, the whole of the circumstances happened in Caria; since we learn, both from Apollodorus and Pausanias, that Miletus, her father, went from the island of Crete to lead a colony into Caria, when he conquered a city, to which he gave his own name. Pausanias says, that all the men of the city being killed during the siege, the conquerors married their wives and daughters. Cyanea, the daughter of

Mæander, fell to the share of Miletus, and Caunus and Byblis were the offspring of that marriage. Byblis, having conceived a criminal passion for her brother, he was obliged to leave his father's court, that he might avoid her importunities; upon which she died of grief. As she often went to weep by a fountain, which was outside of the town, those who related the adventure, magnified it, by stating that she was changed into the fountain, which, after her death, bore her name. We are informed by Photius, on the authority of the historian Conon, that it was Caunus who fell in love with Byblis, and that she hanged herself upon a walnut tree. Ovid also, in his 'Art of Love,' follows the tradition that she hanged herself. 'Arsit et est laqueo fortiter ulta nefas.' Miletus lived in the time of the first Minos, and, according to some writers, married his daughter Acallis; but, having disagreed with his father-in-law, he was obliged to leave Crete, and retired to Caria.

The Persians had certain state ordinances, by which their monarchs were enjoined to marry their own sisters; and, as Asia Minor was overrun by them at the time when Crœsus was conquered by Cyrus, it is possible that the story of Byblis and Caunus may have originated in the disgust which the natives felt for their conquerors, and as a covert reproach to them for sanctioning alliances of so incestuous a nature. While Ovid enters into details in the story, which trench on the rules of modesty and decorum, the moral of the tale, aided by some of his precepts, is not uninstructive as a warning to youth to learn betimes how to regulate the passions.

## Book IX, Fable VI (lines 666–797)

*Ligdus commands his wife Telethusa, who is pregnant, to destroy the infant, should it prove to be a girl; on which, the Goddess Isis appears to her in a dream, and, forbidding her to obey, promises her her protection. Telethusa is delivered of a daughter, who is called Iphis, and passes for a son. Iphis is afterwards married to Ianthe, on which, Isis, to reward her mother's piety, transforms her into a man.*

The fame of this new prodigy would, perhaps, have filled the hundred cities of Crete, if Crete had not lately produced a nearer wonder {of her own}, in the change of Iphis.

For once on a time the Phæstian land[65] adjoining to the Gnossian kingdom produced one Ligdus, of obscure name, a man of the freeborn class of common people. Nor were his means any greater than his rank, but his life and his honour were untainted. He startled the ears of his wife in her pregnancy, with these words, when her lying-in was near at hand: "Two things there are which I wish for; that thou mayst be delivered with very little pain, and that thou mayst bring forth a male child. The other alternative is a cause of greater trouble, and providence has denied us means {for bringing up a female}. The thing I abominate; but if a female should, by chance, be brought forth at thy delivery, (I command it with reluctance, forgive me, natural affection) let it be put to death." {Thus} he said, and they bathed their faces with tears streaming down; both he who commanded, and she to whom the commands were given. But yet Telethusa incessantly urged her husband, with fruitless entreaties, not to confine his hopes within a compass so limited. {But} Ligdus's resolution was fixed.

And now was she hardly {able} to bear her womb big with the burden ripe for birth; when in the middle of the night, under the form of a vision, the daughter of Inachus, attended by a train of her votaries, either stood, or seemed to stand, before her bed. The horns of the moon were upon her forehead, with ears of corn with their bright golden colour, and the royal ornament {of the diadem}; with her was the barking Anubis,[66] and the holy Bubastis,[67] and the particoloured Apis;[68] he, too, who suppresses[69] his voice, and with his finger enjoins silence. There were the sistra too, and Osiris,[70] never enough sought for; and the foreign serpent,[71] filled with soporiferous poison. When thus the Goddess addressed her, as though roused from her sleep, and seeing {all} distinctly: "O Telethusa, one of my votaries, lay aside thy grievous cares, and evade the commands of thy husband; and do not hesitate, when Lucina shall have given thee ease by delivery, to bring up {the child}, whatever it shall be. I am a befriending Goddess,[72] and, when invoked, I give assistance; and thou shalt not complain that thou hast worshipped an ungrateful Divinity."

{Thus} she advises her, and {then} retires from her chamber. The Cretan matron arises joyful from her bed; and suppliantly raising her pure hands towards the stars {of heaven}, prays that her vision may be fulfilled. When her pains increased, and her burden forced itself into the light, and a girl was born to the father unaware of it, the mother ordered it to be brought up, pretending it was a boy; and the thing gained belief, nor was any one but the nurse acquainted with the fact. The father performed his vows, and gave {the child} the name of its grandfather. The grandfather had been called Iphis. The mother rejoiced in that name because it was common {to both sexes}, nor would she be deceiving[73] any one by it. Her deception lay unperceived under this fraud, the result of natural affection. The {child's} dress was that of a boy; the face such, that, whether you gave it to a girl or to a boy, either would be beautiful. In the meantime the third year had {now} succeeded the tenth, when her father, O Iphis, promised to thee, in marriage, the yellow-haired Iänthe, who was a virgin the most commended among all the women of Phæstus, for the endowments of her beauty; the daughter of the Dictæan Telestes. Equal was their age, their beauty equal; and they received their first instruction, the elements {suited} to their age, from the same preceptor.

Love, in consequence, touches the inexperienced breasts of them both, and inflicts on each an equal wound; but {how} different are their hopes! Iänthe awaits the time of their union, and of the ceremonial agreed upon, and believes that she, whom she thinks to be a man, will be {her husband}. Iphis is in love with her whom she despairs to be able to enjoy, and this very thing increases her flame; and, {herself} a maid, she burns with passion for a maid. And, with difficulty, suppressing her tears, she says, "What issue {of my love} awaits me, whom the anxieties unknown to any {before}, and {so} unnatural, of an unheard-of passion, have seized upon? if the Gods would spare me, (they ought to have destroyed me, and if they would not have destroyed me), at least they should have inflicted some natural evil, and {one} common {to the human race}. Passion for a cow does not inflame a cow, nor does that for mares {inflame} the mares. The ram inflames the ewes; its own female follows the buck. And so do birds couple; and among all animals, no female is seized with passion for a female. Would that I did not exist.

"Yet, lest Crete might not be the producer of {all kinds of} prodigies, the daughter of the Sun loved a bull; that is to say, a female {loved} a male. My passion, if I confess the truth, is more extravagant than that. Still she pursued the hopes of enjoyment; still, by a subtle contrivance, and under the form of a cow, did she couple with the bull, and her paramour was one that might be deceived. But though the ingenuity of the whole world were to centre here, though Dædalus himself were to fly back again with his waxen wings, what could he do? Could he, by his skilful arts, make me from a maiden into a youth? or could he transform thee, Iänthe? But why dost thou not fortify thy mind, and recover thyself, Iphis? And why not shake off this passion, void of {all} reason, and senseless {as it is}? Consider what it was thou wast born (unless thou art

deceiving thyself as well), and pursue that which is allowable, and love that which, as a woman, thou oughtst {to love}. Hope it is that produces, Hope it is that nourishes love. This, the {very} case {itself} deprives thee of. No guard is keeping thee away from her dear embrace; no care of a watchful husband, no father's severity; does not she herself deny thy solicitations. And yet she cannot be enjoyed by thee; nor, were everything possible done, couldst thou be blessed; {not}, though Gods and men were to do their utmost. And now, too, no portion of my desires is baffled, and the compliant Deities have granted me whatever they were able, and what I {desire}, my father wishes, she herself wishes, and {so does} my destined father-in-law; but nature, more powerful than all these, wills it not; she alone is an obstacle to me. Lo, the longed-for time approaches, and the wedding-day is at hand, when Iänthe should be mine; and {yet} she will not fall to my lot. In the midst of water, I shall be athirst. Why, Juno, guardian of the marriage rites, and why, Hymenæus, do you come to this ceremonial, where there is not the person who should marry {the wife}, {and} where both {of us females}, we are coupled in wedlock?"

After {saying} these words, she closes her lips. And no less does the other maid burn, and she prays thee, Hymenæus, to come quickly. Telethusa, dreading the same thing that she desires, at one time puts off the time {of the wedding}, and then raises delays, by feigning illness. Often, by way of excuse, she pretends omens and visions. But now she has exhausted all the resources of fiction; and the time for the marriage {so long} delayed is {now} at hand, and {only} one day remains; whereon she takes off the fillets for the hair from her own head and from that of her daughter,[74] and embracing the altar with dishevelled locks, she says, "O Isis, thou who dost inhabit Parætonium,[75] and the Mareotic fields,[76] and Pharos,[77] and the Nile divided into its seven horns, give aid, I beseech thee, and ease me of my fears. Thee, Goddess, thee, I once beheld, and these thy symbols; and all {of them} I recognized; both thy attendants, and thy torches, and the sound of the sistra, and I noted thy commands with mindful care. That this {girl}[78] {now} sees the light, that I, myself, am not punished, is {the result of} thy counsel, and thy admonition; pity us both, and aid us with thy assistance."

Tears followed her words. The Goddess seemed to move, (and she {really} did move) her altars; and the doors of her temple shook. Her horns, too,[79] shone, resembling {those of} the moon, and the tinkling sistrum sounded. The mother departs from the temple, not free from concern indeed, still pleased with this auspicious omen. Iphis follows her, her companion as she goes, with longer strides than she had been wont; her fairness does not continue on her face; both her strength is increased, and her features are more stern; and shorter is the length of her scattered locks. There is more vigour, also, than she had {as} a female. {And} now thou art a male, who so lately wast a female. Bring offerings to the temple, and rejoice with no hesitating confidence. They do bring their offerings to the temple. They add, too, an inscription; the inscription contains {one} short line: "Iphis, a male, offers the presents, which, as a female, he had vowed."

The following morn has disclosed the wide world with the rays {of the Sun}; when Venus, and Juno, and Hymenæus, repair to the social fires[80]; and Iphis, {now} a youth, gains his {dear} Iänthe.

[Footnote 65: *Phæstian land*.--Ver. 668. Phæstus was a city of Crete, built by Minos.]

[Footnote 66: *Anubis*.--Ver. 689. This was an Egyptian Deity, which had the body of a man, and the head of a dog. Some writers say that it was Mercury who was so represented, and that this form was given him in remembrance of the fact of Isis having used dogs in her search for Osiris, when he was slain by his brother Typhon. Other authors say, that Anubis was the son of Osiris, and that he distinguished himself with an helmet, bearing the figure of a dog, when he followed his father to battle.]

[Footnote 67: *Bubastis*.--Ver. 690. Though she is here an attendant of Isis, Diodorus Siculus represents her to have been the same divinity as Isis. Herodotus, however, says that Diana was worshipped by the Egyptians under that name. There was a city of Lower Egypt, called Bubastis, in which Isis was greatly venerated.]

[Footnote 68: *Apis*.--Ver. 690. This is supposed to have been another name for Osiris, whose body, having been burned on the funeral pile, the Egyptians believed that he re-appeared under the form of a bull; the name for which animal was ‘apis.’]

[Footnote 69: *Who suppresses*.--Ver. 691. This was the Egyptian divinity Harpocrates, the God of Secresy and Silence, who was represented with his finger laid on his lips.]

[Footnote 70: *Osiris*.--Ver. 692. When slain by his brother Typhon, Isis long sought him in vain, till, finding his scattered limbs by the aid of dogs, she entombed them. As the Egyptians had a yearly festival, at which they bewailed the loss of Osiris, and feigned that they were seeking him, Ovid calls that God, ‘Nunquam satis quæsitus,’ ‘Never enough sought for.’]

[Footnote 71: *Foreign serpent*.--Ver. 693. This is, most probably, the asp, a small serpent of Egypt, which is frequently found represented on the statues of Isis. Its bite was said to produce a lethargic sleep, ending in death. Cleopatra ended her life by the bite of one, which she ordered to be conveyed to her in a basket of fruit. Some commentators have supposed that the crocodile is here alluded to; but, as others have justly observed, the crocodile has no poisonous sting, but rather a capacity for devouring.]

[Footnote 72: *A befriending Goddess*.--Ver. 698. Diodorus Siculus says, that Isis was the discoverer of numerous remedies for disease, and that she greatly improved the healing art.]

[Footnote 73: *Be deceiving*.--Ver. 709. The name ‘Iphis’ being equally well for a male or a female.]

[Footnote 74: *Of her daughter*.--Ver. 770. We must suppose that Iphis wore the ‘vitta,’ which was an article of female dress, in private only, and in presence of her mother. Of course, in public, such an ornament would not have suited her, when appearing in the character of a man.]

[Footnote 75: *Parætonium*.--Ver. 772. Strabo says, that Parætonium was a city of Libya, with a capacious harbour.]

[Footnote 76: *Mareotic fields*.--Ver. 772. The Mareotic Lake was in the neighbourhood of the city of Alexandria.]

[Footnote 77: *Pharos*.--Ver. 772. This was an island opposite to Alexandria, famed for its light-house, which was erected to warn sailors from off the dangerous quicksands in the neighbourhood.]

[Footnote 78: *This girl*.--Ver. 778. Pointing at Iphis, who had attended her, Antoninus Liberalis says, that Telethusa prayed that Iphis might be transformed into a man, and cited a number of precedents for such a change.]

[Footnote 79: *Her horns too*.--Ver. 783. Isis was sometimes worshipped under the form of a cow, to the horns of which reference is here made.]

[Footnote 80: *The social fires*.--Ver. 795. On the occasion of marriages, offerings were made on the altars of Hymenæus and the other Deities, who were the guardians of conjugal rites.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The story of Iphis being changed from a young woman into a man, of which Ovid lays the scene in the isle of Crete, is one of those facts upon which ancient history is entirely silent. Perhaps, the origin of the story was a disguise of a damsel in male dress, carried on, for family reasons, even to the very point of marriage; or it may have been based upon an account of some remarkable instance of androgynous formation.

Ovid may possibly have invented the story himself, merely as a vehicle for showing how the Deities recompense piety and strict obedience to their injunctions.

## Book X, Fable I (lines 1–85)

*Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus, while sporting in the fields, with other Nymphs, is bitten by a serpent, which causes her death. After having mourned for her, Orpheus resolves to go down to the Infernal Regions in quest of her. Pluto and the Fates consent to her return, on condition that Orpheus shall not look on her till he is out of their dominions. His curiosity prevailing, he neglects this injunction, on which she is immediately snatched away from him, beyond the possibility of recovery. Upon this occasion, the Poet relates the story of a shepherd, who was turned into a rock by a look of Cerberus; and that of Olenus and Lethæa, who were transformed into stones.*

Thence Hymenæus, clad in a saffron-coloured[1] robe, passed through the unmeasured tract of air, and directed his course to the regions of the Ciconians[2], and, in vain, was invoked by the voice of Orpheus. He presented himself indeed, but he brought with him neither auspicious words, nor joyful looks, nor {yet} a happy omen. The torch, too, which he held, was hissing with a smoke that brought tears to the eyes, and as it was, it found no flames amid its waving. The issue was more disastrous than the omens; for the newmade bride, while she was strolling along the grass, attended by a train of Naiads, was killed, having received the sting of a serpent on her ancle.

After the Rhodopeïan bard had sufficiently bewailed her in the upper {realms of} air, that he might try the shades below as well, he dared to descend to Styx by the Tænarian gate, and amid the phantom inhabitants and ghosts that had enjoyed the tomb, he went to Persephone, and him that held these unpleasing realms, the Ruler of the shades; and touching his strings in concert with his words, he thus said, “O ye Deities of the world that lies beneath the earth, to which we {all} come {at last}, each that is born to mortality; if I may be allowed, and you suffer me to speak the truth, laying aside[3] the artful expressions of a deceitful tongue; I have not descended hither {from curiosity} to see dark Tartarus, nor to bind the threefold throat of the Medusæan monster, bristling with serpents. {But} my wife was the cause of my coming; into whom a serpent, trodden upon {by her}, diffused its poison, and cut short her growing years. I was wishful to be able to endure {this}, and I will not deny that I have endeavoured {to do so}. Love has proved the stronger. That God is well known in the regions above. Whether he be so here, too, I am uncertain; but yet I imagine that even here he is; and if the story of the rape of former days is not untrue, ’twas love that united you {two} together. By these places filled with horrors, by this vast Chaos, and by the silence of these boundless realms, I entreat you, weave over again the quick-spun thread {of the life} of Eurydice.

“To you we all belong; and having staid but a little while {above}, sooner or later we {all} hasten to one abode. Hither are we all hastening. This is our last home; and you possess the most lasting dominion over the human race. She, too, when, in due season she shall have completed her allotted {number of} years, will be under your sway. The enjoyment {of her} I beg as a favour. But if the Fates deny me this privilege in behalf of my wife, I have determined that I will not return. Triumph in the death of us both.”

As he said such things, and touched the strings to his words, the bloodless spirits wept. Tantalus did not catch at the retreating water, and the wheel of Ixion stood still, {as though} in amazement; the birds did not tear the liver {of Tityus}; and the granddaughters of Belus paused at their urns; thou, too, Sisyphus, didst seat thyself on thy stone. The story is, that then, for the first time, the cheeks of the Eumenides, overcome by his music, were wet with tears; nor could the royal consort, nor he who rules the infernal regions, endure to deny him his request; and they called for Eurydice. She was among the shades newly arrived, and she advanced with a slow pace, by reason of her wound.

The Rhodopeïan hero receives her, and, at the same time, {this} condition, that he turn not back his eyes until he has passed the Avernian vallies, or else that the grant will be revoked. The ascending path is mounted in deep silence, steep, dark, and enveloped in deepening gloom. And {now} they were not far from the verge of the upper earth. He, enamoured, fearing lest she should flag, and impatient to behold her, turned his eyes; and immediately she sank back again. She, hapless one! both stretching out her arms, and struggling to be grasped, and to grasp him, caught nothing but the fleeting air. And now, dying a second time, she did not at all complain of her husband; for why should she complain of being beloved? And now she pronounced the last farewell, which scarcely did he catch with his ears; and again was she hurried back to the same place.

No otherwise was Orpheus amazed at this twofold death of his wife, than he who, trembling, beheld the three necks[4] of the dog, the middle one supporting chains; whom fear did not forsake, before his former nature {deserted him}, as stone gathered over his body: and {than} Olenus,[5] who took on himself the crime {of another}, and was willing to appear guilty; and {than} thou, unhappy Lethæa, confiding in thy beauty; breasts, once most united, now rocks, which the watery Ida supports. The ferryman drove him away entreating, and, in vain, desiring again to cross {the stream}. Still, for seven days, in squalid guise[6] did he sit on the banks without the gifts of Ceres. Vexation, and sorrow of mind, and tears were his sustenance. Complaining that the Deities of Erebus[7] were cruel, he betook himself to lofty Rhodope, and Hæmus,[8] buffeted by the North winds. The third Titan had {now} ended the year bounded by the Fishes of the ocean;[9] and Orpheus had avoided all intercourse with woman, either because it had ended in misfortune to him, or because he had given a promise {to that effect}. Yet a

passion possessed many a female to unite herself to the bard, {and} many a one grieved when repulsed. He also was the {first} adviser of the people of Thrace to transfer their affections to tender youths; and, on this side of manhood, to enjoy the short spring of life, and its early flowers.

[Footnote 1: *Saffron-coloured*.--Ver. 1. This was in order to be dressed in a colour similar to that of the 'flammeum,' which was a veil of a bright yellow colour, worn by the bride. This custom prevailed among the Romans, among whom the shoes worn by the bride were of the same colour with the veil.]

[Footnote 2: *Ciconians*.--Ver. 2. These were a people of Thrace, near the river Hebrus and the Bistonian Lake.]

[Footnote 3: *Laying aside*.--Ver. 19. 'Falsi positis ambagibus oris,' is rendered by Clarke, 'Laying aside all the long-winded fetches of a false tongue.']

[Footnote 4: *The three necks*.--Ver. 65. There was a story among the ancients, that when Cerberus was dragged by Hercules from the Infernal Regions, a certain man, through fear of Hercules, hid himself in a cave; and that on peeping out, and beholding Cerberus, he was changed into a stone by his fright. Suidas says, that in his time the stone was still to be seen, and that the story gave rise to a proverb.]

[Footnote 5: *Olenus*.--Ver. 69. Olenus, who was supposed to be the son of Vulcan, had a beautiful wife, whose name was Lethæa. When about to be punished for comparing her own beauty to that of the Goddesses, Olenus offered to submit to the penalty in her stead, on which they were both changed into stones.]

[Footnote 6: *In squalid guise*.--Ver. 74. 'Squallidus in ripa--sedit,' is rendered by Clarke, 'He sat in a sorry pickle on the bank.']

[Footnote 7: *Erebus*.--Ver. 76. Erebus was the son of Chaos and Darkness; but his name is often used to signify the Infernal Regions.]

[Footnote 8: *Hæmus*.--Ver. 77. This was a mountain of Thrace, which was much exposed to the North winds.]

[Footnote 9: *Fishes of the ocean*.--Ver. 78. 'Pisces,' 'the Fishes,' being the last sign of the Zodiac, when the sun has passed through it, the year is completed.]

## Riley's Explanation

Though Ovid has separated the adventures of Orpheus, whose death he does not relate till the beginning of the eleventh Book, we will here shortly enter upon an examination of some of the more important points of his history.

As, in his time, Poetry and Music were in a very low state of perfection, and as he excelled in both of those arts, it was said that he was the son of Apollo and the Muse Calliope; and it was added, that he charmed lions and tigers, and made even the trees sensible of the melodious tones of his lyre. These were mere hyperbolical expressions, which signified the wondrous charms of his eloquence and of his music combined, which he employed in cultivating the genius of a savage and uncouth people. Some conjecture that this personage originally came from Asia into Thrace, and suppose that he, together with Linus and Eumolpus, brought poetry and music into Greece, the use of which, till then, was unknown in that country; and that they introduced, at the same time, the worship of Ceres, Mars, and the orgies of Bacchus, which, from him who instituted them, received their name of 'Orphica.' Orpheus, too, is supposed to have united the office of high priest with that of king. Horace styles him the interpreter of the Gods; and he was said to have interposed with the Deities for the deliverance of the Argonauts from a dangerous tempest. It is thought that he passed some part of his life in Egypt, and became acquainted with many particulars of the ancient religion of the Egyptians, which he introduced into the theology of Greece. Some modern writers even go so far as to suggest that he learned from the Hebrews, who were then sojourning in Egypt, the knowledge of the true God.

His wife, Eurydice, dying very young, he was inconsolable for her loss. To alleviate his grief, he went to Thesprotia, in Epirus, the natives of which region were said to possess incantations, for the purpose of raising the ghosts of the departed. Here, according to some accounts, being deceived by a phantom, which was made to appear before him, he died of sorrow; but, according to other writers, he renounced the society of mankind for ever and retired to the mountains of Thrace. His journey to that distant country gave occasion to say, that he descended to the Infernal Regions. This is the more likely, as he is supposed to have there promulgated his notions of the infernal world, which, according to Diodorus Siculus, he had learned among the Egyptians.

Tzetzes, however, assures us that this part of his history is founded on the circumstance, that Orpheus cured his wife of the bite of a serpent, which had till then been considered to be mortal; and that the poets gave an hyperbolical version of the story, in saying that he had rescued her from Hell. He says, too, that he had learned in Egypt the art of magic, which was much cultivated there, and especially the method of charming serpents.

After the loss of his wife, he retired to mount Rhodope, to assuage the violence of his grief. There, according to Ovid and other poets, the Mænades, or Bacchanals, to be revenged for his contempt of them and their rites, tore him in pieces; which story is somewhat diversified by the writers who relate that Venus, exasperated against Calliope, the mother of Orpheus, for having adjudged to Proserpine the possession of Adonis, caused the women of Thrace to become enamoured of her son, and to tear him in pieces while disputing the possession of him. An ancient author, quoted by Hyginus, says that Orpheus was killed by the stroke of a thunderbolt, while he was accompanying the Argonauts; and Apollodorus says the same. Diodorus Siculus calls him one of the kings of Thrace; while other writers, among whom are Cicero and Aristotle, assert that there never was such a person as Orpheus. The learned Vossius says, that the Phœnician word 'ariph,' which signifies 'learned,' gave rise to the story of Orpheus. Le Clerc thinks that in consequence of the same Greek word signifying 'an enchanter,' and also meaning 'a singer,' he acquired the reputation of having been a most skilful magician.

We may, perhaps, safely conclude, that Orpheus really did introduce the worship of many Gods into Greece; and that, possibly, while he promulgated the necessity of expiating crimes, he introduced exorcism, and brought magic into fashion in Greece. Lucian affirms that he was also the first to teach the elements of astronomy. Several works were attributed to him, which are now no longer in existence; among which were a Poem on the Expedition of the Argonauts, one on the War of the Giants, another on the Rape of Proserpine, and a fourth upon the Labours of Hercules. The Poem on the Argonautic Expedition, which now exists, and is attributed to him, is supposed to have been really written by a poet named Onomacritus, who lived in the sixth century B.C., in the time of Pisistratus.

After his death, Orpheus was reckoned in the number of Heroes or Demigods; and we are informed by Philostratus that his head was preserved at Lesbos, where it gave oracular responses. Orpheus is not mentioned by Homer or Hesiod. The learned scholar Lobeck, in his Aglaophamus, has entered very deeply into an investigation of the real nature of the discoveries and institutions ascribed to him.

## Book X, Fable II (lines 86–105)

*Orpheus, retiring to Mount Rhodope, by the charms of his music, attracts to himself all kinds of creatures, rocks, and trees; among the latter is the pine tree, only known since the transformation of Attis.*

There was a hill, and upon the hill a most level space of a plain, which the blades of grass made green: {all} shade was wanting in the spot. After the bard, sprung from the Gods, had seated himself in this place, and touched his tuneful strings, a shade came over the spot. The tree of Chaonia[10] was not absent, nor the grove of the Heliades,[11] nor the mast-tree with its lofty branches, nor the tender lime-trees, nor yet the beech, and the virgin laurel,[12] and the brittle hazels, and the oak, adapted for making spears, and the fir without knots, and the holm bending beneath its acorns, and the genial plane-tree,[13] and the parti-coloured maple,[14] and, together with them, the willows growing by the rivers, and the watery lotus, and the evergreen box, and the slender tamarisks, and the two-coloured myrtle, and the tine-tree,[15] with its azure berries.

You, too, the ivy-trees, with your creeping tendrils, came, and together, the branching vines, and the elms clothed with vines; the ashes, too, and the pitch-trees, and the arbute, laden with its blushing fruit, and the bending palm,[16] the reward of the conqueror; the pine, too, with its tufted foliage,[17] and bristling at the top, pleasing to the Mother of the Gods; since for this the Cybeleïan Attis put off the human form, and hardened into that trunk.

[Footnote 10: *Tree of Chaonia*.--Ver. 90. This was the oak, for the growth of which Chaonia, a province of Epirus, was famous.]

[Footnote 11: *Grove of the Heliades*.--Ver. 91. He alludes to the poplars, into which tree, as we have already seen, the Heliades, or daughters of the sun, were changed after the death of Phaëton.]

[Footnote 12: *Virgin laurel*.--Ver. 92. The laurel is so styled from the Virgin Daphne, who refused to listen to the solicitations of Apollo.]

[Footnote 13: *Genial plane-tree*.--Ver. 95. The plane tree was much valued by the ancients, as affording, by its extending branches, a pleasant shade to festive parties. Virgil says, in the Fourth Book of the Georgics, line 146, 'Atque ministrantem platanum potantibus umbram,' 'And the plane-tree that gives its shade for those that carouse.']

[Footnote 14: *Parti-coloured maple*.--Ver. 95. The grain of the maple being of a varying colour, it was much valued by the ancients, for the purpose of making articles of furniture.]

[Footnote 15: *The tine tree*.--Ver. 98. The 'tinus,' or 'tine tree,' according to Pliny the Elder, was a wild laurel, with green berries.]

[Footnote 16: *The bending palm*.--Ver. 102. The branches of the palm were remarkable for their flexibility, while no superincumbent weight could break them. On this account they were considered as emblematical of victory.]

[Footnote 17: *Tufted foliage*.--Ver. 103. The pine is called 'succincta,' because it sends forth its branches from the top, and not from the sides.]

### Riley's Explanation

The story of Attis, or Athis, here briefly referred to, is related by the ancient writers in many different ways; so much so, that it is not possible to reconcile the discrepancy that exists between them. From Diodorus Siculus we learn that Cybele, the daughter of Mæon, King of Phrygia, falling in love with a young shepherd named Attis, her father ordered him to be put to death. In despair, at the loss of her lover, Cybele left her father's abode, and, accompanied by Marsyas, crossed the mountains of Phrygia. Apollo, (or, as Vossius supposes, some priest of that God,) touched with the misfortunes of the damsel, took her to the country of the Hyperboreans in Scythia, where she died. Some time after, the plague ravaging Phrygia, and the oracle being consulted, an answer was returned, that, to ensure the ceasing of the contagion, they must look for the body of Attis, and give it funeral rites, and render to Cybele the same honour which they were wont to pay to the Gods: all which was done with such scrupulous care, that in time she became one of the most esteemed Divinities.

Arnobius, says that Attis was a shepherd, with whom Cybele fell in love in her old age. Unmoved by her rank, and repelled by her faded charms, he despised her advances. Midas, King of Pessinus, on seeing this, destined his own daughter, Agdistis, for the young Attis. Fearing the resentment of Cybele, he caused the gates of the city to be shut on the day on which the marriage was to be solemnized. Cybele being informed of this, hastened to Pessinus, and, destroying the gates, met with Attis, who had concealed himself behind a pine tree, and caused him to be emasculated; on which Agdistis committed self-destruction in a fit of sorrow.

Servius, Lactantius, and St. Augustine, give another version of the story, which it is not necessary here to enlarge upon, any farther than to say, that it depicts the love of a powerful queen for a young man who repulsed her advances. Ovid, also, gives a similar account in the fourth Book of the Fasti, line 220. Other authors, quoted by Arnobius, have given some

additional circumstances, the origin of which it is almost impossible to guess at. They say that a female called Nana, by touching a pomegranate or an almond tree, which grew from the blood of Agdistis whom Bacchus had slain, conceived Attis, who afterwards became very dear to Cybele.

All that we can conclude from these accounts, and more especially from that given by Ovid in the Fasti, is, that the worship of Cybele being established in Phrygia, Attis was one of her priests; and that, as he led the example of mutilating himself, all her other priests, who were called Galli, submitted to a similar operation, to the great surprise of the uninitiated, who were not slow in inventing some wonderful story to account for an act so extraordinary.

## Book X, Fable III (lines 106–142)

*Cyparissus is about to kill himself for having slain, by accident, a favourite deer; but, before he is able to execute his design, Apollo transforms him into a Cypress.*

Amid this throng was present the cypress, resembling the cone,[18] now a tree, {but} once a youth, beloved by that God who fits the lyre with the strings, and the bow with strings. For there was a large stag, sacred to the Nymphs who inhabit the Carthæan fields; and, with his horns extending afar, he himself afforded an ample shade to his own head. His horns were shining with gold, and a necklace studded with gems,[19] falling upon his shoulders, hung down from his smooth round neck; a silver ball,[20] fastened with little straps, played upon his forehead; and pendants of brass,[21] of equal size, shone on either ear around his hollow temples. He, too, void of fear, and laying aside his natural timorousness, used to frequent the houses, and to offer his neck to be patted by any hands, even though unknown {to him}.

But yet, above all others, he was pleasing to thee, Cyparissus, most beauteous of the nation of Cea.[22] Thou wast wont to lead the stag to new pastures, and to the streams of running waters; sometimes thou didst wreathe flowers of various colours about his horns, and at other times, seated on his back, {like} a horseman, {first} in this direction and {then} in that, thou didst guide his easy mouth with the purple bridle. 'Twas summer and the middle of the day, and the bending arms of the Crab, that loves the sea-shore, were glowing with the heat of the sun; the stag, fatigued, was reclining his body on the grassy earth, and was enjoying the coolness from the shade of a tree. By inadvertence the boy Cyparissus pierced him with a sharp javelin; and, when he saw him dying from the cruel wound, he resolved to attempt to die {as well}. What consolations did not Phœbus apply? and he advised him to grieve with moderation, and according to the occasion. Still did he lament, and as a last favour, he requested this of the Gods above, that he might mourn for ever. And now, his blood quite exhausted by incessant weeping, his limbs began to be changed into a green colour, and the hair, which but lately hung from his snow-white forehead, to become a rough bush, and, a stiffness being assumed, to point to the starry heavens with a tapering top. The God {Phœbus} lamented deeply, and in his sorrow he said, "Thou shalt be mourned by me, and shalt mourn for others, and shalt {ever} attend upon those who are sorrowing[23] {for the dead}."

[Footnote 18: *Resembling the cone.*--Ver. 106. In the Roman Circus for the chariot races, a low wall ran lengthways down the course, which, from its resemblance in position to the spinal bone, was called by the name of 'spina.' At each extremity of this 'spina,' there were placed upon a base, three large cones, or pyramids of wood, in shape very much like cypress trees, to which fact allusion is here made. They were called 'metæ,' 'goals.']

[Footnote 19: *Studded with gems*.--Ver. 113. Necklaces were much worn in ancient times by the Indians, Persians, and Egyptians. They were more especially used by the Greek and Roman females as bridal ornaments. The 'monile baccatum,' or 'bead necklace,' was the most common, being made of berries, glass, or other materials, strung together. They were so strung with thread, silk, or wire, and links of gold. Emeralds seem to have been much used for this purpose, and amber was also similarly employed. Thus Ovid says, in the second Book of the Metamorphoses, line 366, that the amber distilled from the trees, into which the sisters of Phaëton were changed, was sent to be worn by the Latian matrons. Horses and favourite animals, as in the present instance, were decked with 'monilia,' or necklaces.]

[Footnote 20: *A silver ball*.--Ver. 114. The 'bulla' was a ball of metal, so called from its resemblance in shape to a bubble of water. These were especially worn by the Roman children, suspended from the neck, and were mostly made of thin plates of gold, being of about the size of a walnut. The use of these ornaments was derived from the people of Etruria; and though originally worn only by the children of the Patricians, they were subsequently used by all of free birth. The children of the Libertini, or 'freedmen,' indeed wore 'bullæ,' but they were only made of leather. The 'bulla' was laid aside at the same time as the 'toga prætexta,' and was on that occasion consecrated to the Lares. The bulls of the Popes of Rome, received their names from this word; the ornament which was pendent from the rescript or decree being used to signify the document itself.]

[Footnote 21: *Pendants of brass*.--Ver. 116. The ear-ring was called among the Greeks ἐνώτιον, and by the Romans 'inauris.' The Greeks also called it ἐλλόβιον, from its being inserted in the lobe of the ear. Earrings were worn by both sexes among the Lydians, Persians, Libyans, Carthaginians, and other nations. Among the Greeks and Romans, the females alone were in the habit of wearing them. As with us, the ear-ring consisted of a ring and drop, the ring being generally of gold, though bronze was sometimes used by the common people. Pearls, especially those of elongated form, which were called 'elenchi,' were very much valued for pendants.]

[Footnote 22: *Nation of Cea*.--Ver. 120. Cea was one of the Cyclades, and Carthæa was one of its four cities.]

[Footnote 23: *Who are sorrowing*.--Ver. 142. The Poet in this manner accounts for the Roman custom of placing branches of Cypress before the doors of houses in which a dead body lay. Pliny the Elder says, that the Cypress was sacred to Pluto, and that for that reason it was used at funerals, and was placed upon the pile. Varro says, that it was used for the purpose of removing, by its own strong scent, the bad smell of the spot where the bodies were burnt, and also of the bodies themselves. It was also said to be so used, because, when once its bark is cut, it withers, and is consequently emblematical of the frail tenure of human life.]

## Riley's Explanation

Cyparissus, who, according to Ovid was born at Carthæa, a town in the isle of Cea, was probably a youth of considerable poetical talent and proficiency in the polite arts, which caused him to be deemed the favourite of Apollo. His transformation into a Cypress is founded on the resemblance between their names, that tree being called by the Greeks κυπάρισσος. The conclusion of the story is that Apollo, to console himself, enjoined that the Cypress tree should be the symbol of sorrow, or in other words that it should be used at funerals and be planted near graves and sepulchres; which fiction was most likely founded on the fact, that the tree was employed for those purposes; perhaps because its branches, almost destitute of leaves, have a somewhat melancholy aspect.

Some ancient writers also tell us that Cyparissus was a youth beloved by the God Sylvanus, for which reason that God is often represented with branches of Cypress in his hand.

## Book X, Fable IV (lines 143–161)

*Jupiter, charmed with the beauty of the youth Ganymede, transforms himself into an Eagle, for the purpose of carrying him off. He is taken up into Heaven, and is made the Cup-bearer of the Divinities.*

Such a grove {of trees} had the bard attracted {round him}, and he sat in the midst of an assembly of wild beasts, and of a multitude of birds. When he had sufficiently tried the strings struck with his thumb, and perceived that the various tones, though they gave different sounds, {still} harmonize, in this song he raised his voice: “Begin, my parent Muse, my song from Jove, all things submit to the sway of Jove. By me, often before has the power of Jove been sung. In loftier strains have I sung of the Giants, and the victorious thunderbolts scattered over the Phlegræan plains.[24] Now is there occasion for a softer lyre; and let us sing of youths beloved by the Gods above, and of girls surprised by unlawful flames, who, by their wanton desires, have been deserving of punishment.

“The king of the Gods above was once inflamed with a passion for Ganymede, and something was found that Jupiter preferred to be, rather than what he was. Yet into no bird does he vouchsafe to be transformed, but that which can carry his bolts.[25] And no delay {is there}. Striking the air with his fictitious wings, he carries off the youth of Ilium; who even now mingles his cups {for him}, and, much against the will of Juno, serves nectar to Jove.”

[Footnote 24: *Phlegræan plains*.--Ver. 151. Some authors place the Phlegræan {plains} near Cumæ, in Italy, and say that in a spot near there, much impregnated with sulphur, Jupiter, aided by Hercules and the other Deities, conquered the Giants with his lightnings. Others say that their locality was in that part of Macedonia which was afterwards called Pallene; others again, in Thessaly, or Thrace.]

[Footnote 25: *Carry his bolts*.--Ver. 158. The eagle was feigned to be the attendant bird of Jove, among other reasons, because it was supposed to fly higher than any other bird, to be able to fix its gaze on the sun without being dazzled, and never to receive injury from lightning. It was also said to have been the armour-bearer of Jupiter in his wars against the Titans, and to have carried his thunderbolts.]

### Riley’s Explanation

The rape of Ganymede is probably based upon an actual occurrence, which may be thus explained. Tros, the king of Troy, having conquered several of his neighbours, as Eusebius, Cedrenus, and Suidas relate, sent his son Ganymede into Lydia, accompanied by several of the

nobles of his court, to offer sacrifice in the temple dedicated to Jupiter; Tantalus, the king of that country, who was ignorant of the designs of the Trojan king, took his people for spies, and put Ganymede in prison. He having been arrested in a temple of Jupiter, by order of a prince, whose ensign was an eagle, it gave occasion for the report that he had been carried off by Jupiter in the shape of an eagle.

The reason why Jupiter is said to have made Ganymede his cup-bearer is difficult to conjecture, unless we suppose that he had served his father, in that employment at the Trojan court. The poets say that he was placed by the Gods among the Constellations, where he shines as Aquarius, or the Water-bearer.

The capture of Ganymede occasioned a protracted and bloody war between Tros and Tantalus; and after their death, Ilus, the son of Tros, continued it against Pelops, the son of Tantalus, and obliged him to quit his kingdom and retire to the court of Œnomaüs, king of Pisa, whose daughter he married, and by her had a son named Atreus, who was the father of Agamemnon and Menelaüs. Thus we see that probably Paris, the great grandson of Tros, carried off Helen, as a reprisal on Menelaüs, the great grandson of Tantalus, the persecutor of Ganymede. Agamemnon did not fail to turn this fact to his own advantage, by putting the Greeks in mind of the evils which his family had suffered from the kings of Troy.

## Book X, Fable V (lines 162–219)

*As Apollo is playing at quoits with the youth Hyacinthus, one of them, thrown by the Divinity, rebounds from the earth, and striking Hyacinthus on the head, kills him. From his blood springs up the flower which still bears his name.*

“Phœbus would have placed thee too, descendant of Amycla,[26] in the heavens, if the stern Fates had given him time to place thee there. Still, so far as is possible, thou art immortal; and as oft as the spring drives away the winter, and the Ram succeeds the watery Fish, so often dost thou spring up and blossom upon the green turf. Thee, beyond {all} others, did my father love, and Delphi, situate in the middle[27] of the earth, was without its guardian {Deity}, while the God was frequenting the Eurotas, and the unfortified Sparta;[28] and neither his lyre nor his arrows were {held} in esteem {by him}.

“Unmindful of his own dignity, he did not refuse to carry the nets, or to hold the dogs, or to go, as his companion, over the ridges of the rugged mountains; and by lengthened intimacy he augmented his flame. And now Titan was almost in his mid course between the approaching and the past night, and was at an equal distance from them both; {when} they stripped their bodies of their garments, and shone with the juice of the oily olive, and engaged in the game of the broad quoit.[29] First, Phœbus tossed it, well poised, into the airy breeze, and clove the opposite clouds with its weight. After a long pause, the heavy mass fell on the hard ground, and showed skill united with strength. Immediately the Tænarian youth,[30] in his thoughtlessness, and urged on by eagerness for the sport, hastened to take up the circlet; but the hard ground sent it back into the air with a rebound against thy face, Hyacinthus.

“Equally as pale as the youth does the Divinity himself turn; and he bears up thy sinking limbs; and at one moment he cherishes thee, at another, he stanches thy sad wound; {and} now he stops the fleeting life by the application of herbs. His skill is of no avail. The wound is incurable. As if, in a well-watered garden, any one should break down violets, or poppies, and lilies, as they adhere to their yellow stalks; drooping, they would suddenly hang down their languid heads, and could not support themselves; and would look towards the ground with their tops. So sink his dying features; and, forsaken by its vigour, the neck is a burden to itself, and reclines upon the shoulder. ‘Son of Œbalus,’ says Phœbus, ‘thou fallest, deprived of thy early youth; and I look on thy wound as my own condemnation. Thou art {the object of} my grief, and {the cause of} my crime. With thy death is my right hand to be charged; I am the author of thy destruction. Yet what is my fault? unless to engage in sport can be termed a fault; unless it can be called a fault, too, to have loved thee. And oh! that I could give my life for thee, or together with thee; but since I am restrained by the decrees of destiny, thou shalt ever be with me, and shalt dwell on my

mindful lips. The lyre struck with my hand, my songs, too, shall celebrate thee; and, {becoming} a new flower, by the inscription {on thee}, thou shalt imitate[31] my lamentations. The time, too, shall come, at which a most valiant hero[32] shall add his {name} to this flower, and it shall be read upon the same leaves.'

"While such things are being uttered by the prophetic lips of Apollo, behold! the blood which, poured on the ground, has stained the grass, ceases to be blood, and a flower springs up, more bright than the Tyrian purple, and it assumes the appearance which lilies {have}, were there not in this a purple hue, {and} in them that of silver. This was not enough for Phœbus, for 'twas he that was the author of this honour. He himself inscribed his own lamentations on the leaves, and the flower has 'ai, ai,' inscribed {thereon}; and the mournful characters[33] {there} are traced. Nor is Sparta ashamed to have given birth to Hyacinthus; and his honours continue to the present time; the Hyacinthian festival[34] returns, too, each year, to be celebrated with the prescribed ceremonials, after the manner of former {celebrations}."

[Footnote 26: *Descendant of Amycla*.--Ver. 162. Hyacinthus is here called Amyclides, as though being the son of Amycla, whereas, in line 196 he is called 'Œbalides,' as though the son of Œbalus. Pausamas and Apollodorus (in one instance) say that he was the son of Amycla, the Lacedæmonian, who founded the city of Amyclæ; though, in another place, Apollodorus says that Piërus was his father. On the other hand, Hyginus, Lucian, and Servius say that he was the son of Œbalus. Some explain 'Amyclide,' as meaning 'born at Amyclæ;' and, indeed, Claudian says that he was born there. Others, again, would have Œbalide to signify 'born at Œbalia.' But, if he was the son of Amycla, this could not be the signification, as Œbalia was founded by Œbalus, who was the grandson of Amycla. The poet, most probably, meant to style him the descendant of Amycla, as being his great grandson, and the son of Œbalus. Again, in the 217th line of this Book, the Poet says that he was born at Sparta; but, in the fifth Book of the Fasti, line 223, he mentions Therapnæ, a town of Laconia, as having been his birthplace. Perizonius thinks that Ovid has here inadvertently confounded the different versions of the story of Hyacinthus.]

[Footnote 27: *In the middle*.--Ver. 168. Delphi, situated on a ridge of Parnassus, was styled the navel of the world, as it was supposed to be situate in the middle of the earth. The story was, that Jupiter, having let go two eagles, or pigeons, at the opposite extremities of the earth, with the view of ascertaining the central spot of it, they met in their flight at this place.]

[Footnote 28: *Unfortified Sparta*.--Ver. 169. Sparta was not fortified, because Lycurgus considered that it ought to trust for its defence to nothing but the valour and patriotism of its citizens.]

[Footnote 29: *The broad quoit*.--Ver. 177. The ‘discus,’ or quoit, of the ancients, was made of brass, iron, stone, or wood, and was about ten or twelve inches in diameter. Sometimes, a heavy mass of iron, of spherical form, was thrown instead of the ‘discus.’ It was perforated in the middle, and a rope or thong being passed through, was used in throwing it.]

[Footnote 30: *The Tænarian youth*.--Ver. 183. Hyacinthus is so called, not as having been born there, but because Tænarus was a famous headland or promontory of Laconia, his native country.]

[Footnote 31: *Thou shalt imitate*.--Ver. 206. The blood of Hyacinthus, changing into a flower, according to the ideas of the poets, the words Αἰ, Αἰ, expressive, in the Greek language, of lamentation, were said to be impressed on its leaves.]

[Footnote 32: *Most valiant hero*.--Ver. 207. He alludes to Ajax, the son of Telamon, from whose blood, when he slew himself, a similar flower was said to have arisen, with the letters Αἰ, Αἰ, on its leaves, expressive either of grief, or denoting the first two letters of his name, Αἴας. See Book xiii. line 397. The hyacinth was the emblem of death, among the ancient Greeks.]

[Footnote 33: *Mournful characters*.--Ver. 216. The letters are called ‘funesta,’ because the words αἰ, αἰ were the expressions of lamentation at funerals.]

[Footnote 34: *Hyacinthian festival*.--Ver. 219. The Hyacinthia was a festival celebrated every year at Amyclæ, in Laconia, by the people of that town and of Sparta. Some writers say that it was held solely in honour of Apollo; others, of Hyacinthus; but it is much more probable, that it was intended to be in honour of both Apollo and Hyacinthus. The festival lasted for three days, and began on the longest day of the Spartan month, Hecatombæus. On the first and last day, sacrifices were offered to the dead, and the fate of Hyacinthus was lamented. Garlands were forbidden to be worn on those days, bread was not allowed to be eaten, and no songs were recited in praise of Apollo. On the second day, rejoicing and amusements prevailed; the praises of Apollo were sung, and horse races were celebrated; after which, females, riding in chariots made of wicker-work, and splendidly adorned, formed a beautiful procession. On this day, sacrifices were offered, and the citizens kept open houses for their friends and relations. Athenæus mentions a favourite meal of the Laconians on this occasion, which was called κοπίς, and consisted of cakes, bread, meat, broth, raw herbs, figs, and other fruits, with the seeds of the lupine. Macrobius says, that chaplets of ivy were worn at the Hyacinthia; but, of course, that remark can only apply to the second day. Even when they had taken the field against an enemy, the people of Amyclæ were in the habit of returning home on the approach of the Hyacinthia, to celebrate that festival.]

## Riley's Explanation

Hyacinthus, as Pausanias relates, was a youth of Laconia. His father educated him with so much care, that he was looked upon as the favourite of Apollo, and of the Muses. As he was one day playing with his companions, he unfortunately received a blow on the head from a quoit, from the effects of which he died soon after. Some funeral verses were probably composed on the occasion; in which it was said, with the view of comforting his relations, that Boreas, jealous of the affection which Apollo had evinced for the youth, had turned aside the quoit with which they played; and thus, by degrees, in length of time the name of Apollo became inseparably connected with the story.

The Lacedæmonians each year celebrated a solemn festival near his tomb, where they offered sacrifices to him; and we are told by Athenæus, that they instituted games in his honour, which were called after his name. Pausanias makes mention of his tomb, upon which he says was engraved the figure of Apollo. His alleged change into the flower of the same name is probably solely owing to the similarity of their names. It is not very clear what flower it is that was known to the ancients under the name of Hyacinthus. Dioscorides believes it to be that called 'vaccinium' by the Romans, which is of a purple colour, and on which can be traced, though imperfectly, the letters αἰ (alas!) mentioned by Ovid. The lamentations of Apollo, on the death of Hyacinthus, formed the subject of bitter, and, indeed, deserved raillery, for several of the satirical writers among the ancients.

## Book X, Fable VI (lines 220–242)

*Venus, incensed at the Cerastæ for polluting the island of Cyprus, which is sacred to her, with the human sacrifices which they offer to their Gods, transforms them into bulls; and the Propœtides, as a punishment for their dissolute conduct, are transformed into rocks.*

“But if, perchance, you were to ask of Amathus,[35] abounding in metals, whether she would wish to have produced the Propœtides; she would deny it, as well as those whose foreheads were of old rugged with two horns, from which they also derived the name of Cerastæ. Before the doors of these was standing an altar of Jupiter Hospes,[36] {a scene} of tragic horrors; if any stranger had seen it stained with blood, he would have supposed that sucking calves had been killed there, and Amathusian sheep;[37] strangers were slain there. Genial Venus, offended at the wicked sacrifices {there offered}, was preparing to abandon her own cities and the Ophiusian lands.[38] ‘But how,’ said she, ‘have these delightful spots, how have my cities offended? What criminality is there in them? Let the inhuman race rather suffer punishment by exile or by death, or if there is any middle course between death and exile; and what can that be, but the punishment of changing their shape?’

“While she is hesitating into what she shall change them, she turns her eyes towards their horns, and is put in mind that those may be left to them; and {then} she transforms their huge limbs into {those of} fierce bulls.

“And yet the obscene Propœtides presumed to deny that Venus is a Goddess; for which they are reported the first {of all women} to have prostituted their bodies,[39] with their beauty, through the anger of the Goddess. And when their shame was gone, and the blood of their face was hardened, they were, by a slight transition, changed into hard rocks.”

[Footnote 35: *Amathus*.--Ver. 220. Amathus was a city of Cyprus, sacred to Venus, and famous for the mines in its neighbourhood.]

[Footnote 36: *Jupiter Hospes*.--Ver. 224. Jupiter, in his character of Ζεῦς ξένιος, was the guardian and protector of travellers and wayfarers.]

[Footnote 37: *Amathusian sheep*.--Ver. 227. Amathusia was one of the names of the island of Cyprus.]

[Footnote 38: *Ophiusian lands*.--Ver. 229. Cyprus was anciently called Ophiusia, on account of the number of serpents that infested it; ὄφις being the Greek for a serpent.]

[Footnote 39: *Their bodies*.--Ver. 240. The women of Cyprus were notorious for the levity of their character. We learn from Herodotus that they had recourse to prostitution to raise their marriage portions.]

## Riley's Explanation

The Cerastæ, a people of the island of Cyprus, were, perhaps, said to have been changed into bulls, to show the barbarous nature and rustic manners of those islanders, who stained their altars with the blood of strangers, in sacrifice to the Gods.

An equivocation of names also, probably, aided in originating the story. The island of Cyprus is surrounded with promontories which rise out of the sea, and whose pointed rocks appear at a distance like horns, from which it had the name of Cerastis, the Greek word κέρας, signifying a 'horn.' Thus, the inhabitants having the name of Cerastæ, it was most easy to invent a fiction of their having been once turned into oxen, to account the more readily for their bearing that name.

The Propœtides, who inhabited the same island, were females of very dissolute character. Justin, and other writers, mention a singular and horrible custom in that island, of prostituting young girls in the very temple of Venus. It was most probably the utter disregard of these women for common decency, that occasioned the poets to say that they were transformed into rocks.

## Book X, Fable VII (lines 243–297)

*Pygmalion, shocked by the dissolute lives of the Propœtides, throws off all fondness for the female sex, and resolves on leading a life of perpetual celibacy. Falling in love with a statue which he has made, Venus animates it; on which he marries this new object of his affections, and has a son by her, who gives his name to the island.*

“When Pygmalion saw these women spending their lives in criminal pursuits, shocked at the vices which Nature had {so} plentifully imparted to the female disposition, he lived a single life without a wife, and for a long time was without a partner of his bed. In the meantime, he ingeniously carved {a statue of} snow-white ivory with wondrous skill; and gave it a beauty with which no woman can be born; and {then} conceived a passion for his own workmanship. The appearance was that of a real virgin, whom you might suppose to be alive, and if modesty did not hinder her, to be desirous to move; so much did art lie concealed under his skill. Pygmalion admires it; and entertains, within his breast, a flame for this fictitious body.

“Often does he apply his hands to the work, to try whether it is a {human} body, or whether it is ivory; and yet he does not own it to be ivory. He gives it kisses, and fancies that they are returned, and speaks to it, and takes hold of it, and thinks that his fingers make an impression on the limbs which they touch, and is fearful lest a livid mark should come on her limbs {when} pressed. And one while he employs soft expressions, at another time he brings her presents that are agreeable to maidens, {such as} shells, and smooth pebbles, and little birds, and flowers of a thousand tints, and lilies, and painted balls, and tears of the Heliades, that have fallen from the trees. He decks her limbs, too, with clothing, and puts jewels on her fingers; he puts, {too}, a long necklace on her neck. Smooth pendants hang from her ears, and bows from her breast.[40] All things are becoming {to her}; and she does not seem less beautiful than when naked. He places her on coverings dyed with the Sidonian shell, and calls her the companion of his bed, and lays down her reclining neck upon soft feathers, as though it were sensible.

“A festival of Venus, much celebrated throughout all Cyprus, had {now} come; and heifers, with snow-white necks, having their spreading horns tipped with gold, fell, struck {by the axe}. Frankincense, too, was smoking, when, having made his offering, Pygmalion stood before the altar, and timorously said, ‘If ye Gods can grant all things, let my wife be, I pray,’ {and} he did not dare to say ‘this ivory maid,’ {but} ‘like to this {statue} of ivory.’ The golden Venus, as she herself was present at her own festival, understood what that prayer meant; and as an omen of the Divinity being favourable, thrice was the flame kindled up, and it sent up a tapering flame into the air. Soon as he returned, he repaired to the image of his maiden, and, lying along the couch, he gave her kisses. She seems to grow warm. Again he applies his mouth; with his hands,

too, he feels her breast. The pressed ivory becomes soft, and losing its hardness, yields to the fingers, and gives way, just as Hymettian wax[41] grows soft in the sun, and being worked with the fingers is turned into many shapes, and becomes pliable by the very handling. While he is amazed, and is rejoicing, {though} with apprehension, and is fearing that he is deceived; the lover again and again touches the object of his desires with his hand. It is a {real} body; the veins throb, when touched with the thumb.

"Then, indeed, the Paphian hero conceives {in his mind} the most lavish expressions, with which to give thanks to Venus, and at length presses lips, no {longer} fictitious, with his own lips. The maiden, too, feels the kisses given her, and blushes; and raising her timorous eyes towards the light {of day}, she sees at once her lover and the heavens. The Goddess was present at the marriage which she {thus} effected. And now, the horns of the moon having been nine times gathered into a full orb, she brought forth Paphos; from whom the island derived its name."

[Footnote 40: *Bows from her breast*.--Ver. 265. The 'Redimiculum' was a sort of fillet, or head band, worn by females. Passing over the shoulders, it hung on each side, over the breast. In the statues of Venus, it was often imitated in gold. Clarke translates it by the word 'solitaire.']

[Footnote 41: *Hymettian wax*.--Ver. 284. Hymettus was a mountain of Attica, much famed for its honey.]

## Riley's Explanation

The Pygmalion here mentioned must not be mistaken for the person of the same name, who was the brother of Dido, and king of Tyre. The story is most probably an allegory, which was based on the fact that Pygmalion being a man of virtuous principles, and disgusted with the vicious conduct of the women of Cyprus, took a great deal of care in training the mind and conduct of a young female, whom he kept at a distance from the contact of the prevailing vices; and whom, after having recovered her from the obdurate and rocky state to which the other females were reduced, he made his wife, and had a son by her named Paphos; who was said to have been the founder of the city of Cyprus, known by his name.

## Book X, Fable VIII (lines 298–518)

*Myrrha, the daughter of Cinyras and Cenchris, having conceived an incestuous passion for her own father, and despairing of satisfying it, attempts to hang herself. Her nurse surprises her in the act, and prevents her death. Myrrha, after repeated entreaties and assurances of assistance, discloses to her the cause of her despair. The nurse, by means of a stratagem, procures her the object of her desires, which being discovered by her father, he pursues his daughter with the intention of killing her. Myrrha flies from her father's dominions and being delivered of Adonis, is transformed into a tree.*

"Of him was that Cinyras sprung, who, if he had been without issue, might have been reckoned among the happy. Of horrible events shall I {now} sing. Daughters, be far hence; far hence be parents, {too}; or, if my verse shall charm your minds, let credit not be given to me in this part {of my song}, and do not believe that it happened; or, if you will believe, believe as well in the punishment of the deed.

"Yet, if Nature allows this crime to appear to have been committed, I congratulate the Ismarian matrons, and my own {division of the} globe. I congratulate this land, that it is afar from those regions which produced so great an abomination. Let the Panchæan land[42] be rich in amomum, and let it produce cinnamon, and its zedoary,[43] and frankincense distilling from its tree, and its other flowers, so long as it produces the myrrh-tree, as well. The new tree was not of so much worth {as to be a recompense for the crime to which it owed its origin}. Cupid himself denies, Myrrha, that it was his arrows that injured thee; and he defends his torches from that imputation; one of the three Sisters kindled {this flame} within thee, with a Stygian firebrand and with swelling vipers. It is a crime to hate a parent; {but} this love is a greater degree of wickedness than hatred. On every side worthy nobles are desiring thee {in marriage}, and throughout the whole East the youths come to the contest for thy bed. Choose out of all these one for thyself, Myrrha, so that, in all that number, there be not one person, {namely, thy father}.

"She, indeed, is sensible {of her criminality}, and struggles hard against her infamous passion, and says to herself, 'Whither am I being carried away by my feelings? What am I attempting? I beseech you, O ye Gods, and natural affection, and ye sacred ties of parents, forbid this guilt: defend me from a crime so great! if, indeed, this be a crime. But yet the ties of parent and child are said not to forbid this {kind of} union; and other animals couple with no distinction. It is not considered shameful for the heifer to mate with her sire; his own daughter becomes the mate of the horse; the he-goat, too, consorts with the flocks of which he is the father; and the bird conceives by him, from whose seed she herself was conceived. Happy they, to whom these things

are allowed! The care of man has provided harsh laws, and what Nature permits, malignant ordinances forbid. {And} yet there are said to be nations[44] in which both the mother is united to the son, and the daughter to the father, and natural affection is increased by a twofold passion. Ah, wretched me! that it was not my chance to be born there, {and that} I am injured by my lot {being cast} in this place! {but} why do I ruminate on these things? Forbidden hopes, begone! He is deserving to be beloved, but as a father {only}. Were I not, therefore, the daughter of the great Cinyras, with Cinyras I might be united. Now, because he is so much mine, he is not mine, and his very nearness {of relationship} is my misfortune.

"'A stranger, I were more likely to succeed. I could wish to go far away hence, and to leave my native country, so I might {but} escape this crime. A fatal delusion detains me {thus} in love; that being present, I may look at Cinyras, and touch him, and talk with him, and give him kisses, if nothing more is allowed me. But canst thou hope for anything more, impious maid? and dost thou not perceive both how many laws, and {how many} names thou art confounding? Wilt thou be both the rival of thy mother, and the harlot of thy father? Wilt thou be called the sister of thy son, and the mother of thy brother? and wilt thou not dread the Sisters that have black snakes for their hair, whom guilty minds see threatening their eyes and their faces with their relentless torches? But do not thou conceive criminality in thy mind, so long as thou hast suffered none in body, and violate not the laws of all-powerful Nature by forbidden embraces. Suppose he were to be compliant, the action itself forbids {thee; but} he is virtuous, and regardful of what is right. And {yet}, O that there were a like infatuation in him!'

"{Thus} she says; but Cinyras, whom an honourable crowd of suitors is causing to be in doubt what he is to do, inquires of herself, as he repeats their names, of which husband she would wish {to be the wife}. At first she is silent; and, fixing her eyes upon her father's countenance, she is in confusion, and fills her eyes with the warm tears. Cinyras, supposing this to be {the effect} of virgin bashfulness, bids her not weep, and dries her cheeks, and gives her kisses. On these being given, Myrrha is too much delighted; and, being questioned what sort of a husband she would have, she says, 'One like thyself.' But he praises the answer not {really}[45] understood by him, and says, 'Ever be thus affectionate.' On mention being made of affection, the maiden, conscious of her guilt, fixed her eyes on the ground.

"It is {now} midnight, and sleep has dispelled the cares, and {has eased} the minds {of mortals}. But the virgin daughter of Cinyras, kept awake, is preyed upon by an unconquerable flame, and ruminates upon her wild desires. And one while she despairs, and at another she resolves to try; and is both ashamed, and {yet} is desirous, and is not certain what she is to do; and, just as a huge tree, wounded by the axe, when the last stroke {now} remains, is in doubt, {as it were}, on which side it is to fall, and is dreaded in each direction; so does her mind, shaken by varying passions, waver in uncertainty, this way and that, and receives an impulse in either direction;

{and} no limit or repose is found for her love, but death: 'tis death that pleases her. She raises herself upright, and determines to insert her neck[46] in a halter; and tying her girdle to the top of the door-post, she says, 'Farewell, dear Cinyras, and understand the cause of my death;' and {then} fits the noose to her pale neck.

"They say that the sound of her words reached the attentive ears of her nurse,[47] as she was guarding the door of her foster-child. The old woman rises, and opens the door; and, seeing the instruments of the death she has contemplated, at the same moment she cries aloud, and smites herself, and rends her bosom, and snatching the girdle from her neck, tears it to pieces. {And} then, at last, she has time to weep, then to give her embraces, and to inquire into the occasion for the halter. The maid is silent, {as} {though} dumb, and, without moving, looks upon the earth; and {thus} detected, is sorry for her attempt at death in this slow manner. The old woman {still} urges her; and laying bare her grey hair, and her withered breasts, begs her, by her cradle and by her first nourishment, to entrust her with that which is causing her grief. She, turning from her as she asks, heaves a sigh. The nurse is determined to find it out, and not to promise her fidelity only. 'Tell me,' says she, 'and allow me to give thee assistance; my old age is not an inactive one. If it is a frantic passion, I have the means of curing it with charms and herbs; if any one has hurt thee by spells, by magic rites shalt thou be cured; or if it is the anger of the Gods, that anger can be appeased by sacrifice. What more {than these} can I think of? No doubt thy fortunes and thy family are prosperous, and in the way of continuing so; thy mother and thy father are {still} surviving.' Myrrha, on hearing her father's {name}, heaves a sigh from the bottom of her heart. Nor, even yet, does her nurse apprehend in her mind any unlawful passion; {and} still she has a presentiment that it is something {connected with} love. Persisting in her purpose, she entreats her, whatever it is, to disclose it to her, and takes her, as she weeps, in her aged lap; and so embracing her in her feeble arms, she says, 'Daughter, I understand it; thou art in love, and in this case (lay aside thy fears) my assiduity will be of service to thee; nor shall thy father ever be aware of it.'

"Furious, she sprang away from her bosom; and pressing the bed with her face, she said, 'Depart, I entreat thee, and spare my wretched shame.' Upon the other insisting, she said, 'Either depart, or cease to inquire why it is I grieve; that which thou art striving to know, is impious.' The old woman is struck with horror, and stretches forth her hands palsied both with years and with fear, and suppliantly falls before the feet of her foster-child. And one while she soothes her, sometimes she terrifies her {with the consequences}, if she is not made acquainted with it; and {then} she threatens her with the discovery of the halter, {and} of her attempted destruction, and promises her good offices, if the passion is confided to her. She lifts up her head, and fills the breast of her nurse with tears bursting forth; and often endeavouring to confess, as often does she check her voice; and she covers her blushing face with her garments,

and says, ‘O, mother, happy in thy husband!’ Thus much {she says}; and {then} she sighs. A trembling shoots through the chilled limbs and the bones of her nurse, for she understands her; and her white hoariness stands bristling with stiff hair all over her head; and she adds many a word to drive away a passion so dreadful, if {only} she can. But the maiden is well aware that she is not advised to a false step; still she is resolved to die, if she does not enjoy him whom she loves. ‘Live {then},’ says {the nurse}, ‘thou shalt enjoy thy----’ and, not daring to say ‘parent,’ she is silent; and {then} she confirms her promise with an oath.

“The pious matrons were {now} celebrating the annual festival of Ceres,[48] on which, having their bodies clothed with snow-white robes, they offer garlands made of ears of corn, as the first fruits of the harvest; and for nine nights they reckon embraces, and the contact of a husband, among the things forbidden. Cenchreïs, the king’s wife, is absent in that company, and attends the mysterious rites. Therefore, while his bed is without his lawful wife, the nurse, wickedly industrious, having found Cinyras overcome with wine, discloses to him a real passion, {but} under a feigned name, and praises the beauty {of the damsel}. On his enquiring the age of the maiden, she says, ‘She is of the same age as Myrrha.’ After she is commanded to bring her, and as soon as she has returned home, she says, ‘Rejoice, my fosterling, we have prevailed.’ The unhappy maid does not feel joy throughout her entire body, and her boding breast is sad. And still she does rejoice: so great is the discord in her mind.

“’Twas the time when all things are silent, and Boötes had turned his wain with the pole obliquely directed among the Triones.[49] She approaches to {perpetrate} her enormity. The golden moon flies from the heavens; black clouds conceal the hiding stars; the night is deprived of its fires. Thou, Icarus, dost conceal thy rising countenance; and {thou}, Erigone, raised to the heavens through thy affectionate love for thy father. Three times was she recalled by the presage of her foot stumbling; thrice did the funereal owl give an omen by its dismal cry. Yet {onward} she goes, and the gloom and the dark night lessen her shame. In her left hand she holds that of her nurse, the other, by groping, explores the secret road. {And} now she is arrived at the door of the chamber; and now she opens the door; now she is led in; but her knees tremble beneath her sinking hams, her colour and her blood vanish; and her courage deserts her as she moves along. The nearer she is to {the commission of} her crime, the more she dreads it, and she repents of her attempt, and could wish to be able to return unknown. The old woman leads her on by the hand as she lingers, and when she has delivered her up on her approach to the lofty bed, she says, ‘Take her, Cinyras, she is thy own,’ and {so} unites their doomed bodies. The father receives his own bowels into the polluted bed, and allays her virgin fears, and encourages her as she trembles. Perhaps, too, he may have called her by a name {suited to} her age, and she may have called him ‘father,’ that the {appropriate} names might not be wanting in this deed of horror. Pregnant by her father, she departs from the chamber, and, in her impiety, bears his

seed in her incestuous womb, and carries {with her}, criminality in her conception. The ensuing night repeats the guilty deed; nor on that {night} is there an end. At last, Cinyras, after so many embraces, longing to know who is his paramour, on lights being brought in, discovers both the crime and his own daughter.

“His words checked through grief, he draws his shining sword from the scabbard as it hangs. Myrrha flies, rescued from death by the gloom and the favour of a dark night; and wandering along the wide fields, she leaves the Arabians famed for their palms, and the Panchæan fields. And she wanders during nine horns of the returning moon; when, at length, being weary, she rests in the Sabæan country,[50] and with difficulty she supports the burden of her womb. Then, uncertain what to wish, and between the fear of death and weariness of life, she uttered such a prayer {as this}: ‘O ye Deities, if any of you favour those who are penitent; I have deserved severe punishment, and I do not shrink from it. But that, neither existing, I may pollute the living, nor dead, those who are departed, expel me from both these realms; and transforming me, deny me both life and death.’ {Some} Divinity {ever} regards the penitent; at least, the last of her prayers found its Gods {to execute it}. For the earth closes over her legs as she speaks, and a root shoots forth obliquely through her bursting nails, {as} a firm support to her tall trunk. Her bones, too, become hard wood, and her marrow continuing in the middle, her blood changes into sap, her arms into great branches, her fingers into smaller ones; her skin grows hard with bark. And now the growing tree has run over her heavy womb, and has covered her breast, and is ready to enclose her neck. She cannot endure delay, and sinks down to meet the approaching wood, and hides her features within the bark. Though she has lost her former senses together with her {human} shape, she still weeps on, and warm drops distil[51] from the tree. There is a value even in her tears, and the myrrh distilling from the bark, retains the name of its mistress, and will be unheard-of in no {future} age.

“But the infant conceived in guilt grows beneath the wood, and seeks out a passage, by which he may extricate himself, having left his mother. Her pregnant womb swells in the middle of the tree. The burden distends the mother, nor have her pangs words of their own {whereby to express themselves}; nor can Lucina be invoked by her voice {while} bringing forth. Yet she is like one struggling {to be delivered}; and the bending tree utters frequent groans, and is moistened with falling tears. Gentle Lucina stands by the moaning boughs, and applies her hands, and utters words that promote delivery. The tree gapes open, in chinks, and through the cleft bark it discharges the living burden. The child cries; the Naiads, laying him on the soft grass, anoint him with the tears of his mother.

“Even Envy {herself} would have commended his face; for just as the bodies of naked Cupids are painted in a picture, such was he. But that their dress may not make any difference, either give to him or take away from them, the polished quivers.”

[Footnote 42: *The Panchæan land*.--Ver. 309. Panchæa was a region of Arabia Felix, abounding in the choicest wines and frankincense. Here, the Phœnix was said to find the materials for making its nest.]

[Footnote 43: *Its zedoary*.--Ver. 308. 'Costus,' or 'costum,' was an Indian shrub, which yielded a fragrant ointment, much esteemed by the ancients. Clarke translates it 'Coysts,' a word apparently of his own coining.]

[Footnote 44: *Said to be nations*.--Ver. 331. We do not read of any such nations, except the fabulous Troglodytes of Ethiopia, who were supposed to live promiscuously, like the brutes. Attica, king of the Huns, long after Ovid's time, married his own daughter, amid the rejoicings of his subjects.]

[Footnote 45: *Not really*.--Ver. 365. That is to say, not understood by him in the sense in which Myrrha meant it.]

[Footnote 46: *To insert her neck*.--Ver. 378. 'Laqueoque innectere fauces Destinat,' is translated by Clarke, 'And resolves to stitch up her neck in a halter.']

[Footnote 47: *Of her nurse*.--Ver. 382. Antoninus Liberalis gives this hag the name of Hippolyte.]

[Footnote 48: *Festival of Ceres*.--Ver. 431. Commentators, in general, suppose that he here alludes to the festival of the Thesmophoria, which was celebrated in honour of Demeter, or Ceres, in various parts of Greece; in general, by the married women, though the virgins joined in some of the ceremonies. Demosthenes, Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch, say that it was first celebrated by Orpheus; while Herodotus states, that it was introduced from Egypt by the daughters of Danaüs; and that, after the Dorian conquest, it fell into disuse, being retained only by the people of Arcadia. It was intended to commemorate the introduction of laws and the regulations of civilized life, which were generally ascribed to Demeter. It is not known whether the festival lasted four or five days with the Athenians. Many days were spent by the matrons in preparing for its celebration. The solemnity was commenced by the women walking in procession from Athens to Eleusis. In this procession they carried on their heads representations of the laws which had been introduced by Ceres, and other symbols of civilized life. They then spent the night at Eleusis, in celebrating the mysteries of the Goddess. The second day was one of mourning, during which the women sat on the ground around the statues of Ceres, taking no food but cakes made of sesame and honey. On it no meetings of the people were held. Probably it was in the afternoon of this day that there was a procession at Athens, in which the women walked bare-footed behind a waggon, upon which were baskets, with sacred symbols. The third day was one of merriment and festivity among the women, in commemoration of Iämbe, who

was said to have amused the Goddess during her grief at the loss of Proserpine. An atoning sacrifice, called ζήμια, was probably offered to the Goddess, at the end of this day. It is most probable that the ceremonial lasted but three days. The women wore white dresses during the period of its performance, and they adopted the same colour during the celebration of the Cerealia at Rome. Burmann thinks, that an Eastern festival, in honour of Ceres, is here referred to. If so, no accounts of it whatever have come down to us.]

[Footnote 49: *Among the Triones*.--Ver. 446. 'Triones'. This word, which is applied to the stars of the Ursa Major, or Charles's Wain, literally means 'oxen;' and is by some thought to come from 'tero,' 'to bruise,' because oxen were used for the purpose of threshing corn; but it is more likely to have its origin from 'terra,' 'the earth,' because oxen were used for ploughing. The Poet employs this periphrasis, to signify the middle of the night.]

[Footnote 50: *Sabæan country*.--Ver. 480. Sabæa, or Saba, was a region of Arabia Felix, now called 'Yemen.' It was famed for its myrrh, frankincense, and spices. In the Scriptures it is called Sheba, and it was the queen of this region, who came to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.]

[Footnote 51: *Warm drops distil*.--Ver. 500. He alludes to the manner in which frankincense is produced, it exuding from the bark of the tree in drops; this gum, Pliny the Elder and Lucretius call by the name of 'stacta,' or 'stacte.' The ancients flavoured their wines with myrrh.]

## Riley's Explanation

Le Clerc, forming his ideas on what Lucian, Phurnutus, and other authors have said on the subject, explains the story of Cinyras and Myrrha in the following manner. Cynnor, or Cinyras, the grandfather of Adonis, having one day drank to excess, fell asleep in a posture which violated the rules of decency. Mor, or Myrrha, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Ammon, together with her son Adonis, seeing him in that condition, acquainted her husband with her father's lapse. On his repeating this to Cinyras, the latter was so full of indignation, that he loaded Myrrha and Adonis with imprecations.

Loaded with the execrations of her father, Myrrha retired into Arabia, where she remained some time; and because Adonis passed some portion of his youth there, the poets feigned that Myrrha was delivered of him in that country. Her transformation into a tree was only invented on account of the equivocal character of her name, 'Mor,' which meant in the Arabic language 'Myrrh.' It is very probable that the story was founded on a tradition among the Phœnicians of the history of Noah, and of the malediction which Ham drew on himself by his undutiful conduct towards his father.

## Book X, Fable IX (lines 519–707)

*Adonis is educated by the Naiads. His beauty makes a strong impression on the Goddess Venus, and, in her passion, she traverses the same wilds in pursuit of the youth, which his mother did, when flying from the wrath of her father. After chasing the wild beasts, she invites Adonis to a poplar shade, where she warns him of his danger in hunting lions, wild boars, and such formidable animals. On this occasion, too, she relates the adventures of Hippomenes and Atalanta. The beauty of the latter was such, that her charms daily attracted crowds of suitors. Having consulted the oracle, whether she shall marry, she is answered that a husband will certainly prove her destruction. On this, to avoid marrying, she makes it a rule to offer to run with her suitors, promising that she herself will be the prize of the victor, but only on condition that immediate death shall be the fate of those who are vanquished by her. As she excels in running, her design succeeds, and several suitors die in the attempt to win her. Hippomenes, smitten with her charms, is not daunted at their ill success; but boldly enters the lists, after imploring the aid of Venus. Atalanta is struck with his beauty, and is much embarrassed, whether she shall yield to the charms of the youth, or to the dissuasions of the oracle. Hippomenes attracts her attention in the race, by throwing down some golden apples which Venus has given him, and then, reaching the goal before her, he carries off the reward of victory. Venus, to punish his subsequent ingratitude towards her, raises his desires to such a pitch, that he incurs the resentment of Cybele, by defiling her shrine with the embraces of his mistress; on which they are both transformed into lions, and thenceforth draw the chariot of the Goddess.*

“Winged time glides on insensibly and deceives us; and there is nothing more fleeting than years. He, born of his own sister and of his grandfather, who, so lately enclosed in a tree, was so lately born, and but just now a most beauteous infant, is now a youth, now a man, {and} now more beauteous than he {was before}. {And} now he pleases even Venus,[52] and revenges the flames of his mother, {kindled by her}. For, while the boy that wears the quiver is giving kisses to his mother, he unconsciously grazes her breast with a protruding arrow. The Goddess, wounded, pushed away her son with her hand. The wound was inflicted more deeply than it seemed to be, and at first had deceived {even} herself. Charmed with the beauty of the youth, she does not now care for the Cytherian shores, nor does she revisit Paphos, surrounded with the deep sea, and Cnidos,[53] abounding in fish, or Amathus, rich in metals.

“She abandons even the skies; him she {ever} attends; and she who has been always accustomed to indulge in the shade, and to improve her beauty, by taking care of it, wanders over the tops of mountains, through the woods, and over bushy rocks, bare to the knee and with her robes

tucked up after the manner of Diana, and she cheers on the dogs, and hunts animals that are harmless prey, either the fleet hares, or the stag with its lofty horns, or the hinds; she keeps afar from the fierce boars, and avoids the ravening wolves, and the bears armed with claws, and the lions glutted with the slaughter of the herds. Thee, too, Adonis, she counsels to fear them, if she can aught avail by advising thee. And she says, “Be brave against those {animals} that fly; boldness is not safe against those that are bold. Forbear, youth, to be rash at my hazard, and attack not the wild beasts to which nature has granted arms, lest thy {thirst for} glory should cost me dear. Neither thy age, nor thy beauty, nor {other} things which have made an impression on Venus, make any impression on lions and bristly boars, and the eyes and the tempers of wild beasts. The fierce boars carry lightning[54] in their curving tusks; there is rage and fury unlimited in the tawny lions; and the {whole} race is odious to me.”

“Upon his asking, what is the reason, she says, ‘I will tell thee, and thou wilt be surprised at the prodigious result of a fault long since committed. But {this} toil to which I am unaccustomed has now fatigued me, and see! a convenient poplar invites us, by its shade, and the turf furnishes a couch. Here I am desirous to repose myself, together with thee;’ and {forthwith} she rests herself on the ground, and presses at once the grass and himself. And with her neck reclining on the bosom of the youth, smiling, she thus says, and she mingles kisses in the midst of her words:--

“Perhaps thou mayst have heard how a certain damsel excelled the swiftest men in the contest of speed. That report was no idle tale; for she did excel them. Nor couldst thou have said, whether she was more distinguished in the merit of her swiftness, or in the excellence of her beauty. Upon her consulting the oracle about a husband, the God said to her, ‘Thou hast no need, Atalanta, of a husband; avoid obtaining a husband. And yet thou wilt not avoid it, and, while {still} living, thou wilt lose thyself.’ Alarmed with the response of the God, she lives a single life in the shady woods, and determinedly repulses the pressing multitude of her suitors with these conditions. ‘I am not,’ says she, ‘to be gained, unless first surpassed in speed. Engage with me in running. Both a wife and a wedding shall be given as the reward of the swift; death {shall be} the recompense of the slow. Let that be the condition of the contest.’ She, indeed, was cruel {in this proposal}; but (so great is the power of beauty) a rash multitude of suitors agreed to these terms. Hippomenes had sat, as a spectator, of this unreasonable race, and said, ‘Is a wife sought by any one, amid dangers so great?’ And {thus} he condemned the excessive ardour of the youths. {But} when he beheld her face, and her body with her clothes laid aside, such as mine is, or such as thine would be, {Adonis}, if thou wast to become a woman, he was astonished, and raising his hands, he said, ‘Pardon me, ye whom I was just now censuring; the reward which you contended for was not yet known to me.’

“In commending her, he kindles the flame, and wishes that none of the young men may run more swiftly than she, and, in his envy, is apprehensive of it. ‘But why,’ says he, ‘is my chance in

this contest left untried? The Divinity himself assists the daring.' While Hippomenes is pondering such things within himself, the virgin flies with winged pace. Although she appears to the Aonian youth to go no less swiftly than the Scythian arrow, he admires her still more in her beauty, and the very speed makes her beauteous. The breeze that meets her bears back her pinions on her swift feet, and her hair is thrown over her ivory shoulders and the leggings which are below her knees with their variegated border, and upon her virgin whiteness her body has contracted a blush; no otherwise than as when purple hangings[55] over a whitened hall tint it with a shade of a similar colour. While the stranger is observing these things, the last course is run,[56] and the victorious Atalanta is adorned with a festive crown. The vanquished utter sighs, and pay the penalty, according to the stipulation. Still, not awed by the end of these young men, he stands up in the midst; and fixing his eyes on the maiden, he says, 'Why dost thou seek an easy victory by conquering the inactive? Contend {now} with me. If fortune shall render me victorious, thou wilt not take it ill to be conquered by one so illustrious. For my father was Megareus, Onchestius his;[57] Neptune was his grandsire; I am the great grandson of the king of the waves. Nor is my merit inferior to my extraction. Or if I shall be conquered, in the conquest of Hippomenes thou wilt have a great and honourable name.'

"As he utters such words as these, the daughter of Schœneus regards him with a benign countenance, and is in doubt whether she shall wish to be overcome or to conquer; and thus she says: 'What Deity, a foe to the beauteous, wishes to undo this {youth}? and commands him, at the risk of a life {so} dear, to seek this alliance? In my own opinion, I am not of so great value. Nor {yet} am I moved by his beauty. Still, by this, too, I could be moved. But, {'tis} because he is still a boy; 'tis not himself that affects me, but his age. And is it not, too, because he has courage and a mind undismayed by death? And is it not, besides, because he is reckoned fourth in descent from the {monarch} of the sea? And is it not, because he loves me, and thinks a marriage with me of so much worth as to perish {for it}, if cruel fortune should deny me to him? Stranger, while {still} thou mayst, begone, and abandon an alliance stained with blood. A match with me is cruelly hazardous. No woman will be unwilling to be married to thee; and thou mayst be desired {even} by a prudent maid. But why have I any concern for thee, when so many have already perished? Let him look to it; {and} let him die, since he is not warned by the fate of so many of my wooers, and is impelled onwards to weariness of life.

"'Shall he then die because he was desirous with me to live? And shall he suffer an undeserved death, the reward of his love? My victory will not be able to support the odium {of the deed}. But it is no fault of mine. I wish thou wouldst desist! or since thou art {thus} mad, would that thou wast more fleet {than I!} But what a feminine look[58] there is in his youthful face! Ah, wretched Hippomenes, I would that I had not been seen by thee! Thou wast worthy to have lived! And if I had been more fortunate; and if the vexatious Divinities had not denied me {the blessings of}

marriage, thou wast one with whom I could have shared my bed.' Thus she said; and as one inexperienced, and smitten by Cupid for the first time, not knowing what she is doing, she is in love, and {yet} does not know that she is in love.

"{And} now, both the people and her father, demanded the usual race, when Hippomenes, the descendant of Neptune, invoked me with anxious voice; 'I entreat that Cytherea may favour my undertaking, and aid the passion that she has inspired {in me}.' The breeze, not envious, wafted to me this tender prayer; I was moved, I confess it; nor was any long delay made in {giving} aid. There is a field, the natives call it by name the Tamasenian {field},[59] the choicest spot in the Cyprian land; this the elders of former days consecrated to me, and ordered to be added as an endowment for my temple. In the middle of this field a tree flourishes, with yellow foliage, {and} with branches tinkling with yellow gold. Hence, by chance as I was coming, I carried three golden apples, that I had plucked, in my hand; and being visible to none but him, I approached Hippomenes, and I showed him what {was to be} the use of them. The trumpets have {now} given the signal, when each {of them} darts precipitately from the starting place, and skims the surface of the sand with nimble feet. You might have thought them able to pace the sea with dry feet, and to run along the ears of white standing corn {while} erect. The shouts and the applause of the populace give courage to the youth, and the words of those who exclaim, 'Now, now, Hippomenes, is the moment to speed onward! make haste. Now use all thy strength! Away with delay! thou shalt be conqueror.' It is doubtful whether the Megarean hero, or the virgin daughter of Schœneus rejoiced the most at these sayings. O how often when she could have passed by him, did she slacken her speed, and {then} unwillingly left behind the features that long she had gazed upon.

"A parched panting is coming from his faint mouth, and the goal is {still} a great way off. Then, at length, the descendant of Neptune throws one of the three products of the tree. The virgin is amazed, and from a desire for the shining fruit, she turns from her course, and picks up the rolling gold. Hippomenes passes her. The theatres ring[60] with applause. She makes amends for her delay, and the time that she has lost, with a swift pace, and again she leaves the youth behind. And, retarded by the throwing of a second apple, again she overtakes the {young} man, and passes by him. The last part of the race {now} remained. '{And} now,' said he, 'O Goddess, giver of this present, aid me;' and {then} with youthful might, he threw the shining gold, in an oblique direction, on one side of the plain, in order that she might return the more slowly. The maiden seemed to be in doubt, whether she should fetch it; I forced her to take it up, and added weight to the apple, when she had taken it up, and I impeded her, both by the heaviness of the burden, and the delay in reaching it. And that my narrative may not be more tedious than that race, the virgin was outrun, and the conqueror obtained the prize.

“And was I not, Adonis, deserving that he should return thanks to me, and the tribute of frankincense? but, in his ingratitude, he gave me neither thanks nor frankincense. I was thrown into a sudden passion; and provoked at being slighted, I provided by {making} an example, that I should not be despised in future times, and I aroused myself against them both. They were passing by a temple, concealed within a shady wood, which the famous Echion had formerly built for the Mother of the Gods, according to his vow; and the length of their journey moved them to take rest {there}. There, an unseasonable desire of caressing {his wife} seized Hippomenes, excited by my agency. Near the temple was a recess, with {but} little light, like a cave, covered with native pumice stone, {one} sacred from ancient religious observance; where the priest had conveyed many a wooden image of the ancient Gods. This he entered, and he defiled the sanctuary by a forbidden crime. The sacred images turned away their eyes, and the Mother {of the Gods}, crowned with turrets,[61] was in doubt whether she should plunge these guilty ones in the Stygian stream. That seemed {too} light a punishment. Wherefore yellow manes cover their necks so lately smooth; their fingers are bent into claws, of their shoulders are made fore-legs;[62] their whole weight passes into their breasts. The surface of the sand is swept by their tails.[63] Their look has anger {in it}; instead of words they utter growls; instead of chambers they haunt the woods; and dreadful to others, {as} lions, they champ the bits of Cybele with subdued jaws. Do thou, beloved by me, avoid these, and together with these, all kinds of wild beasts which turn not their backs in flight, but their breasts to the fight; lest thy courage should be fatal to us both.”

[Footnote 52: *Pleases even Venus*.--Ver. 524. According to Apollodorus, Venus had caused Myrrha to imbibe her infamous passion, because she had treated the worship of that Goddess with contempt.]

[Footnote 53: *Cnidos*.--Ver. 531. This was a city of Caria, situate on a promontory. Strangers resorted thither, to behold a statue of Venus there, which was made by Praxiteles.]

[Footnote 54: *Carry lightning*.--Ver. 551. The lightning shock seems to be attributed to the wild boar, from the vehemence with which he strikes down every impediment in his way.]

[Footnote 55: *Purple hangings*.--Ver. 595. Curtains, or hangings, called ‘aulæa,’ were used by the ancients to ornament their halls, sitting rooms, and bed chambers. In private houses they were also sometimes hung as coverings over doors, and in the interior, as substitutes for them. In the palace of the Roman emperors, a slave, called ‘velarius,’ was posted at each of the principal doors, to raise the curtain when any one passed through. Window curtains were also used by the Romans, while they were employed in the temples, to veil the statue of the Divinity. Ovid here speaks of them as being of purple colour; while Lucretius mentions them as being of yellow, red, and rusty hue.]

[Footnote 56: *Last course is run*.--Ver. 597. Among the Romans, the race consisted of seven rounds of the Circus, or rather circuits of the 'spina,' or wall, in the midst of it, at each end of which was the 'meta,' or goal. Livy and Dio Cassius speak of seven conical balls, resembling eggs, which were called 'ova,' and were placed upon the 'spina.' Their use was to enable the spectators to count the number of rounds which had been run, for which reason they were seven in number; and as each round was run, one of the 'ova' was put up, or, according to Varro, taken down. The form of the egg was adopted in honour of Castor and Pollux, who were said to have been produced from eggs. The words 'novissima meta' here mean either 'the last part of the course,' or, possibly, 'the last time round the course.']

[Footnote 57: *Onchestius his*.--Ver. 605. But Hyginus says that Neptune was the father of Megareus, or Macareus, as the Scholiast of Sophocles calls him. Neptune being the father of Onchestius, Hippomenes was the fourth from Neptune, inclusively. Onchestius founded a city of that name in Bœotia, in honour of Neptune, who had a temple there; in the time of Pausanias the place was in ruins. That author tells us that Megareus aided Nisus against Minos, and was slain in that war.]

[Footnote 58: *A feminine look*.--Ver. 631. Clarke renders this line-- 'But what a lady-like countenance there is in his boyish face!']

[Footnote 59: *Tamasenian field*.--Ver. 644. Tamasis, or Tamaseus, is mentioned by Pliny as a city of Cyprus.]

[Footnote 60: *The theatres ring*.--Ver. 668. 'Spectacula' may mean either the seats, or benches, on which the spectators sat, or an amphitheatre. The former is most probably the meaning in the present instance.]

[Footnote 61: *Crowned with turrets*.--Ver. 696. Cybele, the Goddess of the Earth, was usually represented as crowned with turrets, and drawn in a chariot by lions.]

[Footnote 62: *Are made fore-legs*.--Ver. 700. 'Armus' is generally the shoulder of a brute; while 'humerus' is that of a man. 'Armus' is sometimes used to signify the human shoulder.]

[Footnote 63: *By their tails*.--Ver. 701. Pliny the Elder remarks that the temper of the lion is signified by his tail, in the same way as that of the horse by his ears. When in motion, it shows that he is angry; when quiet, that he is in a good temper.]

### Riley's Explanation

The Atalanta who is mentioned in this story was the daughter of Schœneus, and the granddaughter of Athamas, whose misfortunes obliged him to retire into Bœotia, where he built

a little town, which was called after his name, as we learn from Pausanias and Eustathius. Ovid omits to say that it was one of the conditions of the agreement, that the lover was to have the start in the race. According to some writers, the golden apples were from the gardens of the Hesperides; while, according to others, they were plucked by Venus in the isle of Cyprus. The story seems to be founded merely on the fact, that Hippomenes contrived by means of bribes to find the way to the favour of his mistress.

Apollodorus, however, relates the story in a different manner; he says that the father of Atalanta desiring to have sons, but no daughters, exposed her, on her birth, in a desert, that she might perish. A she-bear found the infant, and nourished it, until it was discovered by some hunters. As the damsel grew up, she made hunting her favourite pursuit, and slew two Centaurs, who offered her violence, with her arrows. On her parents pressing her to marry, she consented to be the wife of that man only who could outrun her, on condition that those who were conquered by her in the race should be put to death. Several of her suitors having failed in the attempt, one of the name of Melanion, by using a similar stratagem to that attributed by Ovid to Hippomenes, conquered her in the race, and became her husband. Having profaned the temple of Jupiter, they were transformed, Melanion into a lion, and Atalanta into a lioness. According to Apollodorus, her father's name was Iasius, though in his first book he says she was the daughter of Schœneus. He also says that she was the same person that was present at the hunt of the Calydonian boar, though other writers represent them to have been different personages. Euripides makes Mænalus to have been the name of her father.

Atalanta had by Melanion, or, as some authors say, by Mars, a son named Parthenopæus, who was present at the Theban war. Ælian gives a long account of her history, which does not very much differ from the narrative of Apollodorus.

## Book X, Fable X (lines 708–739)

*Adonis being too ardent in the pursuit of a wild boar, the beast kills him, on which Venus changes his blood into a flower of crimson colour.*

“She, indeed, {thus} warned him; and, harnessing her swans, winged her way through the air; but his courage stood in opposition to her advice. By chance, his dogs having followed its sure track, roused a boar, and the son of Cinyras pierced him, endeavouring to escape from the wood, with a wound from the side. Immediately the fierce boar, with his crooked snout, struck out the hunting-spear, stained with his blood, and {then} pursued him, trembling and seeking a safe retreat, and lodged his entire tusks in his groin, and stretched him expiring on the yellow sand.

“Cytherea, borne in her light chariot[64] through the middle of the air, had not yet arrived at Cyprus upon the wings of her swans. She recognized afar his groans, as he was dying, and turned her white birds in that direction. And when, from the lofty sky, she beheld him half dead, and bathing his body in his own blood, she rapidly descended, and rent both her garments and her hair, and she smote her breast with her distracted hands. And complaining of the Fates, she says, ‘But, however, all things shall not be in your power; the memorials of my sorrow, Adonis, shall ever remain; and the representation of thy death, repeated yearly, shall exhibit an imitation of my mourning. But thy blood shall be changed into a flower. Was it formerly allowed thee, Persephone, to change the limbs[65] of a female into fragrant mint; and shall the hero, the son of Cinyras, {if} changed, be a cause of displeasure against me?’ Having thus said, she sprinkles his blood with odoriferous nectar, which, touched by it, effervesces, just as the transparent bubbles are wont to rise in rainy weather. Nor was there a pause longer than a full hour, when a flower sprang up from the blood, of the same colour {with it}, such as the pomegranates are wont to bear, which conceal their seeds beneath their tough rind. Yet the enjoyment of it is but short-lived; for the same winds[66] which give it a name, beat it down, as it has but a slender hold, and is apt to fall by reason of its extreme slenderness.”

[Footnote 64: *In her light chariot.*--Ver. 717. ‘Vecta levi curru Cytherea,’ Clarke quaintly renders, ‘The Cytherean Goddess riding in her light chair.’]

[Footnote 65: *To change the limbs.*--Ver. 729. Proserpine was said to have changed the Nymph, ‘Mentha,’ into a plant of that name, which we call ‘mint.’ Some writers say that she found her intriguing with Pluto while, according to other writers, she was the mistress of Pollux.]

[Footnote 66: *The same winds.*--Ver. 739. The flower which sprang from the blood of Adonis was the anemone, or wind-flower, of which Pliny the Elder says-- ‘This flower never opens but

when the wind is blowing, from which too, it receives its name, as ἄνεμος means the wind.' -- (Book i. c. 23).]

### Riley's Explanation

Theocritus, Bion, Hyginus, and Antoninus Liberalis, beside several other authors, relate the history of the loves of Venus and Adonis. They inform us of many particulars which Ovid has here neglected to remark. They say that Mars, jealous of the passion which Venus had for Adonis, implored the aid of Diana, who, to gratify his revenge, sent the boar that destroyed the youth. According to some writers, it was Apollo himself that took the form of that animal; and they say that Adonis descending to the Infernal Regions, Proserpine fell in love with him, and refused to allow him to return, notwithstanding the orders of Jupiter. On this, the king of heaven fearing to displease both the Goddesses, referred the dispute to the Muse Calliope, who directed that Adonis should pass one half of his time with Venus on earth, and the other half in the Infernal Regions. They also tell us that it took up a year before the dispute could be determined, and that the Hours brought Adonis at last to the upper world, on which, Venus being dissatisfied with the decision of Calliope, instigated the women of Thrace to kill her son Orpheus.

The mythologists have considered this story to be based on grounds either historical or physical. Cicero, in his Discourse on the Nature of the Gods, says, that there were several persons who had the name of Venus, and that the fourth, surnamed Astarte, was a Syrian, who married Adonis, the son of Cinyras, king of Cyprus. Hunting in the forests of Mount Libanus, or Lebanon, he was wounded in the groin by a wild boar, which accident ultimately caused his death. Astarte caused the city of Byblos and all Syria to mourn for his loss; and, to keep his name and his sad fate in remembrance, established feasts in his honour, to be celebrated each year. Going still further, if we suppose the story to have originated in historical facts, it seems not improbable that Adonis did not die of his wound, and that, contrary to all expectation, he was cured; as the Syrians, after having mourned for several days during his festival, rejoiced as though he had been raised from the dead, at a second festival called 'The Return.' The worship both of Venus and Adonis probably originated in Syria, and was spread through Asia Minor into Greece; while the Carthaginians, a Phœnician colony introduced it into Sicily. The festival of Adonis is most amusingly described by Theocritus the Sicilian poet, in his 'Adoniazusæ.' Some authors have suggested that Adonis was the same with the Egyptian God Osiris, and that the affliction of Venus represented that of Isis at the death of her husband. According to Hesiod, Adonis was the son of Phœnix and Alphesibœa, while Panyasis says that he was son of Theias, the king of the Assyrians.

In support of the view which some commentators take of the story of Adonis having been founded on physical circumstance, we cannot do better than quote the able remarks of Mr.

Keightley on the subject. He says (Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy, p. 109)-- “The tale of Adonis is apparently an Eastern mythus. His very name is Semitic (Hebrew ‘Adon,’ ‘Lord’), and those of his parents also refer to that part of the world. He appears to be the same with the Thammuz, mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel, and to be a Phœnician personification of the sun who, during a part of the year is absent, or, as the legend expresses it, with the Goddess of the under world: during the remainder with Astarte, the regent of heaven. It is uncertain when the Adonia were first celebrated in Greece; but we find Plato alluding to the gardens of Adonis, as boxes of flowers used in them were called; and the ill fortune of the Athenian expedition to Sicily was in part ascribed to the circumstance of the fleet having sailed during that festival.”

This notion of the mourning for Adonis being a testimony of grief for the absence of the Sun during the winter, is not, however, to be too readily acquiesced in. Lobeck (Aglaophamus, p. 691), for example, asks, with some appearance of reason, why those nations whose heaven was mildest, and their winter shortest, should so bitterly bewail the regular changes of the seasons, as to feign that the Gods themselves were carried off or slain; and he shrewdly observes, that, in that case, the mournful and the joyful parts of the festival should have been held at different times of the year, and not joined together, as they were. He further inquires, whether the ancient writers, who esteemed these Gods to be so little superior to men, may not have believed them to have been really and not metaphorically put to death? And, in truth, it is not easy to give a satisfactory answer to these questions.

## Book XI, Fable I (lines 1–84)

*While Orpheus is singing to his lyre on Mount Rhodope, the women of Thrace celebrate their orgies. During that ceremony they take advantage of the opportunity to punish Orpheus for his indifference towards their sex; and, in the fury inspired by their rites, they beat him to death. His head and lyre are carried by the stream of the river Hebrus into the sea, and are cast on shore on the isle of Lesbos. A serpent, about to attack the head when thrown on shore, is changed into a stone, and the Bacchanals who have killed him are transformed into trees.*

While with songs such as these, the Thracian poet is leading the woods and the natures of savage beasts, and the following rocks, lo! the matrons of the Ciconians, having their raving breasts covered with the skins of wild beasts, from the summit of a hill, espy Orpheus adapting his voice to the sounded strings {of his harp}. One of these, tossing her hair along the light breeze, says, “See! see! here is our contemner!” and hurls her spear at the melodious mouth of the bard of Apollo: {but}, being wreathed at the end with leaves, it makes a mark without any wound. The weapon of another is a stone, which, when thrown, is overpowered in the very air by the harmony of his voice and his lyre, and lies before his feet, a suppliant, as it were, for an attempt so daring.

But still this rash warfare increases, and {all} moderation departs, and direful fury reigns {triumphant}. And {yet} all their weapons would have been conquered by his music; but the vast clamour, and the Berecynthian pipe[1] with the blown horns, and the tambourines, and the clapping of hands, and Bacchanalian yells, prevented the sound of the lyre from being heard. Then, at last, the stones became red with the blood of the bard, {now} no longer heard. But first the Mænades lay hands on innumerable birds, even yet charmed with his voice as he sang, and serpents, and a throng of wild beasts, the glory of {this} audience of Orpheus; and after that, they turn upon Orpheus with blood-stained right hands; and they flock together, as the birds, if at any time they see the bird of night strolling about by day; {and} as when the stag that is doomed to die[2] in the morning sand in the raised amphitheatre is a prey to the dogs; they both attack the bard, and hurl the thyrsi, covered with green leaves, not made for such purposes as these. Some throw clods, some branches torn from trees, others flint stones. And that weapons may not be wanting for their fury, by chance some oxen are turning up the earth with the depressed ploughshare; and not far from thence, some strong-armed peasants, providing the harvest with plenteous sweat, are digging the hard fields; they, seeing this {frantic} troop, run away, and leave the implements of their labour; and there lie, dispersed throughout the deserted fields, harrows and heavy rakes, and long spades.

After they, in their rage, have seized upon these, and have torn to pieces the oxen with their threatening horns, they return to the destruction of the bard; and they impiously murder him, extending his hands, and then for the first time uttering words in vain, and making no effect on them with his voice. And (Oh Jupiter!) through those lips listened to by rocks, and understood by the senses of wild beasts, his life breathed forth, departs into the breezes.[3] The mournful birds, the crowd of wild beasts, the hard stones, the woods that oft had followed thy song bewailed thee. Trees, {too}, shedding their foliage, mourned thee, losing their leaves. They say, too, that rivers swelled with their own tears; and the Naiads and Dryads had mourning garments of dark colour, and dishevelled hair. The limbs lie scattered[4] in various places. Thou, Hebrus, dost receive the head and the lyre; and (wondrous {to relate}!) while it rolls down the midst of the stream, the lyre complains in I know not what kind of mournful strain. His lifeless tongue, {too}, utters a mournful sound, {to which} the banks mournfully reply. And now, borne onward to the sea, they leave their native stream, and reach the shores of Methymnæan Lesbos.[5] Here an infuriated serpent attacks the head thrown up on the foreign sands, and the hair besprinkled with the oozing blood. At last Phœbus comes to its aid, and drives it away as it tries to inflict its sting, and hardens the open jaws of the serpent into stone, and makes solid its gaping mouth just as it is. His ghost descends under the earth, and he recognizes all the spots which he has formerly seen; and seeking Eurydice through the fields of the blessed, he finds her, and enfolds her in his eager arms. Here, one while, they walk together side by side,[6] and at another time he follows her as she goes before, and {again} at another time, walking in front, precedes her; and now, in safety, Orpheus looks back upon his own Eurydice.

Yet Lyæus did not suffer this wickedness to go unpunished; and grieving for the loss of the bard of his sacred rites, he immediately fastened down in the woods, by a twisting root, all the Edonian matrons who had committed this crime. For he drew out the toes of her feet, just as each one had pursued him, and thrust them by their sharp points into the solid earth. And, as when a bird has entangled its leg in a snare, which the cunning fowler has concealed, and perceives that it is held fast, it beats its wings, and, fluttering, tightens the noose with its struggles; so, as each one of these had stuck fast, fixed in the ground, in her alarm, she attempted flight in vain; but the pliant root held her fast, and confined her, springing forward[7] {to escape}. And while she is looking where her toes are, where, {too}, are her feet and her nails, she sees wood growing up upon her well-turned legs. Endeavouring, too, to smite her thigh, with grieving right hand, she strikes solid oak; her breast, too, becomes oak; her shoulders are oak. You would suppose that her extended arms are real boughs, and you would not be deceived in {so} supposing.

[Footnote 1: *Berecynthian pipe*.--Ver. 16. This pipe, made of box-wood, was much used in the rites of Cybele, or Berecynthia.]

[Footnote 2: *Doomed to die*.--Ver. 26. The Romans were wont to exhibit shows of hunting in the amphitheatre in the morning; and at mid-day the gladiatorial spectacles commenced. The 'arena' was the name given to the central open space, which derived its name from the sand with which it was covered, chiefly for the purpose of absorbing the blood of the wild beasts and of the combatants. Caligula, Nero, and Carus showed their extravagant disposition by using cinnabar and borax instead of sand. In the earlier amphitheatres there were ditches, called 'Euripi,' between the open space, or arena, and the seats, to defend the spectators from the animals. They were introduced by Julius Cæsar, but were filled up by Nero, to gain space for the spectators. Those who fought with the beasts (as it will be remembered St. Paul did at Ephesus) were either condemned criminals or captives, or persons who did so for pay, being trained for the purpose. Lucius Metellus was the first that we read of who introduced wild beasts in the theatre for the amusement of the public. He exhibited in the Circus one hundred and forty-two elephants, which he brought from Sicily, after his victory over the Carthaginians, and which are said to have been slain, more because the Romans did not know what to do with them, than for the amusement of the public. Lions and panthers were first exhibited by M. Fulvius, after the Ætolian war. In the Circensian games, exhibited by the Curule Ædiles, P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, and P. Lentulus, B.C. 168, there were sixty-three African panthers and forty bears and elephants. These latter animals were sometimes introduced to fight with bulls. Sylla, when Prætor, exhibited one hundred lions, which were pierced with javelins. We also read of hippopotami and crocodiles being introduced for the same purpose, while cameleopards were also hunted in the games given by Julius Caesar in his third consulship. He also introduced bull fights, and Augustus first exhibited the rhinoceros, and a serpent, fifty cubits in length. When Titus constructed his great amphitheatre, five thousand wild beasts and four thousand tame animals were slain; while in the games celebrated by Trajan, after his victories over the Dacians, eleven thousand animals are said to have been killed. For further information on this subject, the reader is referred to the article 'Venatio,' in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, which valuable work contains a large quantity of interesting matter on this barbarous practice of the Romans.]

[Footnote 3: *Into the breezes*.--Ver. 43. 'In ventos anima exhalata recessit' is rendered by Clarke--'his life breathed out, marches off into the wind.']

[Footnote 4: *Limbs lie scattered*.--Ver. 50. The limbs of Orpheus were collected by the Muses, and, according to Pausanias, were buried by them in Dium in Macedonia, while his head was carried to Lesbos.]

[Footnote 5: *Methymnæan Lesbos*.--Ver. 55. Methymna was a town in the isle of Lesbos, famed for its wines.]

[Footnote 6: *Side by side*.--Ver. 64. ‘Conjunctis passibus’ means ‘at an equal pace, and side by side.’]

[Footnote 7: *Springing forward*.--Ver. 78. ‘Exsultantem’ is rendered by Clarke, ‘bouncing hard to get away.’]

## Riley’s Explanation

Some of the ancient mythologists say that the story of the serpent, changed into stone for insulting the head of Orpheus, was founded on the history of a certain inhabitant of the isle of Lesbos, who was punished for attacking the reputation of Orpheus. This critic excited contempt, as a malignant and ignorant person, who endeavoured, as it were, to sting the character of the deceased poet, and therefore, by way of exposing his spite and stupidity, he was said to have been changed from a serpent into a stone. According to Philostratus, the poet’s head was preserved in the temple of Apollo at Lesbos; and he tells us that Diomedes, and Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, brought Philoctetes to Troy, after having explained to him the oracular response which the head of Orpheus had given to him from the bottom of a cave at Lesbos.

The harp of Orpheus was preserved in the same temple; and so many wonders were reported of it, that Neanthus, the son of the tyrant Pytharus, purchased it of the priests of Apollo, believing that its sound would be sufficient to put rocks and trees in motion; but, according to Lucian, he succeeded so ill, that on his trying the harp, the dogs of the neighbouring villages fell upon him and tore him to pieces.

The transformation of the women of Thrace into trees, for the murder of Orpheus, is probably an allegory intended to show that these furious and ill-conditioned females did not escape punishment for their misdeeds; and that they were driven by society to pass the rest of their lives in woods and caverns.

## Book XI, Fable II (lines 85–145)

*Bacchus, having punished the Thracian women for the murder of Orpheus, leaves Thrace. His tutor, Silenus, having become intoxicated, loses his companions, and is brought by some Phrygian peasants to Midas. He sends him to Bacchus, on which the God, in acknowledgment of his kindness, promises him whatever favour he may desire. Midas asks to be able to turn everything that he touches into gold. This power is granted; but, soon convinced of his folly, Midas begs the God to deprive him of it, on which he is ordered to bathe in the river Pactolus. He obeys the God, and communicates the power which he possesses to the stream; from which time that river has golden sands.*

And this is not enough for Bacchus. He resolves to forsake the country itself, and, with a superior train, he repairs to the vineyards of his own Tymolus, and Pactolus; although it was not golden at that time, nor to be coveted for its precious sands. The usual throng, {both} Satyrs and Bacchanals, surround him, but Silenus is away. The Phrygian rustics took him, as he was staggering with age and wine, and, bound with garlands, they led him to {their} king, Midas, to whom, together with the Cecropian Eumolpus,[8] the Thracian Orpheus had intrusted the {mysterious} orgies {of Bacchus}. Soon as he recognized this associate and companion of these rites, he hospitably kept a festival on the coming of this guest, for twice five days, and {as many} nights joined in succession.

“And now the eleventh Lucifer had closed the lofty host of the stars, when the king came rejoicing to the Lydian lands, and restored Silenus to the youth, his foster-child. To him the God, being glad at the recovery of his foster-father, gave the choice of desiring a favour, pleasing, {indeed}, but useless, {as it turned out}. He, destined to make a foolish use of the favour, says, ‘Cause that whatever I shall touch with my body shall be turned into yellow gold.’ Liber assents to his wish, and grants him the hurtful favour, and is grieved that he has not asked for something better. The Berecynthian hero[9] departs joyful, and rejoices in his own misfortune, and tries the truth of his promise by touching everything. And, hardly believing himself, he pulls down a twig from a holm-oak, growing on a bough not lofty; the twig becomes gold. He takes up a stone from the ground; the stone, too, turns pale with gold. He touches a clod, also; by his potent touch the clod becomes a mass {of gold}. He plucks some dry ears of corn, that wheat is golden. He holds an apple taken from a tree, you would suppose that the Hesperides had given it. If he places his fingers upon the lofty door-posts, {then} the posts are seen to glisten. When, too, he has washed his hands in the liquid stream, the water flowing from his hands might have deceived Danaë. He scarcely can contain his own hopes in his mind, imagining everything to be of gold. As he is {thus} rejoicing, his servants set before him a table supplied with dainties, and

not deficient in parched corn. But then, whether he touches the gifts of Ceres with his right hand, the gifts of Ceres, {as gold}, become hard; or if he attempts to bite the dainties with hungry teeth, those dainties, upon the application of his teeth, shine as yellow plates of gold. {Bacchus}, the grantor of this favour, he mingles with pure water; you could see liquid gold flowing through his jaws.

“Astonished at the novelty of his misfortune, being both rich and wretched, he wishes to escape from his wealth, and {now} he hates what but so lately he has wished for; no plenty relieves his hunger, dry thirst parches his throat, and he is deservedly tormented by the {now} hated gold; and raising his hands towards heaven, and his shining arms, he says, “Grant me pardon, father Lenæus; I have done wrong, but have pity on me, I pray, and deliver me from this specious calamity!” Bacchus, the gentle Divinity among the Gods, restored him, as he confessed that he had done wrong, {to his former state}, and annulled his given promise, and the favour that was granted: “And that thou mayst not remain overlaid with thy gold, so unhappily desired, go,” said he, “to the river adjoining to great Sardis,[10] and trace thy way, meeting the waters as they fall from the height of the mountain, until thou comest to the rise of the stream. And plunge thy head beneath the bubbling spring, where it bursts forth most abundantly, and at once purge thy body, at once thy crime.” The king placed himself beneath the waters prescribed; the golden virtue tinged the river, and departed from the human body into the stream. And even now, the fields, receiving the ore of this ancient vein {of gold}, are hard, growing of pallid colour, from their clods imbibing the gold.

[Footnote 8: *Eumolpus*.--Ver. 93. There were three celebrated persons of antiquity named Eumolpus. The first was a Thracian, the son of Neptune and Chione, who lived in the time of Erectheus, king of Athens, against whom he led the people of Eleusis, and who established the Eleusinian mysteries. Some of his posterity settling at Athens, the Eumolpus here named was born there. He was the son of Musæus and the disciple of Orpheus. The third Eumolpus is supposed to have lived between the times of the two already named.]

[Footnote 9: *Berecynthian hero*.--Ver. 106. Midas is so called from mount Berecynthus in Phrygia.]

[Footnote 10: *Sardis*.--Ver. 137. The city of Sardis was the capital of Lydia, where Crœsus had his palace. The river Pactolus flowed through it.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The ancients divided the Divinities into several classes, and in the last class, which Ovid calls the populace, or commonalty of the Gods, were the Satyrs and Sileni. The latter, according to Pausanias, were no other than Satyrs of advanced age. There seems, however, to have been one

among them, to whom the name of Silenus was especially given, and to him the present story relates. According to Pindar and Pausanias he was born at Malea, in Laconia; while Theopompus, quoted by Ælian, represents him as being the son of a Nymph. He was inferior to the higher Divinities, but superior to man, in not being subject to mortality. He was represented as bald, flat-nosed, and red-faced, a perfect specimen of a drunken old man. He is often introduced either sitting on an ass, or reeling along on foot, with a thyrsus to support him.

He was said to have tended the education of the infant Bacchus, and indeed, according to the author whose works are quoted as those of Orpheus, he was an especial favourite of the Gods; while some writers represent him not as a drunken old man, but as a learned philosopher and a skilful commander. Lucian combines the two characters, and describes him as an aged man with large straight ears and a huge belly, wearing yellow clothes, and generally mounted on an ass, or supported by a staff, but, nevertheless, as being a skilful general. Hyginus says, that the Phrygian peasants found Midas near a fountain, into which, according to Xenophon, some one had put wine, which had made him drunk. In his interview with Midas, according to Theopompus, as quoted by Ælian, they had a conversation concerning that unknown region of the earth, to which Plato refers under the name of the New Atlantis, and which, after long employing the speculations of the ancient philosophers, was realized to the moderns in the discovery of America. The passage is sufficiently curious to deserve to be quoted. He says, “Asia, Europe, and Libya, are but three islands, surrounded by the ocean; but beyond that ocean there is a vast continent, whose bounds are entirely unknown to us. The men and the animals of that country are much larger, and live much longer than those of this part of the world. Their towns are fine and magnificent; their customs are different from ours; and they are governed by different laws. They have two cities, one of which is called ‘the Warlike,’ and the other ‘the Devout.’ The inhabitants of the first city are much given to warfare, and make continual attacks upon their neighbours, whom they bring under their subjection. Those who inhabit the other city are peaceable, and blessed with plenty; the earth without toil or tillage furnishing them with abundance of the necessaries of life. Except their sick, they all live in the midst of riches and continual festivity and pleasure; but they are so just and righteous that the Gods themselves delight to go frequently and pass their time among them.

“The warlike people of the first city having extended their conquests in their own vast continent, made an irruption into ours, with a million of men, as far as the country of the Hyperboreans; but when they saw their mode of living, they deemed them to be unworthy of their notice, and returned home. These warriors rarely die of sickness; they delight in warfare, and generally lose their lives in battle. There is also in this new world another numerous people called Meropes; and in their country is a place called ‘Anostus,’ that is to say, ‘not to be repassed,’ because no one ever comes back from thence. It is a dreadful abyss, having no other than a reddish sort of light.

There are two rivers in that place; one called the River of Sorrow, and the other the River of Mirth. Trees as large as planes grow about these rivers. Those who eat of the fruit of the trees growing near the River of Sorrow, pass their lives in affliction, weeping continually, even to their last breath; but such as eat of the fruit of the other trees, forget the past, and revert through the different stages of their life, and then die."

Ælian regards the passage as a mere fable, and the latter part is clearly allegorical. The mention of the two cities, 'the Warlike' and 'the Devout,' can hardly fail to remind us of Japan, with its spiritual and temporal capitals.

Some writers say, that Silenus was the king of Caria, and was the contemporary and friend of Midas, to whom his counsel proved of considerable service, in governing his dominions. He was probably called the foster-father or tutor, of Bacchus, because he introduced his worship into Phrygia and the neighbouring countries.

## Book XI, Fable III (lines 146–193)

*Pan is so elated with the praises of some Nymphs who hear the music of his pipe, that he presumes to challenge Apollo to play with him. The mountain God, Tmolus, who is chosen umpire of the contest, decides in favour of Apollo, and the whole company approve of his judgment except Midas, who, for his stupidity in preferring Pan, receives a pair of asses' ears. He carefully conceals them till they are discovered by his barber, who publishes his deformity in a very singular manner.*

He, abhorring riches, inhabited the woods and the fields, and {followed} Pan, who always dwells in caves of the mountains; but his obtuse understanding[11] still remained, and the impulse of his foolish mind was fated again, as before, to be an injury to its owner. For the lofty Tmolus, looking far and wide over the sea, stands erect, steep with its lofty ascent; and extending in its descent on either side, is bounded on the one side by Sardis, on the other by the little Hypæpæ.

While Pan is there boasting of his strains to the charming Nymphs, and is warbling a little tune upon the reeds joined with wax, daring to despise the playing of Apollo in comparison with his own, he comes to the unequal contest under the arbitration of Tmolus.[12] The aged umpire seats himself upon his own mountain, and frees his ears of the {incumbering} trees. His azure-coloured hair is only covered with oak, and acorns hang around his hollow temples. And looking at the God of the flocks, he says, "there is no delay in {me}, your umpire." He sounds his rustic reeds, and delights Midas with his uncouth music; for he, by chance, is present as he plays. After this the sacred Tmolus turns his face towards the countenance of Apollo; his words follow {the direction of} his face. He, having his yellow head wreathed with Parnassian laurel, sweeps the ground with his robe, soaked in Tyrian purple,[13] and supports with his left hand his lyre, adorned with gems and Indian ivory; the other hand holds the plectrum. The very posture is that of an artist. He then touches the strings with a skilful thumb; charmed by the sweetness of which, Tmolus bids Pan to hold his reeds in submission to the lyre; and the judgment and decision of the sacred mountain pleases them all. Yet it is blamed, and is called unjust by the voice of Midas alone. But the Delian {God} does not allow his stupid ears to retain their human shape: but draws them out to a {great} length, and he fills them with grey hairs, and makes them unsteady at the lower part, and gives them the power of moving. The rest {of his body} is that of a man; in one part alone is he condemned {to punishment}; and he assumes the ears of the slowly moving ass.

He, indeed, concealed them, and endeavoured to veil his temples, laden with this foul disgrace, with a purple turban. But a servant, who was wont to cut his hair, when long, with the steel {scissars}, saw it; who, when he did not dare disclose the disgraceful thing he had seen, though

desirous to publish it, and yet could not keep it secret, retired, and dug up the ground, and disclosed, in a low voice, what kind of ears he had beheld on his master, and whispered it to the earth cast up. And {then} he buried this discovery of his voice with the earth thrown in again, and, having covered up the ditch, departed in silence.

There, a grove, thick set with quivering reeds, began to rise; and as soon as it came to maturity, after a complete year, it betrayed its planter. For, moved by the gentle South wind, it repeated the words {there} buried, and disclosed the ears of his master.

[Footnote 11: *Obtuse understanding*.--Ver. 148. 'Pingue sed ingenium mansit,' is rendered by Clarke, 'but he continued a blockhead still.']

[Footnote 12: *Tmolus*.--Ver. 156. This was the tutelary divinity of the mountain of Tmolus, or Tymolus.]

[Footnote 13: *Soaked in Tyrian purple*.--Ver. 166. Being saturated with Tyrian purple, the garment would be 'dibaphus,' or 'twice dipt;' being first dyed in the grain, and again when woven. Of course, these were the most valuable kind of cloths.]

## Riley's Explanation

Midas, according to Pausanias, was the son of Gordius and Cybele, and reigned in the Greater Phrygia. Strabo says that he and his father kept their court near the river Sangar, in cities which, in the time of that author had become mean villages. As Midas was very rich, and at the same time very frugal, it was reported that whatever he touched was at once turned into gold; and Bacchus was probably introduced into his story, because Midas had favoured the introduction of his worship, and was consequently supposed to have owed his success to the good offices of that Divinity. He was probably the first who extracted gold from the sands of the river Pactolus, and in that circumstance the story may have originated. Strabo says that Midas found the treasures which he possessed in the mines of Mount Bermius. It was said that in his infancy some ants were seen to creep into his cradle, and to put grains of wheat in his mouth, which was supposed to portend that he would be rich and frugal.

As he was very stupid and ignorant, the fable of his preference of the music of Pan to that of Apollo was invented, to which was added, perhaps, as a mark of his stupidity, that the God gave him a pair of asses' ears. The scholiast of Aristophanes, to explain the story, says either it was intended to shew that Midas, like the ass, was very quick of hearing, or in other words, had numerous spies in all parts of his dominions; or, it was invented, because his usual place of residence was called Onouta, ὄνου ὦτα, 'the ears of an ass.' Strabo says that he took a draught of

warm bullock's blood, from the effects of which he died; and, according to Plutarch, he did so to deliver himself from the frightful dreams with which he was tormented.

Tmolus, the king of Lydia, according to Clitophon, was the son of Mars and the Nymph Theogene, or, according to Eustathius, of Sipylus and Eptonia. Having violated Arriphe, a Nymph of Diana, he was, as a punishment, tossed by a bull, and falling on some sharp pointed stakes, he lost his life, and was buried on the mountain that afterwards bore his name.

## Book XI, Fable IV (lines 194–220)

*Apollo and Neptune build the walls of Troy for king Laomedon, who refuses to give the Gods the reward which he has promised: on which Neptune punishes his perjury by an inundation of his country. Laomedon is then obliged to expose his daughter to a sea monster, in order to appease the God. Hercules delivers her; and Laomedon defrauds him likewise of the horses which he has promised him. In revenge, Hercules plunders the city of Troy, and carries off Hesione, whom he gives in marriage to his companion Telamon.*

The son of Latona, having {thus} revenged himself, departs from Tmolus, and, borne through the liquid air, rests on the plains of Laomedon, on this side of the narrow sea of Helle, the daughter of Nephele. On the right hand of Sigæum and on the left of the lofty Rhœtæum,[14] there is an ancient altar dedicated to the Panomphæan[15] Thunderer. Thence, he sees Laomedon {now} first building the walls of rising Troy, and that this great undertaking is growing up with difficult labour, and requires no small resources. And {then}, with the trident-bearing father of the raging deep, he assumes a mortal form, and for the Phrygian king they build the walls,[16] a sum of gold being agreed on for the defences.

The work is {now} finished; the king refuses the reward, and, as a completion of his perfidy, adds perjury to his false words. “Thou shalt not escape unpunished,” says the king of the sea; and he drives all his waters towards the shores of covetous Troy. He turns the land, too, into the form of the sea, and carries off the wealth of the husbandmen, and overwhelms the fields with waves. Nor is this punishment sufficient: the daughter of the king, is also demanded for a sea monster. Chained to the rugged rocks, Alcides delivers her, and demands the promised reward, the horses agreed upon; and the recompense of so great a service being denied him, he captures the twice-perjured walls of conquered Troy. Nor does Telamon, a sharer in the warfare, come off without honour; and he obtains Hesione, who is given to him.

But Peleus was distinguished by a Goddess for his wife; nor was he more proud of the name of his grandfather than that of his father-in-law.[17] Since, not to his lot alone did it fall to be the grandson of Jove; to him alone, was a Goddess given for a wife.

[Footnote 14: *Rhœtæum.*--Ver. 197. Sigæum and Rhœtæum were two promontories, near Troy, between which was an altar dedicated to Jupiter Panomphæus.]

[Footnote 15: *Panomphæan.*--Ver. 198. Jupiter had the title ‘Panomphæus,’ from πᾶν, ‘all,’ and ὀμφὴ, ‘the voice,’ either because he was worshipped by the voices of all, or because he was the author of all prophecy.]

[Footnote 16: *Build the walls*.--Ver. 204. It has been suggested that the story of Laomedon obtaining the aid of Neptune in building the walls of Troy, only meant that he built it of bricks made of clay mixed with water, and dried in the sun.]

[Footnote 17: *His father-in-law*.--Ver. 219. Nereus, the father of Thetis; was a Divinity of the sea, and was gifted with the power of prophecy.]

### Riley's Explanation

Laomedon, being King of Troy, and the city being open and defenceless, he undertook to enclose it with walls, and succeeded so well, that the work was attributed to Apollo. The strong banks which he was obliged to raise to keep out the sea and to prevent inundations, were regarded as the work of Neptune. In time, these banks being broken down by tempests, it was reported that the God of the sea had thus revenged himself on Laomedon, for refusing him the reward which had been agreed upon between them. This story received the more ready credit from the circumstance mentioned by Herodotus and Eustathius, that this king used the treasure belonging to the temple of Neptune, in raising these embankments, and building the walls of his city; having promised the priests to restore it when he should be in a condition to do so; which promise he never performed. Homer says that Neptune and Apollo tended the flocks while all the subjects of Laomedon were engaged in building the walls.

When these embankments were laid under water, and a plague began to rage within the city, the Trojans were told by an oracle that to appease the God of the sea, they must sacrifice a virgin of the royal blood. The lot fell upon Hesione, and she was exposed to the fury of a sea-monster. Hercules offered to deliver her for a reward of six horses, and having succeeded, was refused his recompense by Laomedon; whom he slew, and then plundered his city. He then gave the kingdom to Podarces, the son of Laomedon, and Hesione to his companion Telamon, who had assisted him. This monster was probably an allegorical representation of the inundations of the sea; and Hesione having been made the price of him that could succeed in devising a remedy, she was said to have been exposed to the fury of a monster. The six horses promised by Laomedon were perhaps so many ships, which Hercules demanded for his recompense; and this is the more likely, as the ancients said that these horses were so light and swift, that they ran upon the waves, which story seems to point at the qualities of a galley or ship under sail.

Lycophron gives a more wonderful version of the story. He says that the monster, to which Hesione was exposed, devoured Hercules, and that he was three days in its belly, and came out, having lost all his hair. This is, probably, a way of telling us that Hercules and his assistants were obliged to work in the water, which incommoded them very much. Palæphatus gives another explanation: he says that Hesione was about to be delivered up to a pirate, and that Hercules, on boarding his ship, was wounded, although afterwards victorious.

## Book XI, Fables V and VI (lines 221–409)

*Proteus foretells that Thetis shall have a son, who shall be more powerful than his father, and shall exceed him in valour. Jupiter, who is in love with Thetis, is alarmed at this prediction, and yields her to Peleus. The Goddess flies from his advances by assuming various shapes, till, by the advice of Proteus, he holds her fast, and then having married her, she bears Achilles. Peleus goes afterwards to Ceyx, king of Trachyn, to expiate the death of his brother Phocus, whom he has killed. Ceyx is in a profound melancholy, and tells him how his brother Dædalion, in the transports of his grief for his daughter Chione, who had been slain for vying with Diana, has been transformed into a hawk. During this relation, Peleus is informed that a wolf which Psamathe has sent to revenge the death of Phocus, is destroying his herds. He endeavours to avert the wrath of the Goddess, but she is deaf to his entreaties, till, by the intercession of Thetis, she is appeased, and she turns the wolf into stone.*

For the aged Proteus had said to Thetis, “Goddess of the waves, conceive; thou shalt be the mother of a youth, who by his gallant actions shall surpass the deeds of his father, and shall be called greater than he.” Therefore, lest the world might contain something greater than Jove, although he had felt no gentle flame in his breast, Jupiter avoided the embraces of Thetis,[18] {the Goddess} of the sea, and commanded his grandson, the son of Æacus,[19] to succeed to his own pretensions, and rush into the embraces of the ocean maid. There is a bay of Hæmonia, curved into a bending arch; its arms project out; there, were the water {but} deeper, there would be a harbour, {but} the sea is {just} covering the surface of the sand. It has a firm shore, which retains not the impression of the foot, nor delays the step {of the traveller}, nor is covered with sea-weeds. There is a grove of myrtle at hand, planted with particoloured berries. In the middle there is a cave, whether formed by nature or art, it is doubtful; still, by art rather. To this, Thetis, thou wast wont often to come naked, seated on thy harnessed dolphin. There Peleus seized upon thee, as thou wast lying fast bound in sleep; and because, being tried by entreaties, thou didst resist, he resolved upon violence, clasping thy neck with both his arms. And, unless thou hadst had recourse to thy wonted arts, by frequently changing thy shape, he would have succeeded in his attempt. But, at one moment, thou wast a bird (still, as a bird he held thee fast); at another time a large tree: to {that} tree did Peleus cling. Thy third form was that of a spotted tiger; frightened by that, the son of Æacus loosened his arms from thy body.

Then pouring wine upon its waters,[20] he worshipped the Gods of the sea, both with the entrails of sheep and with the smoke of frankincense; until the Carpathian[21] prophet said, from the middle of the waves, “Son of Æacus, thou shalt gain the alliance desired by thee. Do thou only, when she shall be resting fast asleep in the cool cave, bind her unawares with cords

and tenacious bonds. And let her not deceive thee, by imitating a hundred forms; but hold her fast, whatever she shall be, until she shall reassume the form which she had before." Proteus said this, and hid his face in the sea, and received his own waves at his closing words. Titan was {now} descending, and, with the pole of his chariot bent downward, was taking possession of the Hesperian main; when the beautiful Nereid, leaving the deep, entered her wonted place of repose. Hardly had Peleus well seized the virgin's limbs, {when} she changed her shape, until she perceived her limbs to be held fast, and her arms to be extended different ways. Then, at last, she sighed, and said, "Not without {the aid of} a Divinity, dost thou overcome me;" and then she appeared {as} Thetis {again}. The hero embraced her {thus} revealed, and enjoyed his wish, and by her was the father of great Achilles.

And happy was Peleus in his son, happy, too, in his wife, and one to whose lot all {blessings} had fallen, if you except the crime of his killing Phocus. The Trachinian land[22] received him guilty of his brother's blood, and banished from his native home. Here Ceyx, sprung from Lucifer for his father, and having the comeliness of his sire in his face, held the sway without violence and without bloodshed, who, being sad at that time and unlike his {former} self, lamented the loss of his brother. After the son of Æacus, wearied, both with troubles and the length of the journey, has arrived there, and has entered the city with a few attending him, and has left the flocks of sheep and the herds which he has brought with him, not far from the walls, in a shady valley; when an opportunity is first afforded him of approaching the prince, extending the symbols of peace[23] with his suppliant hand, he tells him who he is, and from whom descended. He only conceals his crime, and, dissembling as to the {true} reason of his banishment, he entreats {him} to aid him {by a reception} either in his city or in his territory. On the other hand, the Trachinian {prince} addresses him with gentle lips, in words such as these: "Peleus, our bounties are open even to the lowest ranks, nor do I hold an inhospitable sway. To this my inclination, thou bringest in addition as powerful inducements, an illustrious name, and Jupiter as thy grandsire. And do not lose thy time in entreaty; all that thou askest thou shalt have. Look upon all these things, whatever thou seest, as in part thy own: would that thou couldst behold them in better condition!" and {then} he weeps. Pelcus and his companions enquire what it is that occasions grief so great. To them he {thus} speaks:--

"Perhaps you may think that this bird, which lives upon prey, and affrights all the birds, always had wings. It was a man; and as great is the vigour of its courage, as he {who was} Dædalion by name was active, and bold in war, and ready for violence; {he was} sprung from him, for his father, who summons forth[24] Aurora, and withdraws the last from the heavens. Peace was cherished by me; the care of maintaining peace and my marriage contract was mine; cruel warfare pleased my brother; that prowess of his subdued both kings and nations, which, changed, now chases the Thisbean doves.[25] Chione was his daughter, who, highly endowed

with beauty, was pleasing to a thousand suitors, when marriageable at the age of twice seven years. By chance Phœbus, and the son of Maia, returning, the one from his own Delphi, the other from the heights of Cyllene, beheld her at the same moment, and at the same moment were inspired with passion. Apollo defers his hope of enjoyment until the hours of night; the other brooks no delay, and with his wand, that causes sleep, touches the maiden's face. At the potent touch she lies entranced, and suffers violence from the God. Night has {now} bespangled the heavens with stars; Phœbus personates an old woman, and takes those delights before enjoyed {in imagination}. When her mature womb had completed the {destined} time, Autolycus was born, a crafty offspring of the stock of the God with winged feet, ingenious at every kind of theft, {and} who used, not degenerating from his father's skill,[26] to make white out of black, and black out of white. From Phœbus was born (for she brought forth twins) Philammon, famous for his tuneful song, and for his lyre.

"{But} what avails it for her to have brought forth two children, and to have been pleasing to two Gods, and to have sprung from a valiant father, and the Thunderer as her ancestor?[27] Is even glory {thus} prejudicial to many? To her, at least, it was a prejudice; who dared to prefer herself to Diana, and decried the charms of the Goddess. But violent wrath was excited in her, and she said, 'We will please her by our deeds.'[28] And there was no delay: she bent her bow, and let fly an arrow from the string, and pierced with the reed the tongue that deserved it. The tongue was silent; nor did her voice, and the words which she attempted {to utter, now} follow; and life, with her blood, left her, as she endeavoured to speak. Oh hapless affection! What pain did I {then} endure in my heart, as her uncle, and what consolations did I give to my affectionate brother? These the father received no otherwise than rocks do the murmurs of the ocean, and he bitterly lamented his daughter {thus} snatched from him. But when he beheld her burning, four times had he an impulse to rush into the midst of the pile; thence repulsed, four times did he commit his swift limbs to flight, and, like an ox, bearing upon his galled neck the stings of hornets, he rushed where there was no path. Already did he seem to me to run faster than a human being, and you would have supposed that his feet had assumed wings. Therefore he outran all; and, made swift by the desire for death, he gained the heights of Parnassus.

"Apollo pitying him, when Dædalion would have thrown himself from the top of the rock, made him into a bird, and supported him, hovering {in the air} upon {these} sudden wings; and he gave him a curved beak, and crooked claws on his talons, his former courage, and strength greater {in proportion} than his body; and, now {become} a hawk, sufficiently benignant to none, he rages {equally} against all birds; and grieving {himself}, becomes the cause of grief to others."

While the son of Lucifer is relating these wonders about his brother, hastening with panting speed, Phocæan Antenor, the keeper of his herds, runs up to him. "Alas, Peleus! Peleus!" says he,

“I am the messenger to thee of a great calamity;” and {then} Peleus bids him declare whatever news it is that he has brought; and the Trachinian hero himself is in suspense, and trembles through apprehension. The other tells {his story:} “I had driven the weary bullocks to the winding shore, when the Sun at his height, in the midst of his course, could look back on as much of it as he could see to be {now} remaining; and a part of the oxen had bent their knees on the yellow sands, and, as they lay, viewed the expanse of the wide waters; some, with slow steps, were wandering here and there; others were swimming, and appearing with their lofty necks above the waves. A temple is hard by the sea, adorned neither with marble nor with gold, but {made} of solid beams, and shaded with an ancient grove; the Nereids and Nereus possess it. A sailor, while he was drying his nets upon the shore, told us that these were the Gods of the temple. Adjacent to this is a marsh, planted thickly with numerous willows, which the water of the stagnating waves of the sea has made into a swamp. From that spot, a huge monster, a wolf, roaring with a loud bellowing, alarms the neighbouring places, and comes forth from the thicket of the marsh, {both} having his thundering jaws covered with foam and with clotted blood, {and} his eyes suffused with red flame. Though he was raging both with fury and with hunger, still was he more excited by fury; for he did not care to satisfy his hunger by the slaughter of the oxen, and to satiate his dreadful appetite, but he mangled the whole herd, and, like a true foe, pulled each {to the ground}. Some, too, of ourselves, while we were defending them, wounded with his fatal bite, were killed. The shore and the nearest waves were red with blood, and the fens were filled with the lowings {of the herd}. But delay is dangerous, and the case does not allow us to hesitate: while anything is {still} left, let us all unite, and let us take up arms, arms, {I say}, and in a body let us bear weapons.”

{Thus} speaks the countryman. And the loss does not affect Peleus; but, remembering his crime, he considers that the bereaved Nereid has sent these misfortunes of his, as an offering to the departed Phocus. The Œtæan king[29] commands his men to put on their armour, and to take up stout weapons; together with whom, he himself is preparing to go. But Halcyone, his wife, alarmed at the tumult, runs out, and not yet having arranged all her hair, even that which is {arranged} she throws in disorder; and clinging to the neck of her husband, she entreats him, both with words and tears, to send assistance without himself, and {so} to save two lives in one. The son of Æacus says to her, “O queen, lay aside thy commendable and affectionate fears; the kindness of thy proposal is {too} great {for me}. It does not please me, that arms should be employed against this new monster. The Divinity of the sea must be adored.” There is a lofty tower; a fire {is} upon the extreme summit,[30] a place grateful to wearied ships. They go up there, and with sighs they behold the bulls lying scattered upon the sea shore, and the cruel ravager with blood-stained mouth, having his long hair stained with gore. Peleus, thence extending his hands towards the open sea, entreats the azure Psamathe to lay aside her wrath,

and to give him her aid. But she is not moved by the words of the son of Æacus, thus entreating. Thetis, interceding on behalf of her husband, obtains that favour {for him}.

But still the wolf persists, not recalled from the furious slaughter, {and} keenly urged by the sweetness of the blood; until she changes him into marble, as he is fastening on the neck of a mangled heifer. His body preserves every thing except its colour. The colour of the stone shows that he is not now a wolf, and ought not now to be feared. Still, the Fates do not permit the banished Peleus to settle in this land: the wandering exile goes to the Magnetes,[31] and there receives from the Hæmonian Acastus[32] an expiation of the murder.

[Footnote 18: *Embraces of Thetis.*--Ver. 226. Fulgentius suggests, that the meaning of this is, that Jupiter, or fire, will not unite with Thetis, who represents water.]

[Footnote 19: *Son of Æacus.*--Ver. 227. Peleus was the son of Æacus, who was the son of Jupiter, by Ægina, the daughter of Æsopus.]

[Footnote 20: *Upon its waters.*--Ver. 247. While libations were made to the other Divinities, either on their altars, or on the ground, the marine Deities were so honoured by pouring wine on the waves of the sea.]

[Footnote 21: *Carpathian.*--Ver. 249. The Carpathian sea was so called from the Isle of Carpathus, which lay between the island of Rhodes and the Egyptian coast.]

[Footnote 22: *Trachinian land.*--Ver. 269. Apollodorus says, that Peleus, when exiled, repaired to Phthia, and not to the city of Trachyn.]

[Footnote 23: *Symbols of peace.*--Ver. 276. The 'velamenta' were branches of olive, surrounded with bandages of wool, which were held in the hands of those who begged for mercy or pardon. The wool covering the hand was emblematical of peace, the hand being thereby rendered powerless to effect mischief.]

[Footnote 24: *Who summons forth.*--Ver. 296. This is a periphrasis for Lucifer, or the Morning Star, which precedes, and appears to summon the dawn.]

[Footnote 25: *Thisbean doves.*--Ver. 300. Thisbe was a town of Bœotia, so called from Thisbe, the daughter of Æsopus. It was famous for the number of doves which it produced.]

[Footnote 26: *Father's skill.*--Ver. 314. Being the son of Mercury, who was noted for his thieving propensities.]

[Footnote 27: *Her ancestor.*--Ver. 319. Jupiter was the great-grandfather of Chione, being the father of Lucifer, and the grandfather of Dædalion.]

[Footnote 28: *By our deeds*.--Ver. 323. This is said sarcastically, as much as to say, 'If I do not please her by my looks, at least I will by my actions.']

[Footnote 29: *The Œtæan king*.--Ver. 383. Namely, Ceyx, the king of Trachyn, which city Hercules had founded, at the foot of Mount Œta.]

[Footnote 30: *The extreme summit*.--Ver. 393. The upper stories of the ancient light-houses had windows looking towards the sea; and torches, or fires (probably in cressets, or fire-pans, at the end of poles), were kept burning on them by night, to guide vessels. 'Pharos,' or 'Pharus,' the name given to light-houses, is derived from the celebrated one built on the island of Pharos, at the entrance of the port of Alexandria. It was erected by Sostratus, of Cnidos, at the expense of one of the Ptolemies, and cost 800 talents. It was of huge dimensions, square, and constructed of white stone. It contained many stories, and diminished in width from below upwards. There were 'phari,' or 'light-houses,' at Ostia, Ravenna, Capreæ, and Brundisium.]

[Footnote 31: *The Magnetes*.--Ver. 408. The Magnetes were the people of Magnesia, a district of Thessaly. They were famed for their skill in horsemanship.]

[Footnote 32: *Hæmonian Acastus*.--Ver. 409. Acastus was the son of Pelias. His wife Hippolyta, being enamoured of Peleus, and he not encouraging her advances, she accused him of having made an attempt on her virtue. On this, Acastus determined upon his death; and having taken him to Mount Pelion, on the pretext of hunting, he took away his arms, and left him there, to be torn to pieces by the wild beasts. Mercury, or, according to some, Chiron, came to his assistance, and gave him a sword made by Vulcan, with which he slew Acastus and his wife.]

## Riley's Explanation

Thetis being a woman of extraordinary beauty, it is not improbable, that in the Epithalamia that were composed on her marriage, it was asserted, that the Gods had contended for her hand, and had been forced to give way, in obedience to the superior power of destiny. Hyginus says that Prometheus was the only person that was acquainted with the oracle; and that he imparted it to Jupiter, on condition that he would deliver him from the eagle that tormented him: whereupon the God sent Hercules to Mount Caucasus, to perform his promise. It was on the occasion of this marriage that the Goddess Discord presented the golden apple, the dispute for which occasioned the Trojan war. The part of the story which relates how she assumed various forms, to avoid the advances of Peleus, is perhaps an ingenious method of stating, that having several suitors, she was originally disinclined to Peleus, and used every pretext to avoid him, until, by the advice of a wise friend, he found means to remove all the difficulties which opposed his alliance with her.

Some writers state that Thetis was the daughter of Chiron; but Euripides, in a fragment of his Iphigenia, tells us that Achilles, who was the son of this marriage, took a pride in carrying the figure of a Nereid on his shield. The three sons of Æacus were Peleus, Telamon, and Phocus; while they were playing at quoits, the latter accidentally received a blow from Peleus, which killed him. Ovid, however, seems here to imply that Peleus killed his brother purposely.

The story of Chione most probably took its rise from the difference between the inclinations of the two children that she bore. Autolycus, being cunning, and addicted to theft, he was styled the son of Mercury; while Philammon being a lover of music, Apollo was said to be his father. According to Pausanias, Autolycus was the son of Dædalion, and not of Chione. The story of the wolf, the minister of the vengeance of Psamathe, for the death of Phocus, is probably built on historical grounds. Æacus had two wives, Ægina and Psamathe, the sister of Thetis; by the first he had Peleus and Telamon; by the second, Phocus. Lycomedes, the king of Scyros, the brother of Psamathe, resolved to revenge the death of his nephew, whom Peleus had killed: and declared war against Ceyx, for receiving him into his dominions. The troops of Lycomedes ravaged the country, and carried away the flocks of Peleus: on which prayers and entreaties were resorted to, with the view of pacifying him; which object having been effected, he withdrew his troops. On this, it was rumoured that he was changed into a rock, after having ravaged the country like a wild beast, which comparison was perhaps suggested by the fact of his name being partly compounded of the word λυκὸς, ‘a wolf.’

## Book XI, Fable VII (lines 410–748)

*Ceyx, going to Claros, to consult the oracle about his brother's fate, is shipwrecked on the voyage. Juno sends Iris to the God of Sleep, who, at her request, dispatches Morpheus to Halcyone, in a dream, to inform her of the death of her husband. She awakes in the morning, full of solicitude, and goes to the shore where she finds the body of Ceyx thrown up by the waves. She is about to cast herself into the sea in despair, when the Gods transform them both into king-fishers.*

In the mean time, Ceyx being disturbed in mind, both on account of the strange fate of his brother, and {the wonders} that had succeeded his brother, prepares to go to the Clarian God, that he may consult the sacred oracle, the consolation of mortals: for the profane Phorbas,[33] with his Phlegyans, renders the {oracle} of Delphi inaccessible. Yet he first makes thee acquainted with his design, most faithful Halcyone, whose bones receive a chill, and a paleness, much resembling boxwood, comes over her face, and her cheeks are wet with tears gushing forth. Three times attempting to speak, three times she moistens her face with tears, and, sobs interrupting her affectionate complaints, she says:--

"What fault of mine, my dearest, has changed thy mind? Where is that care of me, which once used to exist? Canst thou now be absent without anxiety, thy Halcyone being left behind? Now, is a long journey pleasing to thee? Now, am I dearer to thee when at a distance? But I suppose thy journey is by land, and I shall only grieve, and shall not fear as well, and my anxiety will be free from apprehension. The seas and the aspect of the stormy ocean affright me. And lately I beheld broken planks on the sea shore; and often have I read the names upon tombs,[34] without bodies {there buried}. And let not any deceitful assurance influence thy mind, that the grandson of Hippotas[35] is thy father-in-law; who confines the strong winds in prison, and assuages the seas when he pleases. When, once let loose, the winds have taken possession of the deep, nothing is forbidden to them; every land and every sea is disregarded by them. Even the clouds of heaven do they insult, and by their bold onsets strike forth the brilliant fires.[36] The more I know them, (for I do know them, and, when little, have often seen them in my father's abode,) the more I think they are to be dreaded. But if thy resolution, my dear husband, cannot be altered by my entreaties, and if thou art {but} too determined to go; take me, too, as well. At least, we shall be tossed together; nor shall I fear anything, but what I shall be {then} suffering; and together we shall endure whatever shall happen; together we shall be carried over the wide seas."

By such words and the tears of the daughter of Æolus, is her husband, son of the {Morning} Star, {much} affected; for the flame {of love} exists no less in him. But he neither wishes to

abandon his proposed voyage, nor to admit Halcyone to a share in the danger; and he says, in answer, many things to console her timorous breast. And yet she does not, on that account, approve of his reasons. To them he adds this alleviation, with which alone he influences his affectionate {wife}: “All delay will, indeed, be tedious to me; but I swear to thee by the fire of my sire, (if only the fates allow me to return,) that I will come back before the moon has twice completed her orb.” When, by these promises, a hope has been given her of his {speedy} return, he forthwith orders a ship, drawn out of the dock, to be launched in the sea, and to be supplied with its {proper} equipments. On seeing this, Halcyone again shuddered, as though presaging the future, and shed her flowing tears, and gave him embraces; and at last, in extreme misery, she said, with a sad voice, “Farewell!” and then she sank with all her body {to the ground}.

But the youths, while Ceyx is {still} seeking pretexts for delay, in double rows,[37] draw the oars towards their hardy breasts, and cleave the main with equal strokes. She raises her weeping eyes, and sees her husband standing on the crooked stern, and by waving his hand making the first signs to her; and she returns the signals. When the land has receded further, and her eyes are unable to distinguish his countenance: {still}, while she can, she follows the retreating ship with her sight. When this too, borne onward, cannot be distinguished from the distance; still she looks at the sails waving from the top of the mast. When she no {longer} sees the sails; she anxiously seeks her deserted bed, and lays herself on the couch. The bed, and the spot, renew the tears of Halcyone, and remind her what part {of herself} is wanting.

They have {now} gone out of harbour, and the breeze shakes the rigging; the sailor urges the pendent oars towards their sides;[38] and fixes the sailyards[39] on the top of the mast, and spreads the canvass full from the mast, and catches the coming breezes. Either the smaller part, or, at least, not more than half her course, had {now} been cut by the ship, and both lands were at a great distance, when, towards night, the sea began to grow white with swelling waves, and the boisterous East wind to blow with greater violence. Presently the master cries, “At once, lower the top sails, and furl the whole of the sail to the yards!” He orders, {but} the adverse storm impedes the execution; and the roaring of the sea does not allow any voice to be heard.

Yet, of their own accord, some hasten to draw in the oars, some to secure the sides, some to withdraw the sails from the winds. This one pumps up the waves, and pours back the sea into the sea; another takes off the yards. While these things are being done without any order, the raging storm is increasing, and the fierce winds wage war on every side, and stir up the furious main. The master of the ship is himself alarmed, and himself confesses that he does not know what is their {present} condition, nor what to order or forbid; so great is the amount of their misfortunes, and more powerful than all his skill. For the men are making a noise with their shouts, the cordage with its rattling, the heavy waves with the dashing of {other} waves, the skies with the thunder. The sea is upturned with billows, and appears to reach the heavens, and to

sprinkle the surrounding clouds with its foam. And one while, when it turns up the yellow sands from the bottom, it is of the same colour with them; at another time {it is} blacker than the Stygian waves. Sometimes it is level, and is white with resounding foam. The Trachinian ship too, is influenced by these vicissitudes; and now aloft, as though from the summit of a mountain, it seems to look down upon the vallies and the depths of Acheron; at another moment, when the engulphing sea has surrounded it, sunk below, it seems to be looking at heaven above from the infernal waters. Struck on its side by the waves, it often sends forth a low crashing sound, and beaten against, it sounds with no less noise, than on an occasion when the iron battering ram, or the balista, is shaking the shattered towers. And as fierce lions are wont, gaining strength in their career, to rush with their breasts upon the weapons, and arms extended {against them}; so the water, when upon the rising of the winds it had rushed onwards, advanced against the rigging of the ship, and was much higher than it.

And now the bolts shrink, and despoiled of their covering of wax,[40] the seams open wide, and afford a passage to the fatal waves. Behold! vast showers fall from the dissolving clouds, and you would believe that the whole of the heavens is descending into the deep, and that the swelling sea is ascending to the tracts of heaven. The sails are wet with the rain, and the waves of the ocean are mingled with the waters of the skies. The firmament is without its fires; {and} the gloomy night is oppressed both with its own darkness and that of the storm. Yet the lightnings disperse these, and give light as they flash; the waters are on fire with the flames of the thunder-bolts. And now, too, the waves make an inroad into the hollow texture of the ship; and as a soldier, superior to all the rest of the number, after he has often sprung forward against the fortifications of a defended city, at length gains his desires; and, inflamed with the desire of glory, {though but} one among a thousand more, he still mounts the wall, so, when the violent waves have beaten against the lofty sides, the fury of the tenth wave,[41] rising more impetuously {than the rest}, rushes onward; and it ceases not to attack the wearied ship, before it descends within the walls, as it were, of the captured bark. Part, then, of the sea is still attempting to get into the ship, part is within it. All are now in alarm, with no less intensity than a city is wont to be alarmed, while some are undermining the walls without, and others within have possession of the walls. {All} art fails them, and their courage sinks; and as many {shapes of} death seem to rush and to break in {upon them}, as the waves that approach. One does not refrain from tears; another is stupefied; another calls those happy[42] whom funeral rites await; another, in his prayers, addresses the Gods, and lifting up his hands in vain to that heaven which he sees not, implores their aid. His brothers and his parent recur to the mind of another; to another, his home, with his pledges {of affection}, and {so} what has been left behind by each.

{The remembrance of} Halcyone affects Ceyx; on the lips of Ceyx there is nothing but Halcyone; and though her alone he regrets, still he rejoices that she is absent. {Gladly}, too, would he look

back to the shore of his native land, and turn his last glance towards his home; but he knows not where it is. The sea is raging in a hurricane[43] so vast, and all the sky is concealed beneath the shade brought on by the clouds of pitchy darkness, and the face of the night is redoubled {in gloom}. The mast is broken by the violence of the drenching tempest; the helm, too, is broken; and the undaunted wave, standing over its spoil, looks down like a conqueror, upon the waves as they encircle {below}. Nor, when precipitated, does it rush down less violently, than if any {God} were to hurl Athos or Pindus, torn up from its foundations, into the open sea; and with its weight and its violence together, it sinks the ship to the bottom. With her, a great part of the crew overwhelmed in the deep water, and not rising again to the air, meet their fate. Some seize hold of portions and broken pieces of the ship. Ceyx himself seizes a fragment of the wreck, with that hand with which he was wont {to wield} the sceptre, and in vain, alas! he invokes his father, and his father-in-law. But chiefly on his lips, as he swims, is his wife Halcyone. Her he thinks of, and {her name} he repeats: he prays the waves to impel his body before her eyes; and that when dead he may be entombed by the hands of his friends. While he {still} swims, he calls upon Halcyone far away, as often as the billows allow[44] him to open his mouth, and in the very waves he murmurs {her name}. {When}, lo! a darkening arch[45] of waters breaks over the middle of the waves, and buries his head sinking beneath the bursting billow. Lucifer was obscured that night, and such that you could not have recognized him; and since he was not allowed to depart from the heavens,[46] he concealed his face beneath thick clouds.

In the meantime, the daughter of Æolus, ignorant of so great misfortunes, reckons the nights; and now she hastens {to prepare} the garments[47] for him to put on, and now, those which, when he comes, she herself may wear, and vainly promises herself his return. She, indeed, piously offers frankincense to all the Gods above; but, before all, she pays her adorations at the temple of Juno, and comes to the altars on behalf of her husband, who is not in existence. And she prays that her husband may be safe, and that he may return, and may prefer no woman before her. But this {last} alone can be her lot, out of so many of her wishes. But the Goddess endures not any longer to be supplicated on behalf of one who is dead; and, that she may repel her polluted hands[48] from the altars,--she says, “Iris, most faithful messenger of my words, hasten quickly to the soporiferous court of Sleep, and command him, under the form of Ceyx who is dead, to send a vision to Halcyone, to relate her real misfortune.” {Thus} she says. Iris assumes garment of a thousand colours, and, marking the heavens with her curving arch, she repairs to the abode of the king, {Sleep}, as bidden, concealed beneath a rock.

There is near the Cimmerians[49] a cave with a long recess, a hollowed mountain, the home and the habitation of slothful Sleep, into which the Sun, {whether} rising, or in his mid course, or setting, can never come. Fogs mingled with darkness are exhaled from the ground, and {it is} a twilight with a dubious light. No wakeful bird, with the notes of his crested features, there calls

forth the morn; nor do the watchful dogs, or the geese more sagacious[50] than the dogs, break the silence with their voices. No wild beasts, no cattle, no boughs waving with the breeze, no {loud} outbursts of the human voice, {there} make any sound; mute Rest has there her abode. But from the bottom of the rock runs a stream, the waters of Lethe,[51] through which the rivulet, trickling with a murmuring noise amid the sounding pebbles, invites sleep. Before the doors of the cavern, poppies bloom in abundance, and innumerable herbs, from the juice of which the humid night gathers sleep, and spreads it over the darkened Earth. There is no door in the whole dwelling, to make a noise by the turning of the hinges; no porter at the entrance. But in the middle is a couch, raised high upon black ebony, stuffed with feathers, of a dark colour, concealed by a dark coverlet; on which the God himself lies, his limbs dissolved in sloth. Around him lie, in every direction, imitating divers shapes, unsubstantial dreams as many as the harvest bears ears of corn, the wood green leaves, the shore the sands thrown up. Into this, soon as the maiden had entered, and had put aside with her hands the visions that were in her way, the sacred house shone with the splendour of her garment, and the God, with difficulty lifting up his eyes sunk in languid sloth, again and again relapsing, and striking the upper part of his breast with his nodding chin, at last aroused himself from his {dozing}; and, raised on his elbow, he inquired why she had come; for he knew {who she was}.

But she {replied}, “Sleep, thou repose of all things; Sleep, thou gentlest of the Deities; thou peace of the mind, from which care flies, who dost soothe the hearts {of men}, wearied with the toils of the day, and refittest them for labour, command a vision, that resembles in similitude the real shape, to go to Halcyone, in Herculean Trachyn, in the form of the king, and to assume the form of one that has suffered shipwreck. Juno commands this.” After Iris had executed her commission, she departed; for she could no longer endure the effects of the vapour; and, as soon as she perceived sleep creeping over her limbs, she took to flight,[52] and departed along the bow by which she had come just before.

But Father {Sleep}, out of the multitude of his thousand sons, raises Morpheus,[53] a {skilful} artist, and an imitator of {any human} shape. No one more dexterously than he mimics the gait, and the countenance, and the mode of speaking; he adds the dress, too, and the words most commonly used by any one. But he imitates men only; for another one becomes a wild beast, becomes a bird, {or} becomes a serpent, with its lengthened body: this one, the Gods above call Icelos; the tribe of mortals, Phobetor. There is likewise a third, {master} of a different art, {called} Phantasos: he cleverly changes {himself} into earth, and stone, and water, and a tree, and all those things which are destitute of life. These are wont, by night, to show their features to kings and to generals, {while} others wander amid the people and the commonalty. These, Sleep, the aged {God}, passes by, and selects Morpheus alone from all his brothers, to execute the

commands of the daughter of Thaumas; and again he both drops his head, sunk in languid drowsiness, and shrinks back within the lofty couch.

{Morpheus} flies through the dark with wings that make no noise, and in a short space of intervening time arrives at the Hæmonian city; and, laying aside his wings from off his body, he assumes the form of Ceyx; and in that form, wan, and like one without blood, without garments, he stands before the bed of his wretched wife. The beard of the hero appears to be dripping, and the water to be falling thickly from his soaking hair. Then leaning on the bed, with tears running down his face, he says these words: "My most wretched wife, dost thou recognise {thy} Ceyx, or are my looks {so} changed with death? Observe me; thou wilt {surely} know me: and, instead of thy husband, thou wilt find the ghost of thy husband. Thy prayers, Halcyone, have availed me nothing; I have perished. Do not promise thyself, {thus} deceived, my {return}. The cloudy South wind caught my ship in the Ægean Sea,[54] and dashed it to pieces, tossed by the mighty blasts; and the waves choked my utterance, in vain calling upon thy name. It is no untruthful messenger that tells thee this: thou dost not hear these things through vague rumours. I, myself, shipwrecked, in person, am telling thee my fate. Come, arise then, shed tears, and put on mourning; and do not send me unlamented to the phantom {realms of} Tartarus."

To these words Morpheus adds a voice, which she may believe to be that of her husband. He seems, too, to be shedding real tears, and his hands have the gesture of Ceyx. As she weeps, Halcyone groans aloud, and moves her arms in her sleep, and catching at his body, grasps the air; and she cries aloud, "Stay, whither dost thou hurry? We will go together." Disturbed by her own voice, and by the appearance of her husband, she shakes off sleep; and first she looks about there, to see if he, who has been so lately seen, is there; for the servants, roused by her voice, have brought in lights. After she has found him nowhere, she smites her face with her hands, and tears her garments from off her breast, and beats her breast itself. Nor cares she to loosen her hair; she tears it, and says to her nurse, as she inquires what is the occasion of her sorrow: "Halcyone is no more! no more! with her own Ceyx is she dead. Away with words of comfort. He has perished by shipwreck. I have seen him, and I knew him; and as he departed, desirous to detain him, I extended my hands towards him. The ghost fled: but, yet it was the undoubted and the real ghost of my husband. It had not, indeed, if thou askest me {that}, his wonted features; nor was he looking cheerful with his former countenance. Hapless, I beheld him, pale, and naked, and with his hair still dripping. Lo! ill-fated {man}, he stood on this very spot;" and she seeks the prints of his footsteps, if any are left. "This it was, this is what I dreaded in my ill-boding mind, and I entreated that thou wouldst not, deserting me, follow the winds. But, I could have wished, since thou didst depart to perish, that, at least, thou hadst taken me as well. To have gone with thee, {yes}, with thee, would have been an advantage to me; for then neither should I have spent any part of my life otherwise than together with thee, nor would my death

have been divided {from thee}. Now, absent {from thee}, I perish; now, absent, I am tossed on the waves; and the sea has thee without me.

“My heart were more cruel than the sea itself, were I to strive to protract my life any further; and, were I to struggle to survive so great a misfortune. But I will not struggle, nor, hapless one, will I abandon thee; and, at least, I will {now} come to be thy companion. And, in the tomb, if the urn {does} not, yet the inscription[55] shall unite us: if {I touch} not thy bones with my bones, still will I unite thy name with my name.” Grief forbids her saying more, and wailings come between each word, and groans are heaved from her sorrow-stricken breast.

It is {now} morning: she goes forth from her abode to the sea-shore, and, wretched, repairs to that place from which she had seen him go, and says, “While he lingered, and while he was loosening the cables, at his departure, he gave me kisses upon this sea-shore;” and while she calls to recollection the incidents which she had observed with her eyes, and looks out upon the sea, she observes on the flowing wave, I know not what {object}, like a body, within a distant space: and at first she is doubtful what it is. After the water has brought it a little nearer, and, although it is {still} distant, it is plain that it is a corpse. Ignorant who it may be, because it is ship-wrecked, she is moved at the omen, and, though unknown, would fain give it a tear. “Alas! thou wretched one!” she says, “whoever thou art; and if thou hast any wife!” Driven by the waves, the body approaches nearer. The more she looks at it, the less and the less is she mistress of her senses. And now she sees it brought close to the land, that now she can well distinguish it: it is her husband. “’Tis he!” she exclaims, and, on the instant, she tears her face, her hair, {and} her garments; and, extending her trembling hands towards Ceyx, she says, “And is it thus, Oh dearest husband! is it thus, Oh ill-fated one! that thou dost return to me?”

A mole, made by the hand of man, adjoins the waves, which breaks the first fury of the ocean, and weakens the first shock of its waters. Upon that she leaped, and ’tis wondrous that she could. She flew, and beating the light air with her wings newly formed, she, a wretched bird, skimmed the surface of the water. And, while she flew, her croaking mouth, with its slender bill, uttered a sound like that of one in sadness, and full of complaining. But when she touched the body, dumb, and without blood, embracing the beloved limbs with her new-made wings, in vain she gave him cold kisses with her hardened bill. The people were in doubt whether Ceyx was sensible of this, or whether, by the motion of the wave, he seemed to raise his countenance; but {really} he was sensible of it; and, at length, through the pity of the Gods above, both were changed into birds. Meeting with the same fate, even then their love remained. Nor, when {now} birds, is the conjugal tie dissolved: they couple, and they become parents; and for seven calm days,[56] in the winter-time, does Halcyone brood upon her nest floating on the sea.[57] Then the passage of the deep is safe; Æolus keeps the winds in, and restrains them from sallying forth, and secures a {smooth} sea for his descendants.

[Footnote 33: *The profane Phorbas*.--Ver. 414. The temple at Delphi was much nearer and more convenient for Ceyx to resort to; but at that period it was in the hands of the Phlegyans, a people of Thessaly, of predatory and lawless habits, who had plundered the Delphic shrine. They were destroyed by thunderbolts and pestilence, or, according to some authors, by Neptune, who swept them away in a flood. Phorbas, here mentioned, was one of the Lapithæ, a savage robber, who forced strangers to box with him, and then slew them. Having the presumption to challenge the Gods, he was slain by Apollo.]

[Footnote 34: *Names upon tombs*.--Ver. 429. Cenotaphs, or honorary tombs, were erected in honour of those, who having been drowned, their bodies could not be found. One great reason for erecting these memorials was the notion, that the souls of those who had received no funeral honours, wandered in agony on the banks of the Styx for the space of one hundred years.]

[Footnote 35: *Hippotas*.--Ver. 431. Æolus was the grandson of Hippotas, through his daughter Sergesta, who bore Æolus to Jupiter. Ovid says that he was the father of Halcyone; but, according to Lucian, she was the daughter of Æolus the Hellenian, the grandson of Deucalion.]

[Footnote 36: *Brilliant fires*.--Ver. 436. Ovid probably here had in view the description given by Lucretius, commencing Book i. line 272.]

[Footnote 37: *In double rows*.--Ver. 462. By this it is implied that the ship of Ceyx was a 'biremis,' or one with two ranks of rowers; one rank being placed above the other. Pliny the Elder attributes the invention of the 'biremis' to the Erythræans. Those with three ranks of rowers were introduced by the Corinthians; while Dionysius, the first king of Sicily, was the inventor of the Quadriremis, or ship with four ranks of rowers. Quinqueremes, or those with five ranks, are said to have been the invention of the Salaminians. The first use of those with six ranks has been ascribed to the Syracusans. Ships were sometimes built with twelve, twenty, and even forty ranks of rowers, but they appear to have been intended rather for curiosity than for use. As, of course, the labour of each ascending rank increased, through the necessity of the higher ranks using longer oars, the pay of the lowest rank was the lowest, their work being the easiest. Where there were twenty ranks or more, the upper oars required more than one man to manage them. Ptolemy Philopater had a vessel built as a curiosity, which had no less than four thousand rowers.]

[Footnote 38: *Towards their sides*.--Ver. 475. 'Obvertere lateri remos' most probably means 'To feather the oars,' which it is especially necessary to do in a gale, to avoid the retarding power of the wind against the surface of the blade of the oar.]

[Footnote 39: *Fixes the sail-yards*.--Ver. 476. 'Cornua' means, literally, 'The ends or points of the sail-yards,' or 'Antennæ:' but here the word is used to signify the sail-yards themselves.]

[Footnote 40: *Covering of wax*.--Ver. 514. The 'Cera' with which the seams of the ships were stopped, was most probably a composition of wax and pitch, or other bituminous and resinous substances.]

[Footnote 41: *The tenth wave*.--Ver. 530. This is said in allusion to the belief that every tenth wave exceeded the others in violence.]

[Footnote 42: *Calls those happy*.--Ver. 540. Those who died on shore would obtain funeral rites; while those who perished by shipwreck might become food for the fishes, a fate which was regarded by the ancients with peculiar horror. Another reason for thus regarding death by shipwreck, was the general belief among the ancients, that the soul was an emanation from æther, or fire, and that it was contrary to the laws of nature for it to be extinguished by water. Ovid says in his Tristia, or Lament (Book I. El. 2, l. 51-57), 'I fear not death: 'tis the dreadful kind of death; Take away the shipwreck: then death will be a gain to me. 'Tis something for one, either dying a natural death, or by the sword, to lay his breathless corpse in the firm ground, and to impart his wishes to his kindred, and to hope for a sepulchre, and not to be food for the fishes of the sea.']

[Footnote 43: *A hurricane*.--Ver. 548-9. 'Tanta vertigine pontus Fervet' is transcribed by Clarke, 'The sea is confounded with so great a vertigo.']

[Footnote 44: *The billows allow*.--Ver. 566. 'Quoties sinit hiscere fluctus' is rendered by Clarke, 'As oft as the waves suffer him to gape.']

[Footnote 45: *A darkening arch*.--Ver. 568. Possibly 'niger arcus' means a sweeping wave, black with the sand which it has swept from the depths of the ocean; or else with the reflection of the dark clouds.]

[Footnote 46: *From the heavens*.--Ver. 571. The word Olympus is frequently used by the poets to signify 'the heavens;' as the mountain of that name in Thessaly, from its extreme height, was supposed to be the abode of the Gods.]

[Footnote 47: *Prepare the garments*.--Ver. 575. Horace tells us that their clients wove garments for the Roman patricians; and the females of noble family did the same for their husbands, children, and brothers. Ovid, in the Fasti, describes Lucretia as making a 'lacerna,' or cloak, for her husband Collatinus. She says to her hand-maidens, 'With all speed there must be sent to your master a cloak made with our hands.' (Book ii. l. 746.) Suetonius tells us that Augustus would wear no clothes but those made by his wife, sister, or daughter.]

[Footnote 48: *Polluted hands*.--Ver. 584. All persons who had been engaged in the burial of the dead were considered to be polluted, and were not allowed to enter the temples of the Gods till

they had been purified. Among the Greeks, persons who had been supposed to have died in foreign countries, and whose funeral rites had been performed in an honorary manner by their own relatives, if it turned out that they were not dead, and they returned to their own country, were considered impure, and were only purified by being dressed in swaddling clothes, and treated like new-born infants. We shall, then, be hardly surprised at Juno considering Halcyone to be polluted by the death of her husband Ceyx, although at a distance, and as yet unknown to her.]

[Footnote 49: *The Cimmerians*.--Ver. 592. Ovid appropriately places the abode of the drowsy God in the cold, damp, and foggy regions of the Cimmerians, who are supposed, by some authors, to have been a people of Sarmatia, or Scythia, near the Palus Mæotis, or sea of Azof. Other writers suppose that a fabulous race of people, said to live near Baiæ in Italy, and to inhabit dark caves throughout the day, while they sallied forth to plunder at night, are here referred to. This description of the abode of Sleep, and of his appearance and attendants, is supposed to have been borrowed by Ovid from one of the Greek poets.]

[Footnote 50: *Geese more sagacious*.--Ver. 599. This is said in compliment to the geese, for the service they rendered, in giving the alarm, and saving the Capitol, when in danger of being taken by the Gauls.]

[Footnote 51: *Waters of Lethe*.--Ver. 603. After the dead had tasted the waters of Lethe, one of the rivers of Hell, it was supposed that they lost all recollection of the events of their former life.]

[Footnote 52: *Took to flight*.--Ver. 632. Clarke translates this line, 'Away she scours, and returns through the bow through which she had come.']

[Footnote 53: *Morpheus*.--Ver. 635. Morpheus was so called from the Greek μορφὴ, 'shape,' or 'figure,' because he assumed various shapes. Icelos has his name from the Greek ἴκελος, 'like,' for a similar reason. Phobetor is from the Greek φοβὸς, 'fear,' because it was his office to terrify mortals. Lucian appears to mean the same Deity, under the name of Taraxion. Phantasos is from the Greek φάντασις, 'fancy.']

[Footnote 54: *In the Ægean Sea*.--Ver. 663. The Ægean Sea lay between the city of Trachyn and the coast of Ionia, whither Ceyx had gone.]

[Footnote 55: *The inscription*.--Ver. 706. The epitaphs on the tombs of the ancients usually contained the name of the person, his age, and (with the Greeks) some account of the principal events of his life. Halcyone, in her affectionate grief, promises her husband, at least, an honorary funeral, and a share in her own epitaph.]

[Footnote 56: *Seven calm days*.--Ver. 745. Simonides mentions eleven as being the number of the days; Philochorus, nine; but Demagoras says seven, the number here adopted by Ovid.]

[Footnote 57: *Floating on the sea*.--Ver. 746. The male of the kingfisher was said by the ancients to be so constant to his mate, that on her death he refused to couple with any other, for which reason the poets considered that bird as the emblem of conjugal affection. The sea was supposed to be always calm when the female was sitting; from which time of serenity, our proverb, which speaks of 'Halcyon days,' takes its rise.]

## Riley's Explanation

According to the testimony of several of the ancient writers, Ceyx was the king of Trachyn, and was a prince of great knowledge and experience; and many had recourse to him to atone for the murders which they had committed, whether through imprudence or otherwise. Pausanias says that Eurystheus having summoned Ceyx to deliver up to him the children of Hercules, that prince, who was not able to maintain a war against so powerful a king, sent the youths to Theseus, who took them into his protection.

To recover from the melancholy consequent upon the death of his brother Dædalion and his niece Chione, he went to Claros to consult the oracle of Apollo, and was shipwrecked on his return; on which, his wife, Halcyone, was so afflicted, that she died of grief, or else threw herself into the sea, as Hyginus informs us. It was said that they were changed into the birds which we call kingfishers, a story which, probably, has no other foundation than the name of Halcyone, which signifies that bird; which by the ancients was considered to be the symbol of conjugal affection.

Apollodorus, however, does not give us so favourable an idea of the virtue of these persons as Ovid has done. According to him, it was their pride which proved the cause of their destruction. Jupiter enraged at Ceyx, because he had assumed his name as Halcyone had done that of Juno, changed them both into birds, he becoming a cormorant, and she a kingfisher. This story is remarkable for the beautiful and affecting manner in which it is told.

## Book XI, Fable VIII (lines 749–795)

*The Nymph Hesperia flying from Æsacus, who is enamoured of her, is bitten by a serpent, and instantly dies from the effects of the wound. He is so afflicted at her death, that he throws himself into the sea, and is transformed into a didapper.*

Some old man[58] observes them as they fly over the widely extended seas, and commends their love, preserved to the end {of their existence}. One, close by, or the same, if chance so orders it, says, “This one, too, which you see, as it cuts through the sea, and having its legs drawn up,” pointing at a didapper, with its wide throat, “was the son of a king. And, if you want to come down to him in one lengthened series, his ancestors are Ilus, and Assaracus, and Ganymede,[59] snatched away by Jupiter, and the aged Laomedon, and Priam, to whom were allotted the last days of Troy. He himself was the brother of Hector, and had he not experienced a strange fate in his early youth, perhaps he would have had a name not inferior to {that} of Hector; although the daughter of Dymas bore this {last}. Alexirhoë, the daughter of the two-horned Granicus,[60] is said secretly to have brought forth Æsacus, under shady Ida.

“He loathed the cities, and distant from the splendid court, frequented the lonely mountains, and the unambitious fields; nor went but rarely among the throngs of Ilium. Yet, not having a breast either churlish, or impregnable to love, he espies Hesperie, the daughter of Cebrenus,[61] on the banks of her sire, who has been often sought by him throughout all the woods, drying her locks, thrown over her shoulders, in the sun. The Nymph, {thus} seen, takes to flight, just as the frightened hind from the tawny wolf; and {as} the water-duck, surprised at a distance, having left her {wonted} stream, from the hawk. Her the Trojan hero pursues, and, swift with love, closely follows her, made swift by fear. Behold! a snake, lurking in the grass, with its barbed sting, wounds her foot as she flies, and leaves its venom in her body. With her flight is her life cut short. Frantic, he embraces her breathless, and cries aloud,-- “I grieve, I grieve that {ever} I pursued {thee}. But I did not apprehend this; nor was it of so much value to me to conquer. We two have proved the destruction of wretched thee. The wound was given by the serpent; by me was the occasion given. I should be more guilty than he, did I not give the consolation for thy fate by my own death.” {Thus} he said; and from a rock which the hoarse waves had undermined, he hurled himself into the sea. Tethys, pitying him as he fell, received him softly, and covered him with feathers as he swam through the sea; and the power of obtaining the death he sought was not granted to him. The lover is vexed that, against his will, he is obliged to live on, and that opposition is made to his spirit, desirous to depart from its wretched abode. And, as he has assumed newformed wings on his shoulders, he flies aloft, and again he throws his body in the waves: his feathers break the fall. Æsacus is enraged; and headlong he plunges into the

deep,[62] and incessantly tries the way of destruction. Love caused his leanness; the spaces between the joints of his legs are long; his neck remains long, {and} his head is far away from his body. He loves the sea, and has his name because he plunges[63] in it.

[Footnote 58: *Some old man*.--Ver. 749-50. 'Hos aliquis senior--spectat;' these words are translated by Clarke, 'Some old blade spies them.']

[Footnote 59: *Ganymede*.--Ver. 756. Ovid need not have inserted Assaracus and Ganymede, as they were only the brothers of Ilus, and the three were the sons of Tros. Ilus was the father of Laomedon, whose son was Priam, the father of Æsacus.]

[Footnote 60: *Granicus*.--Ver. 763. The Granicus was a river of Mysia, near which Alexander the Great defeated Darius with immense slaughter.]

[Footnote 61: *Cebrenus*.--Ver. 769. The Cebrenus was a little stream of Phrygia, not far from Troy.]

[Footnote 62: *Plunges into the deep*.--Ver. 791-2. 'Inque profundum Pronus abit,' Clarke renders, 'Goes plumb down into the deep.' Certainly this is nearer to its French origin, 'a plomb,' than the present form, 'plump down;' but, like many other instances in his translation, it decidedly does not help us, as he professes to do, to 'the attainment of the elegancy of this great Poet.']

[Footnote 63: *Because he plunges*.--Ver. 795. He accounts for the Latin name of the diver, or didapper, 'mergus,' by saying that it was so called, 'a mergendo,' from its diving, which doubtless was the origin of the name, though not taking its rise in the fiction here related by the Poet.]

## Riley's Explanation

Ovid and Apollodorus agree that Æsacus was the son of Priam, and that he was changed into a didapper, or diver, but they differ in the other circumstances of his life. Instead of being the son of Alexirhoë, Apollodorus says that he was the son of Priam and Arisbe the daughter of Merope, his first wife; that his father made him marry Sterope, who dying very young, he was so afflicted at her death, that he threw himself into the sea. He also says that Priam having repudiated Arisbe to marry Hecuba, the daughter of Cisseus, Æsacus seeing his mother-in-law pregnant of her second son, foretold his father that her progeny would be the cause of a bloody war, which would end in the destruction of the kingdom of Troy; and that upon this prediction, the infant, when born, was exposed on Mount Ida.

Tzetzes adds, that Æsacus told his father that it was absolutely necessary to put to death both the mother and the infant which was born on that same day; on which Priam being informed

that Cilla, the wife of Thymætes, being delivered on that day of a son, he ordered them both to be killed; thinking thereby to escape the realization of the prediction. Servius, on the authority of Euphorion, relates the story in much the same manner; but a poet quoted by Cicero in his first book on Divination, says that it was the oracle of Zelia, a little town at the foot of Mount Ida, which gave that answer as an interpretation of the dream of Hecuba. Pausanias says it was the sibyl Herophila who interpreted the dream, while other ancient writers state that it was Cassandra. Apollodorus says that Æsacus learned from his grandfather Merops the art of foretelling things to come.

## Book XII, Fables I and II (lines 1–145)

*The Greeks assemble their troops at Aulis, to proceed against the city of Troy, and revenge the rape of Helen; but the fleet is detained in port by contrary winds. Calchas, the priest, after a prediction concerning the success of the expedition, declares that the weather will never be favourable till Agamemnon shall have sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia. She is immediately led to the altar for that purpose; but Diana, appeased by this act of obedience, carries away the maiden, and substitutes a hind in her place, on which a fair wind arises. Upon the Greeks landing at Troy, a battle is fought, in which Protesilaüs is killed by Hector, and Achilles kills Cygnus, a Trojan, on which his father Neptune transforms him into a swan.*

His father Priam mourned him, not knowing that Æsacus, having assumed wings, was {still} living; Hector, too, with his brothers, made unavailing offerings[1] at a tomb, that bore his name {on it}. The presence of Paris was wanting, at this mournful office: who, soon after, brought into his country a lengthened war, together with a ravished wife;[2] and a thousand ships[3] uniting together, followed him, and, together {with them}, the whole body[4] of the Pelasgian nation. Nor would vengeance have been delayed, had not the raging winds made the seas impassable, and the Bœotian land detained in fishy Aulis the ships ready to depart. Here, when they had prepared a sacrifice to Jupiter, after the manner of their country, as the ancient altar was heated with kindled fires, the Greeks beheld an azure-coloured serpent creep into a plane tree, which was standing near the sacrifice they had begun. There was on the top of the tree a nest of twice four birds, which the serpent seized[5] together, and the dam as she fluttered around {the scene of} her loss, and he buried them in his greedy maw. All stood amazed. But {Calchas}, the son of Thestor, a soothsayer, foreseeing the truth, says, “Rejoice, Pelasgians, we shall conquer. Troy will fall, but the continuance of our toil will be long;” and he allots the nine birds to the years of the war. {The serpent}, just as he is, coiling around the green branches in the tree, becomes a stone, and, under the form of a serpent, retains that stone {form}.

Nereus continued boisterous in the Ionian waves, and did not impel the sails onwards; and there are some who think that Neptune favoured Troy, because he made the walls of the city. But not {so} the son of Thestor. For neither was he ignorant, nor did he conceal, that the wrath of the virgin Goddess must be appeased by the blood of a virgin. After the public good had prevailed over affection, and the king over the father, and Iphigenia, ready to offer her chaste blood, stood before the altar, while the priests were weeping; the Goddess was appeased, and cast a mist before their eyes, and, amid the service and the hurry of the rites, and the voices of the suppliants, is said to have changed Iphigenia, the Mycenian maiden, for a substituted hind. Wherefore, when the Goddess was appeased by a death which was {more} fitting, and at the

same moment the wrath of Phœbe, and of the sea was past, the thousand ships received the winds astern, and having suffered much, they gained the Phrygian shore.

There is a spot in the middle of the world, between the land and the sea, and the regions of heaven, the confines of the threefold universe, whence is beheld whatever anywhere exists, although it may be in far {distant} regions, and every sound pierces the hollow ears. {Of this place} Fame is possessed, and chooses for herself a habitation on the top[6] of a tower, and has added innumerable avenues, and a thousand openings to her house, and has closed the entrances with no gates. Night and day are they open. It is all of sounding brass; it is all resounding, and it reechoes the voice, and repeats what it hears. Within there is no rest, and silence in no part. Nor yet is there a clamour, but the murmur of a low voice, such as is wont to arise from the waves of the sea, if one listens at a distance, or like the sound which the end of the thundering {makes} when Jupiter has clashed the black clouds together. A crowd occupies the hall; the fickle vulgar come and go; and a thousand rumours, false mixed with true, wander up and down, and circulate confused words. Of these, some fill the empty ears with conversation; some are carrying elsewhere what is told them; the measure of the fiction is ever on the increase, and each fresh narrator adds something to what he has heard. There, is Credulity, there, rash Mistake, and empty Joy, and alarmed Fears, and sudden Sedition, and Whispers of doubtful origin. She sees what things are done in heaven and on the sea, and on the earth; and she pries into the whole universe.

She has made it known that Grecian ships are on their way, with valiant troops: nor does the enemy appear in arms unlooked for. The Trojans oppose their landing, and defend the shore, and thou, Protesilaüs,[7] art, by the decrees of fate, the first to fall by the spear of Hector;[8] and the battles {now} commenced, and the courageous spirits of {the Trojans}, and Hector, {till then} unknown, cost the Greeks dear. Nor do the Phrygians experience at small expense of blood what the Grecian right hand can do. And now the Sigæan shores are red {with blood}: now Cygnus, the son of Neptune, has slain a thousand men. Now is Achilles pressing on in his chariot, and levelling the Trojan ranks, with the blow of his Peleian spear; and seeking through the lines either Cygnus or Hector, he engages with Cygnus: Hector is reserved for the tenth year. Then animating the horses, having their white necks pressed with the yoke, he directed his chariot against the enemy, and brandishing his quivering spear with his arm, he said, “O youth, whoever thou art, take this consolation in thy death, that thou art slain by the Hæmonian Achilles.”

Thus far the grandson of Æacus. His heavy lance followed his words. But, although there was no missing in the unerring lance, yet it availed nothing, by the sharpness of its point, {thus} discharged; and as it only bruised his breast with a blunt stroke, {the other} said, “Thou son of a Goddess, (for by report have we known of thee beforehand) why art thou surprised that wounds

are warded off from me? (for {Achilles} was surprised); not this helmet that thou seest tawny with the horse's mane, nor the hollowed shield, the burden of my left arm, are assistant to me; from them ornament {alone} is sought; for this cause, too, Mars is wont to take up arms. All the assistance of defensive armour shall be removed, {and} yet I shall come off unhurt. It is something to be born, not of a Nereid,[9] but {of one} who rules both Nereus and his daughter, and the whole ocean."

{Thus} he spoke; and he hurled against the descendant of Æacus his dart, destined to stick in the rim of his shield; it broke through both the brass and the next nine folds of bull's hide; but stopping in the tenth circle {of the hide}, the hero wrenched it out, and again hurled the quivering weapon with a strong hand; again his body was without a wound, and unharmed, nor was a third spear able {even} to graze Cygnus, unprotected, and exposing himself. Achilles raged no otherwise than as a bull,[10] in the open Circus,[11] when with his dreadful horns he butts against the purple-coloured garments, used as the means of provoking him, and perceives that his wounds are evaded. Still, he examines whether the point has chanced to fall from off the spear. It is {still} adhering to the shaft. "My hand then is weak," says he, "and it has spent {all} the strength it had before, upon one man. For decidedly it was strong enough, both when at first I overthrew the walls of Lyrnessus, or when I filled both Tenedos and Eëtionian[12] Thebes with their own blood. Or when Caÿcus[13] flowed empurpled with the slaughter of its people: and Telephus[14] was twice sensible of the virtue of my spear. Here, too, where so many have been slain, heaps of whom I both have made along this shore, and I {now} behold, my right hand has proved mighty, and is mighty."

{Thus} he spoke; and as if he distrusted what he had done before, he hurled his spear against Menœtes, one of the Lycian multitude,[15] who {was} standing opposite, and he tore asunder both his coat of mail, and his breast beneath it. He beating the solid earth with his dying head, he drew the same weapon from out of the reeking wound, and said, "This is the hand, this the lance, with which I conquered but now. The same will I use against him; in his {case}, I pray that the event may prove the same." Thus he said, and he hurled it at Cygnus, nor did the ashen lance miss him; and, not escaped {by him}, it resounded on his left shoulder: thence it was repelled, as though by a wall, or a solid rock. Yet Achilles saw Cygnus marked with blood, where he had been struck, and he rejoiced, {but in} vain. There was no wound; that was the blood of Menœtes.

Then indeed, raging, he leaps headlong from his lofty chariot, and hand to hand, with his gleaming sword striking at his fearless foe, he perceives that the shield and the helmet are pierced with his sword, and that his weapon, too, is blunted upon his hard body. He endures it no longer; and drawing back his shield, he three or four times strikes the face of the hero, and his hollow temples, with the hilt of the sword; and following, he presses onward as the other gives ground, and confounds him, and drives him on, and gives him no respite in his confusion.

Horror seizes on him, and darkness swims before his eyes; and as he moves backwards his retreating steps, a stone in the middle of the field stands in his way. Impelled over this, with his breast upwards, Achilles throws Cygnus with great violence, and dashes him[16] to the earth. Then, pressing down his breast with his shield and his hard knees, he draws tight the straps of his helmet; which, fastened beneath his pressed chin, squeeze close his throat, and take away his respiration and the passage of his breath.

He is preparing to strip his vanquished {foe}; he sees {nothing but} his armour, left behind. The God of the Ocean changed his body into a white bird, of which he {so} lately bore the name.

[Footnote 1: *Unavailing offerings*.--Ver. 3. 'Inferias inanes' is a poetical expression, signifying the offering sacrifices of honey, milk, wine, blood, flowers, frankincense, and other things, at a tomb, which was empty or honorary. The Greeks called these kind of sacrifices by the name of χοαὶ.]

[Footnote 2: *A ravished wife*.--Ver. 5. This was Helen, the wife of Menelaüs, whose abduction by Paris was the cause of the Trojan war.]

[Footnote 3: *A thousand ships*.--Ver. 7. That is, a thousand in round numbers. For Homer makes them, 1186; Dictys Cretensis, 1225; and Dares, 1140.]

[Footnote 4: *The whole body*.--Ver. 7. The adjective 'commune' is here used substantively, and signifies 'the whole body.']

[Footnote 5: *Serpent seized*.--Ver. 16-17. Clarke translates this line, 'Which the snake whipt up, as also the dam flying about her loss, and buried them in his greedy paunch.']

[Footnote 6: *On the top*.--Ver. 43. 'Summaque domum sibi legit in arce,' is translated by Clarke, 'And chooses there a house for herself, on the very tip-top of it.']

[Footnote 7: *Protesilaüs*.--Ver. 68. He was the husband of Laodamia, the daughter of Acastus. His father was Iphiclus, who was noted for his extreme swiftness.]

[Footnote 8: *Spear of Hector*.--Ver. 67. Some writers say that he fell by the hand of Æneas.]

[Footnote 9: *Of a Nereid*.--Ver. 93. Cygnus says this sarcastically, in allusion to Achilles being born of Thetis, a daughter of Nereus.]

[Footnote 10: *As a bull*.--Ver. 103-4. Clarke translates these lines in this comical strain: 'Achilles was as mad as a bull in the open Circus, when he pushes at the red coat, stuffed, used on purpose to provoke him.']

[Footnote 11: *The open Circus*.--Ver. 104. We learn from Seneca, that it was the custom in the 'venationes' of the Circus to irritate the bull against his antagonist, by thrusting in his path figures stuffed with straw or hay, and covered with red cloth. Similar means are used to provoke the bull in the Spanish bull-fights of the present day.]

[Footnote 12: *Eëtionian*.--Ver. 110. Eëtion, the father of Andromache, the wife of Hector, was the king of Thebes in Cilicia, which place was ravaged by the Greeks for having sent assistance to the Trojans.]

[Footnote 13: *Caÿcus*.--Ver. 111. The Caÿcus was a river of Mysia, in Asia Minor, which country had incurred the resentment of the Greeks, for having assisted the Trojans.]

[Footnote 14: *Telephus*.--Ver. 112. Telephus, the son of Hercules and the Nymph Auge, was wounded in combat by Achilles. By the direction of the oracle, he applied to Achilles for his cure, which was effected by means of the rust of the weapon with which the wound was made.]

[Footnote 15: *Lycian multitude*.--Ver. 116. The Lycians, whose territory was in Asia Minor, between Caria and Pamphylia, were allies of the Trojans.]

[Footnote 16: *And dashes him*.--Ver. 139. Clarke renders this line, 'He overset him, and thwacked him against the ground.']

## Riley's Explanation

It is not improbable that the prediction of Calchas, at Aulis, that the war against Troy would endure nine years, had no other foundation than his desire to check an enterprise which must be attended with much bloodshed, and difficulties of the most formidable nature. It is not unlikely, too, that this interpretation of the story of the serpent devouring the birds may have been planned by some of the Grecian generals, who did not dare openly to refuse their assistance to Agamemnon. The story of Iphigenia was, perhaps, founded on a similar policy. The ancient poets and historians are by no means agreed as to the fate of Iphigenia, as some say that she really was sacrificed, while others state that she was transformed into a she-bear, others into an old woman, and Nicander affirms that she was changed into a heifer.

There is no story more celebrated among the ancients than that of the intended immolation of Iphigenia. Euripides wrote two tragedies on the subject. Homer, however, makes no allusion to the story of Iphigenia; but he mentions Iphianassa, the daughter of Agamemnon, who was sent for, to be a hostage on his reconciliation with Achilles; she is probably the same person that is meant by the later poets, under the name of Iphigenia.

It has been suggested by some modern commentators, that the story of Iphigenia was founded on the sacrifice of his own daughter, by Jeptha, the judge of Israel, which circumstance happened much about the same time. The story of the substitution of the hind for the damsel, when about to be slain, was possibly founded on the substituted offering for Isaac when about to be offered by his father; for it is not probable that the people of Greece were entirely ignorant of the existence of the books of Moses, and that wonderful narrative would be not unlikely to make an impression on minds ever ready to be attracted by the marvellous. Some writers have taken pains to show that Agamemnon did not sacrifice, or contemplate sacrificing, his own daughter, by asserting that the Iphigenia here mentioned was the daughter of Helen, who was educated by Clytemnestra, the wife of Agamemnon, and the sister of Helen. Pausanias also adopts this view, and gives for his authorities Euphorion of Chalcis, Alexander, Stesichorus, and the people of Argos, who preserved a tradition to the same effect.

Lucretius, Virgil, and Diodorus Siculus are in the number of those who assert that Iphigenia actually was immolated. According to Dictys the Cretan, and several of the ancient scholiasts, Ulysses having left the Grecian camp without the knowledge of Agamemnon, went to Argos, and returned with Iphigenia, under the pretext that her father intended to marry her to Achilles. Some writers state that Achilles was in love with Iphigenia; and that he was greatly enraged at Ulysses for bringing her to the camp, and opposed her sacrifice to the utmost of his power.

Ovid then proceeds to recount the adventures of the Greeks, after their arrival at Troy. An oracle had warned the Greeks, that he who should be the first to land on the Trojan shores, would inevitably be slain. Protesilaüs seeing that this prediction damped the courage of his companions, led the way, and sacrificed his life for the safety of his friends, being slain by Hector immediately on his landing. Cygnus, signalizing himself by his bravery, attracted the attention of Achilles, who singled him out as a worthy antagonist. It was said that this hero was the son of Neptune; perhaps because he was powerful by sea, and the prince of some island in the Archipelago. He was said to be invulnerable, most probably because his shield was arrow-proof. The story of his transformation into a swan, has evidently no other foundation than the resemblance between his name and that of that bird.

## Book XII, Fables III and IV (lines 146–535)

*A truce ensuing, the Grecian chiefs having assembled at a feast, express their surprise at the fact of Cygnus being invulnerable. Nestor, by way of showing a still more surprising instance, relates how the Nymph Cænis, the daughter of Elatus, having yielded to the caresses of Neptune, was transformed by him into a man, and made invulnerable. Cæneus being present at the wedding feast of Pirithoüs, the son of Ixion, where Eurytus was a guest, the latter, being elevated with wine, made an attempt upon Hippodamia, the bride; on which a quarrel arose between the Centaurs and the Lapithæ. After many on both sides had been slain, Cæneus still remained unhurt; on which, the Centaurs having heaped up trunks of trees upon him, he was pressed to death; Neptune then changed his body into a bird.*

This toil[17] {and} this combat brought on a cessation for many days; and both sides rested, laying aside their arms. And while a watchful guard was keeping the Phrygian walls, and a watchful guard was keeping the Argive trenches, a festive day had arrived, on which Achilles, the conqueror of Cygnus, appeased Pallas with the blood of a heifer, adorned with fillets. As soon as he had placed its entrails[18] upon the glowing altars, and the smell, acceptable to the Deities, mounted up to the skies, the sacred rites had their share, the other part was served up at the table. The chiefs reclined on couches, and sated their bodies with roasted flesh,[19] and banished both their cares and their thirst with wine. No harps, no melody of voices,[20] no long pipe of boxwood pierced with many a hole, delights them; but in discourse they pass the night, and valour is the subject-matter of their conversation. They relate the combats of the enemy and their own; and often do they delight to recount, in turn, both the dangers that they have encountered and that they have surmounted. For of what {else} should Achilles speak? or of what, in preference, should they speak before the great Achilles? {But} especially the recent victory over the conquered Cygnus was the subject of discourse. It seemed wonderful to them all, that the body of the youth was penetrable by no weapon, and was susceptible of no wounds, and that it blunted the steel itself. This same thing, the grandson of Æacus, this, the Greeks wondered at.

When thus Nestor says {to them}: “Cygnus has been the only despiser of weapons in your time, and penetrable by no blows. But I myself formerly saw the Perrhæbean[21] Cæneus bear a thousand blows with his body unhurt; Cæneus the Perrhæbean, {I say}, who, famous for his achievements, inhabited Othrys. And that this, too, might be the more wondrous in him, he was born a woman.” They are surprised, whoever are present, at the singular nature of this prodigy, and they beg him to tell the story. Among them, Achilles says, “Pray tell us, (for we all have the same desire to hear it,) O eloquent old man,[22] the wisdom of our age; who was {this} Cæneus,

{and} why changed to the opposite sex? in what war, and in the engagements of what contest was he known to thee? by whom was he conquered, if he was conquered by any one?"

Then the aged man {replied}: "Although tardy old age is a disadvantage to me, and many things which I saw in my early years escape me {now}, yet I remember most {of them}; and there is nothing, amid so many transactions of war and peace, that is more firmly fixed in my mind than that circumstance. And if extended age could make any one a witness of many deeds, I have lived two hundred[23] years, {and} now my third century is being passed {by me}. Cænis, the daughter of Elatus, was remarkable for her charms; the most beauteous virgin among the Thessalian maids, and one sighed for in vain by the wishes of many wooers through the neighbouring {cities}, and through thy cities, Achilles, for she was thy countrywoman. Perhaps, too, Peleus would have attempted that alliance; but at that time the marriage of thy mother had either befallen him, or had been promised him. Cænis did not enter into any nuptial ties; and as she was walking along the lonely shore, she suffered violence from the God of the ocean. 'Twas thus that report stated; and when Neptune had experienced the pleasures of this new amour, he said, 'Be thy wishes secure from all repulse; choose whatever thou mayst desire.' The same report has related this too; Cænis replied, 'This mishap makes my desire extreme, that I may not be in a condition to suffer any such thing {in future}. Grant that I be no {longer} a woman, {and} thou wilt have granted me all.' She spoke these last words with a hoarser tone, and the voice might seem to be that of a man, as {indeed} it was.

"For now the God of the deep ocean had consented to her wish; and had granted moreover that he should not be able to be pierced by any wounds, or to fall by {any} steel. Exulting in his privilege, the Atracian[24] departed; and {now} spent his time in manly exercises, and roamed over the Peneïan plains. {Pirithoüs}, the son of the bold Ixion, had married Hippodame,[25] and had bidden the cloud-born monsters to sit down at the tables ranged in order, in a cave shaded with trees. The Hæmonian nobles were there; I, too, was there, and the festive palace resounded with the confused rout. Lo! they sing the marriage song, and the halls smoke with the fires;[26] the maiden, too, is there, remarkable for her beauty, surrounded by a crowd of matrons and newly married women. We {all} pronounce Pirithoüs fortunate in her for a wife; an omen which we had well nigh falsified. For thy breast, Eurytus, most savage of the savage Centaurs, is inflamed as much with wine as with seeing the maiden; and drunkenness, redoubled by lust, holds sway {over thee}. On the sudden the tables being overset, disturb the feast, and the bride is violently dragged away by her seized hair. Eurytus snatches up Hippodame, {and} the others such as each one fancies, or is able {to seize}; and there is {all} the appearance of a captured city. The house rings with the cries of women. Quickly we all rise; and first, Theseus says, 'What madness, Eurytus, is impelling thee, who, while I {still} live, dost provoke Pirithoüs, and, in thy ignorance, in one dost injure two?' And that the valiant hero may not say these things in vain, he

pushes them off as they are pressing on, and takes her whom they have seized away from them as they grow furious.

“He says nothing in answer, nor, indeed, can he defend such actions by words; but he attacks the face of her protector with insolent hands, and strikes his generous breast. By chance, there is near at hand an ancient bowl, rough with projecting figures, which, huge as it is, the son of Ægeus, himself huger {still}, takes up and hurls full in his face. He, vomiting both from his wounds and his mouth clots of blood,[27] and brains and wine together, lying on his back, kicks on the soaking sand. {The} double-limbed[28] {Centaurs} are inflamed at the death of their brother; and all vying, with one voice exclaim, ‘To arms! to arms!’ Wine gives them courage, and, in the first onset, cups hurled are flying about, and shattered casks[29] and hollow cauldrons; things before adapted for a banquet, now for war and slaughter. First, the son of Ophion, Amycus, did not hesitate to spoil the interior of the house of its ornaments; and first, from the shrine he tore up a chandelier,[30] thick set with blazing lamps; and lifting it on high, like him who attempts to break the white neck of the bull with sacrificial axe, he dashed it against the forehead of Celadon the Lapithean, and left his skull mashed into his face, no {longer} to be recognized. His eyes started out, and the bones of his face being dashed to pieces, his nose was driven back, and was fixed in the middle of his palate. Him, Belates the Pellæan, having torn away the foot of a maple table, laid flat on the ground, with his chin sunk upon his breast, and vomiting forth his teeth mixed with blood; and sent him, by a twofold wound, to the shades of Tartarus.

“As Gryneus stood next, looking at the smoking altar with a grim look, he said, ‘{And} why do we not make use of this?’ and {then} he raised an immense altar, together with its fire; and hurled it into the midst of the throng of the Lapithæ, and struck down two {of them}, Broteus and Orius. The mother of Orius was Mycale, who was known by her incantations to have often drawn down the horns of the struggling moon. {On this} Exadius says, ‘Thou shalt not go unpunished, if only the opportunity of getting a weapon is given me;’ and, as his weapon, he wields the antlers of a votive stag,[31] which were upon a lofty pine-tree. With the double branches of these, Gryneus is pierced through the eyes, and has those eyes scooped out. A part of them adheres to the antlers, a part runs down his beard, and hangs down clotted with gore. Lo! Rhœtus snatches up an immense flaming brand, from the middle of the altar, and on the right side breaks through the temples of Charaxus, covered with yellow hair. His locks, seized by the violent flames, burn like dry corn, and the blood seared in the wound emits a terrific noise in its hissing, such as the iron glowing in the flames is often wont to emit, which, when the smith has drawn it out with the crooked pincers, he plunges into the trough; whereon it whizzes, and, sinking in the bubbling water, hisses. Wounded, he shakes the devouring fire from his locks, and takes upon his shoulders the threshold, torn up out of the ground, a {whole} waggon-load, which its very weight

hinders him from throwing full against the foe. The stony mass, too, bears down Cometes, a friend, who is standing at a short distance; nor does Rhœtus {then} restrain his joy, {and} he says, 'In such manner do I pray that the rest of the throng of thy party may be brave;' and {then} he increases the wound, redoubled with the half-burnt stake, and three or four times he breaks the sutures of his head with heavy blows, and its bones sink within the oozing brains.

"Victorious, he passes on to Evagrus, and Corythus, and Dryas; of which {number}, when Corythus, having his cheeks covered[32] with their first down, has fallen, Evagrus says, 'What glory has been acquired by thee, in killing a boy?' Rhœtus permits him to say no more, and fiercely thrusts the glowing flames into the open mouth of the hero, as he is speaking, and through the mouth into the breast. Thee, too, cruel Dryas, he pursues, whirling the fire around his head, but the same issue does not await thee as well. Thou piercest him with a stake burnt at the end, while triumphing in the success of an uninterrupted slaughter, in the spot where the neck is united to the shoulder. Rhœtus groans aloud, and with difficulty wrenches the stake out of the hard bone, and, drenched in his own blood, he flies. Orneus flies, too, and Lycabas, and Medon, wounded in his right shoulder-blade, and Thaumas with Pisenor; Mermerus, too, who lately excelled all in speed of foot, {but} now goes more slowly from the wound he has received; Pholus, too, and Melaneus, and Abas a hunter of boars, and Astylos the augur, who has in vain dissuaded his own party from this warfare. He also says to Nessus,[33] as he dreads the wounds, 'Fly not! {for} thou shalt be reserved for the bow of Hercules.' But Eurynomus and Lycidas, and Areos, and Imbreus did not escape death, all of whom the right hand of Dryas pierced right through. Thou, too, Crenæus, didst receive a wound in front,[34] although thou didst turn thy back in flight; for looking back, thou didst receive the fatal steel between thy two eyes, where the nose is joined to the lower part of the forehead. In the midst of so much noise, Aphidas was lying fast asleep from the wine which he had drunk incessantly, and was not aroused, and in his languid hand was grasping the mixed bowl, stretched at full length upon the shaggy skin of a bear of Ossa. Soon as Phorbas beheld him from afar, wielding no arms, he inserted his fingers in the strap of his lance,[35] and said, 'Drink thy wine mingled with {the water of} Styx;' and, delaying no longer, he hurled his javelin against the youth, and the ash pointed with steel was driven into his neck, as, by chance, he lay {there} on his back. His death happened without his being sensible of it; and the blood flowed from his full throat, both upon the couch and into the bowl itself.

"I saw Petræus endeavouring to tear up an acorn-bearing oak from the earth; {and}, as he was grasping it in his embrace, and was shaking it on this side and that, and was moving about the loosened tree, the lance of Pirithoüs hurled at the ribs of Petræus, transfixed his struggling breast together with the tough oak. They said, {too}, that Lycus fell by the valour of Pirithoüs, {and} that Chromis fell {by the hand} of Pirithoüs. But each of them {gave} less glory to the

conqueror, than Dictys and Helops gave. Helops was transfixed by the javelin, which passed right through his temples, and, hurled from the right side, penetrated to his left ear. Dictys, slipping from the steep point of a rock, while, in his fear, he is flying from the pursuing son of Ixion, falls down headlong, and, by the weight of his body, breaks a huge ash tree, and spits his own entrails upon it, {thus} broken. Aphareus advances {as} his avenger, and endeavours to hurl a stone torn away from the mountain. As he is endeavouring {to do so}, the son of Ægeus attacks him with an oaken club, and breaks the huge bones of his arm, and has neither leisure, nor, {indeed}, does he care to put his useless body to death; and he leaps upon the back of the tall Bianor, not used to bear[36] any other than himself; and he fixes his knees in his ribs, and holding his long hair, seized with his left hand, shatters his face, and his threatening features, and his very hard temples, with the knotty oak. With his oak, {too}, he levels Nedymnus, and Lycotas the darter, and Hippasus having his breast covered with his flowing beard, and Ripheus, who towered above the topmost woods, and Tereus, who used to carry home the bears, caught in the Hæmonian mountains, alive and raging.

"Demoleon could not any longer endure Theseus enjoying this success in the combat, and he tried with vast efforts to tear up from the thick-set wood an aged pine; because he could not effect this, he hurled it, broken short, against his foe. But Theseus withdrew afar from the approaching missile, through the warning of Pallas; so {at least} he himself wished it to be thought. Yet the tree did not fall without effect: for it struck off from the throat of the tall Crantor, both his breast and his left shoulder. He, Achilles, had been the armour-bearer of thy father: him Amyntor, king of the Dolopians,[37] when conquered in war, had given to the son of Æacus, as a pledge and confirmation of peace. When Peleus saw him at a distance, mangled with a foul wound, he said, 'Accept however, Crantor, most beloved of youths, this sacrifice;' and, with a strong arm, and energy of intention, he hurled his ashen lance against Demoleon, which broke through the enclosures of his ribs, and quivered, sticking amid the bones. He draws out with his hand the shaft without the point; even that follows, with much difficulty; the point is retained within his lungs. The very pain gives vigour to his resolution; {though} wounded, he rears against the enemy, and tramples upon the hero with his horse's feet. The other receives the re-echoing strokes upon his helmet and his shield, and defends his shoulders, and holds his arms extended before him, and through the shoulder-blades he pierces two breasts[38] at one stroke. But first, from afar, he had consigned to death Phlegræus, and Hyles; in closer combat, Hiphinoüs and Clanis. To these is added Dorylas, who had his temples covered with a wolf's skin, and the real horns of oxen reddened with much blood, that performed the duty of a cruel weapon.

"To him I said, for courage gave me strength, 'Behold, how much thy horns are inferior to my steel;' and {then} I threw my javelin. When he could not avoid this, he held up his right hand

before his forehead, about to receive the blow; {and} to his forehead his hand was pinned. A shout arose; but Peleus struck him delaying, and overpowered by the painful wound, (for he was standing next to him) with his sword beneath the middle of his belly. He leaped forth, and fiercely dragged his own bowels on the ground, and trod on them {thus} dragged, and burst them {thus} trodden; and he entangled his legs, as well in them, and fell down, with his belly emptied {of its inner parts}. Nor did thy beauty, Cyllarus,[39] save thee while fighting, if only we allow beauty to that {monstrous} nature {of thine}. His beard was beginning {to grow}; the colour of his beard was that of gold; and golden-coloured hair was hanging from his shoulders to the middle of his shoulder-blades. In his face there was a pleasing briskness; his neck, and his shoulders, and his hands, and his breast {were} resembling the applauded statues of the artists, and {so} in those parts in which he was a man; nor was the shape of the horse beneath that {shape}, faulty and inferior to {that of} the man. Give him {but} the neck and the head {of a horse, and} he would be worthy of Castor. So fit is his back to be sat upon, so stands his breast erect with muscle; {he is} all over blacker than black pitch; yet his tail is white; the colour, too, of his legs is white. Many a female of his own kind longed for him; but Hylonome alone gained him, than whom no female more handsome lived in the lofty woods, among the half beasts. She alone attaches Cyllarus, both by her blandishments, and by loving, and by confessing that she loves him. Her care, too, of her person is as great as can be in those limbs: so that her hair is smoothed with a comb; so that she now decks herself with rosemary, now with violets or roses, {and} sometimes she wears white lilies; and twice a day she washes her face with streams that fall from the height of the Pagasæan wood; {and} twice she dips her body in the stream: and she throws over her shoulder or her left side no skins but what are becoming, and are those of choice beasts.

“Their love was equal: together they wandered upon the mountains; together they entered the caves; and then, too, together had they entered the Lapithæan house; together were they waging the fierce warfare. The author {of the deed} is unknown: {but} a javelin came from the left side, and pierced thee, Cyllarus, below {the spot} where the breast is joined to the neck. The heart, being pierced with a small wound, grew cold, together with the whole body, after the weapon was drawn out. Immediately, Hylonome receives his dying limbs, and cherishes the wound, by laying her hand on it, and places her mouth on his, and strives to stop the fleeting life. When she sees him dead, having uttered what the clamour hinders from reaching my ears, she falls upon the weapon that has pierced him, and as she dies, embraces her husband. He, too, {now} stands before my eyes, Phæocomes, {namely}, who had bound six lions’ skins together with connecting knots; covered all over, both horse and man. He, having discharged the trunk of a tree, which two yokes of oxen joined together could hardly have moved, battered the son of Phonolenus on the top of his head. The very broad round form of his skull was broken; and through his mouth, and through his hollow nostrils, and his eyes, and his ears, his softened brains poured down; just

as curdled milk is wont through the oaken twigs, or as {any} liquor flows under the weight of a well-pierced sieve, and is squeezed out thick through the numerous holes. But I, while he was preparing to strip him of his arms as he lay, (this thy sire knows,) plunged my sword into the lower part of his belly, as he was spoiling him. Chthonius, too, and Teleboas, lay {pierced} by my sword. The former was bearing a two-forked bough {as his weapon}, the latter a javelin; with his javelin he gave me a wound. You see the marks; look! the old scar is still visible.

"Then ought I[40] to have been sent to the taking of Troy; then I might, if not have overcome, {still} have stayed the arms of the mighty Hector. But at that time Hector was not existing, or {but} a boy; {and} now my age is failing. Why tell thee of Periphas, the conqueror of the two-formed Pyretus? Why of Ampyx, who fixed his cornel-wood spear, without a point, full in the face of the four-footed Oëclus? Macareus, struck down the Pelethronian[41] Erigdupus,[42] by driving a crowbar into his breast. I remember, too, that a hunting spear, hurled by the hand of Nessus, was buried in the groin of Cymelus. And do not believe that Mopsus,[43] the son of Ampycus, only foretold things to come; a two-formed {monster} was slain by Mopsus, darting {at him}, and Odites in vain attempted to speak, his tongue being nailed to his chin, and his chin to his throat. Cæneus had put five to death, Stiphelus, and Bromus, and Antimachus, and Helimus, and Pyracmos, wielding the axe. I do not remember {their respective} wounds, {but} I marked their numbers, and their names. Latreus, most huge both in his limbs and his body, sallied forth, armed with the spoils of Emathian[44] Halesus, whom he had consigned to death. His age was between that of a youth, and an old man; his vigour that of a youth; grey hairs variegated his temples. Conspicuous by his buckler, and his helmet, and his Macedonian pike; [45] and turning his face towards both sides, he brandished his arms, and rode in one same round, and vaunting, poured forth thus many words into the yielding air:--

"'And shall I put up with thee, too, Cænis? for to me thou shalt ever be a woman, to me always Cænis. Does not thy natal origin lower thy {spirit}? And does it not occur to thy mind for what {foul} deed thou didst get thy reward, and at what price the false resemblance to a man? Consider both what thou wast born, as well as what thou hast submitted to: go, and take up a distaff together with thy baskets, and twist the threads[46] with thy thumb; leave warfare to men.' As he is vaunting in such terms, Cæneus pierces his side, stretched in running, with a lance hurled at him, just where the man is joined to the horse. He raves with pain, and strikes at the exposed face of the Phylleian [47] youth with his pike. It bounds back no otherwise than hail from the roof of a house; or than if any one were to beat a hollow drum with a little pebble. Hand to hand he encounters him, and strives to plunge his sword into his tough side; {but} the parts are impervious to his sword. 'Yet,' says he, 'thou shalt not escape me; with the middle of the sword shalt thou be slain, since the point is blunt;' and {then} he slants the sword against his

side, and grasps his stomach with his long right arm. The blow produces an echo, as on a body of marble when struck; and the shivered blade flies different ways, upon striking his neck.

“After Cæneus had enough exposed his unhurt limbs to him in his amazement, ‘Come now,’ said he, ‘let us try thy body with my steel;’ and up to the hilt he plunged his fatal sword into his shoulder-blade, and extended his hand unseen into his entrails, and worked it about, and in the wound made a {fresh} wound. Lo! the double-limbed {monsters,} enraged, rush on in an impetuous manner, and all of them hurl and thrust their weapons at him alone. Their weapons fall blunted. Unstabbed and bloodless the Elateïan Cæneus remains from each blow. This strange thing makes them astonished. ‘Oh great disgrace!’ cries Monychus; ‘a {whole} people, we are overcome by one, and that hardly a man; although, {indeed}, he is a man; and we by our dastardly actions, are what he {once} was. What signify our huge limbs? What our twofold strength? What that our twofold nature has united in us the stoutest animals in existence? I neither believe that we are born of a Goddess for our mother, nor of Ixion, who was so great a person, that he conceived hopes of {even} the supreme Juno. By a half male foe are we baffled. Heap upon him stones and beams, and entire mountains, and dash out his long-lived breath, by throwing {whole} woods {upon him}. Let a {whole} wood press on his jaws; and weight shall be in the place of wounds.’

“{Thus} he said; and by chance having got a tree, thrown down by the power of the boisterous South wind, he threw it against the powerful foe: and he was an example {to the rest}; and in a short time, Othrys, thou wast bare of trees, and Pelion had no shades. Overwhelmed by this huge heap, Cæneus swelters beneath the weight of the trees, and bears on his brawny shoulders the piled-up oaks. But after the load has increased upon his face and his head, and his breath has no air to draw; at one moment he faints, at another he endeavours, in vain, to raise himself into the {open} air, and to throw off the wood cast {upon him}: and sometimes he moves it. Just as lo! we see, if lofty Ida is convulsed with earthquakes. The event is doubtful. Some gave out that his body was hurled to roomy Tartarus by the weight of the wood. The son of Ampycus denied this, and saw go forth into the liquid air, from amid the pile, a bird with tawny wings; which then was beheld by me for the first time, then, {too}, for the last. When Mopsus saw it with gentle flight surveying his camp, and making a noise around it with a vast clamour, following him both with his eyes and his feelings, he said, ‘Hail! thou glory of the Lapithæan race, once the greatest of men, but now the only bird {of thy kind}, Cæneus.’ This thing was credited from its assertor. Grief added resentment, and we bore it with disgust, that one was overpowered by foes so many. Nor did we cease to exercise our weapons, in {shedding their} blood, before a part of them was put to death, and flight and the night dispersed the rest.”

[Footnote 17: *This toil.*--Ver. 146. Clarke translates ‘Hic labor,’ ‘This laborious bout.’]

[Footnote 18: *Its entrails*.--Ver. 152. The 'prosecta,' or 'prosiciæ,' or 'ablegamina,' were portions of the animal which were the first cut off, for the purpose of becoming as a sacrifice to the Deities. The 'prosecta,' in general, consisted of a portion of the entrails.]

[Footnote 19: *Roasted flesh*.--Ver. 155. We are informed by Servius, that boiled meat was not eaten in the heroic ages.]

[Footnote 20: *Melody of voices*.--Ver. 157. Plutarch remarks, that that entertainment is the most pleasant where no musician is introduced; conversation, in his opinion, being preferable.]

[Footnote 21: *Perrhæbean*.--Ver. 172. The Perrhæbeans were a people of Thessaly, who, having been conquered by the Lapithæ, betook themselves to the mountain fortresses of Pindus.]

[Footnote 22: *Eloquent old man*.--Ver. 176-181. Clarke renders these lines, 'Come, tell us, O eloquent old gentleman, the wisdom of our age, who was that Cæneus, and why he was turned into the other sex? in which war, or what engagement, he was known to you? by whom he was conquered, if he was conquered by any one?' Upon that, the old blade replied.']

[Footnote 23: *Two hundred*.--Ver. 188. Ovid does not here follow the more probable version, that the age of Nestor was three generations of thirty years each.]

[Footnote 24: *The Atracian*.--Ver. 209. 'Atracides' is an epithet, meaning 'Thessalian,' as Atrax, or Atracia, was a town of Thessaly, situated near the banks of the river Peneus.]

[Footnote 25: *Hippodame*.--Ver. 210. She is called Ischomache by Propertius, and Deidamia by Plutarch.]

[Footnote 26: *With the fires*.--Ver. 215. These fires would be those of the nuptial torches, and of the altars for sacrifice to Hymenæus and the other tutelary divinities of marriage.]

[Footnote 27: *Clots of blood*.--Ver. 238. Clarke renders 'Sanguinis globos,' 'goblets of blood.']

[Footnote 28: *Double-limbed*.--Ver. 240. Clarke translates, 'Ardescunt bimembres,' 'The double-limbed fellows are in a flame.']

[Footnote 29: *Shattered cask*.--Ver. 243. 'Cadi' were not only earthenware vessels, in which wine was kept, but also the vessels used for drawing water.]

[Footnote 30: *A chandelier*.--Ver. 247. 'Funale' ordinarily means, 'a link,' or 'torch,' made of fibrous substances twisted together, and smeared with pitch or wax. In this instance the word seems to mean a chandelier with several branches.]

[Footnote 31: *A votive stag*.--Ver. 267. It appears that the horns of a stag were frequently offered as a votive gift to the Deities, especially to Diana, the patroness of the chase. Thus in the seventh Eclogue of Virgil, Mycon vows to present to Diana, 'Vivacis cornua cervi,' 'The horns of a long-lived stag.']

[Footnote 32: *Cheeks covered*.--Ver. 291. 'Prima tectus lanugine malas,' is not very elegantly rendered by Clarke, 'Having his chaps covered with down, then first putting out.']

[Footnote 33: *Nessus*.--Ver. 309. We have already seen how Nessus the Centaur met his death from the arrow of Hercules, when about to offer violence to Deïanira.]

[Footnote 34: *A wound in front*.--Ver. 312. It has been suggested that, perhaps Ovid here had in his mind the story of one Pomponius, of whom Quintilian relates, that, having received a wound in his face, he was showing it to Cæsar, on which he was advised by the latter never to look behind him when he was running away.]

[Footnote 35: *Strap of his lance*.--Ver. 321. The 'amentum' was the thong, or strap of leather, with which the lance, or javelin, was fastened, in order to draw it back when thrown.]

[Footnote 36: *Not used to bear*.--Ver. 346. He alludes to the twofold nature, or 'horse-part' of the Centaur, as Clarke calls it.]

[Footnote 37: *The Dolopians*.--Ver. 364. They were a people of Phthiotis and Thessaly.]

[Footnote 38: *Pierces two breasts*.--Ver. 377. He says this by poetical license, in allusion to the two-fold form of the Centaurs.]

[Footnote 39: *Cyllarus*.--Ver. 393. This was also the name of the horse which Castor tamed, to which Ovid alludes in the 401st line.]

[Footnote 40: *Then ought I*.--Ver. 445. Nestor here shows a little of the propensity for boasting, which distinguishes him in the Iliad.]

[Footnote 41: *Pelethronian*.--Ver. 452. Pelethronia was a region of Thessaly, which contained a town and a mountain of that name.]

[Footnote 42: *Erigdupus*.--Ver. 453. The signification of this name is 'The noise of strife.']

[Footnote 43: *Mopsus*.--Ver. 456. He was a prophet, and one of the Lapithæ. There are two other persons mentioned in ancient history of the same name.]

[Footnote 44: *Emathian*.--Ver. 462. Properly, Emathia was a name of Macedonia; but it is here applied to Thessaly, which adjoined to that country.]

[Footnote 45: *Macedonian pike*.--Ver. 466. The ‘sarissa’ is supposed to have been a kind of pike with which the soldiers of the Macedonia phalanx were armed. Its ordinary length was twenty-one feet; but those used by the phalanx were twenty-four feet long.]

[Footnote 46: *Twist the threads*.--Ver. 475. The woof was called ‘subtegmen,’ ‘subtemen,’ or ‘trama,’ while the warp was called ‘stamen,’ from ‘stare,’ ‘to stand,’ on account of its erect position in the loom.]

[Footnote 47: *Phylleian*.--Ver. 479. Phyllus was a city of Phthiotis, in Thessaly.]

## Riley’s Explanation

We learn from Diodorus Siculus, and other ancient authors, that the people of Thessaly, and those especially who lived near Mount Pelion, were the first who trained horses for riding, and used them as a substitute for chariots. Pliny the Elder says that they excelled all the other people of Greece in horsemanship, and that they carried it to such perfection, that the name of ἱππεὺς, ‘a horseman,’ and that of ‘Thessalian,’ became synonymous. Again, the Thessalians, from their dexterity in killing the wild bulls that infested the neighbouring mountains, sometimes with darts or spears, and at other times in close engagement, acquired the name of Hippocentaurs, that is, ‘horsemen that hunted bulls,’ or simply κένταυροι, ‘Centaurs.’

It is not improbable that, because the Thessalians began to practise riding in the reign of Ixion, the poets made the Centaurs his sons; and they were said to have a cloud for their mother, which Jupiter put in the place of Juno, to baulk the attempt of Ixion on her virtue, because, according to Palæphatus, many of them lived in a city called Nephele, which, in Greek, signifies a cloud. As another method of accounting for their alleged descent from a cloud, it has been suggested that the Centaurs were a rapacious race of men, who ravaged the neighbouring country: that those who wrote the first accounts of them, in the ancient dialect of Greece, gave them the name of Nephelim, (the epithet of the giants of Scripture,) many Phœnician words having been imported in the early language of that country; and that in later times, finding them called by this name, the Greek word Nephelè, signifying ‘a cloud,’ persons readily adopted the fable that they were born of one.

The Centaurs being the descendants of Centaurus, the son of Ixion, and Pirithoüs being also the son of Ixion, by Dia, the former, declared war against Pirithoüs, asserting, that, as the descendants of Ixion, they had a right to share in the succession to his dominions. This quarrel, however, was made up, and they continued on friendly terms, until the attempt of Eurytus, or Eurytion, on Hippodamia, the bride of Pirithoüs, which was followed by the consequences here described by Ovid. The Centaurs are twice mentioned in the Iliad as φῆρες, or ‘wild beasts,’ and once under the name of ‘Centaurs.’ Pindar is the first writer that mentions them as being of a

twofold form, partly man, and partly horse. In the twenty-first Book of the Odyssey, line 295, Eurytion is said to have had his ears and nose cut off by way of punishment, and that, from that period, 'discord arose between the Centaurs and men.'

Buttman, (Mythologus, ii. p. 22, as quoted by Mr. Keightley), says that the names of Centaurs and Lapithæ are two purely poetic names, used to designate two opposite races of men,--the former, the rude horse-riding tribes, which tradition records to have been spread over the north of Greece: the latter, the more civilized race, which founded towns, and gradually drove their wild neighbours back into the mountains. He thinks that the explanation of the word 'Centaurs,' as 'Air-piercers,' (from κεντεῖν τὴν αὔραν) not an improbable one, for the idea is suggested by the figure of a Cossack leaning forward with his protruded lance as he gallops along. But he regards the idea of κένταυρος, having been in its origin simply κέντωρ, as much more probable, [it meaning simply 'the spurrer-on.'] Lapithæ may, he thinks, have signified 'Stone persuaders,' from λᾶας πείθειν, a poetic appellation for the builders of towns. He supposes Hippodamia to have been a Centauress, married to the prince of the Lapithæ, and thus accounts for the Centaurs having been at the wedding. Mr. Keightley, in his 'Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy,' remarks that 'it is certainly not a little strange that a rude mountain race like the Centaurs should be viewed as horsemen; and the legend which ascribes the perfecting of the art of horsemanship to the Lapithæ, is unquestionably the more probable one. The name Centaur, which so much resembles the Greek verb κεντέω, 'to spur,' we fancy gave origin to the fiction. This derivation of it is, however, rather dubious.'

After the battle here described, the Centaurs retreated to the mountains of Arcadia. The Lapithæ pursuing them, drove them to the Promontory of Malea in Laconia, where, according to Apollodorus, Neptune took them into his protection. Servius and Antimachus, as quoted by Comes Natalis, say that some of them fled to the Isle of the Sirens (or rather to that side of Italy which those Nymphs had made their abode); and that there they were destroyed by the voluptuous and debauched lives they led.

The fable of Cæneus, which Ovid has introduced, is perhaps simply founded on the prodigious strength and the goodness of the armour of a person of that name. The story of Halyonome killing herself on the body of Cyllarus, may possibly have been handed down by tradition. It is not unlikely that, if the Centaurs were horsemen, their women were not unacquainted with horsemanship; indeed, representations of female Centaurs are given, on ancient monuments, as drawing the chariot of Bacchus.

## Book XII, Fables V and VI (lines 536–628)

*Periclymenus, the brother of Nestor, who has received from Neptune the power of transforming himself, is changed into an eagle, in a combat with Hercules; and in his flight is shot by him with an arrow. Neptune prays Apollo to avenge the death of Cygnus: because the Destinies will not permit him to do so himself. Apollo enters the Trojan camp in disguise, and directs the arrow which Paris aims at Achilles; who is mortally wounded in the heel, the only vulnerable part of his body.*

As the Pylian related this fight between the Lapithæ and the Centaurs, {but} half human, Tlepolemus[48] could not endure his sorrow for Alcides being passed by with silent lips, and said, “It is strange, old man, that thou shouldst have a forgetfulness of the exploits of Hercules; at least, my father himself used often to relate to me, that these cloud-begotten {monsters} were conquered by him.” The Pylian, sad at this, said, “Why dost thou force me to call to mind my misfortunes, and to rip up my sorrows, concealed beneath years, and to confess my hatred of, and disgust at, thy father? He, indeed, ye Gods! performed things beyond all belief, and filled the world with his services; which I could rather wish could be denied; but we are in the habit of praising neither Deiphobus nor Polydamas,[49] nor Hector himself: for who would commend an enemy? That father of thine once overthrew the walls of Messene, and demolished guiltless cities, Elis and Pylos, and carried the sword and flames into my abode. And, that I may say nothing of others whom he slew, we were twice six sons of Neleus, goodly youths; the twice six fell by the might of Hercules, myself alone excepted. And that the others were vanquished might have been endured; {but} the death of Periclymenus is wonderful; to whom Neptune, the founder of the Neleian family, had granted to be able to assume whatever shapes he might choose, and again, when assumed, to lay them aside. He, after he had in vain been turned into all other shapes, was turned into the form of the bird that is wont to carry the lightnings in his crooked talons, the most acceptable to the king of the Gods. Using the strength of {that} bird, his wings, and his crooked bill, together with his hooked talons, he tore the face of the hero. The Tirynthian hero aims at him his bow, too unerring, and hits him, as he moves his limbs aloft amid the clouds, and hovering {in the air}, just where the wing is joined to the side.

“Nor is the wound a great one, but his sinews, cut by the wound, fail him, and deny him motion and strength for flying. He fell down to the earth, his weakened pinions not catching the air; and where the smooth arrow had stuck in his wing, it was pressed {still further} by the weight of his pierced body, and it was driven, through the upper side, into the left part of the neck. Do I seem to be owing encomiums to the exploits of thy {father} Hercules, most graceful leader of the Rhodian fleet?[50] Yet I will no further avenge my brothers, than by being silent on his brave

deeds: with thyself I have a firm friendship." After the son[51] of Neleus had said these things with his honied tongue, the gifts of Bacchus being resumed after the discourse of the aged man, they arose from their couches: the rest of the night was given to sleep.

But the God who commands the waters of the sea with his trident, laments, with the affection of a father, the body of his son, changed into the bird of the son of Sthenelus; and abhorring the ruthless Achilles, pursues his resentful wrath in more than an ordinary manner. And now, the war having been protracted for almost twice five years, with such words as these he addresses the unshorn Smintheus:[52] "O thou, most acceptable to me, by far, of the sons of my brother, who, together with me, didst build the walls of Troy in vain; and dost thou not grieve when thou lookest upon these towers so soon to fall? or dost thou not lament that so many thousands are slain in defending these walls? and (not to recount them all) does not the ghost of Hector, dragged around his Pergamus, recur to thee? Though still the fierce Achilles, more blood-stained than war itself, lives on, the destroyer of our toil, let him but put himself in my power, I will make him feel what I can do with my triple spear. But since it is not allowed us to encounter the enemy in close fight, destroy him, when off his guard, with a secret shaft."

He nodded his assent; and the Delian {God}, indulging together both his own resentment and that of his uncle, veiled in a cloud, comes to the Trojan army, and in the midst of the slaughter of the men, he sees Paris, at intervals, scattering his darts among the ignoble Greeks; and, discovering himself to be a Divinity, he says, "Why dost thou waste thy arrows upon the blood of the vulgar? If thou hast any concern for thy friends, turn upon the grandson of Æacus, and avenge thy slaughtered brothers." {Thus} he said; and pointing at the son of Peleus, mowing down the bodies of the Trojans with the sword, he turned his bow towards him, and directed his unerring arrow with a fatal right hand. This was {the only thing} at which, after {the death of} Hector, the aged Priam could rejoice. And art thou then, Achilles, the conqueror of men so great, conquered by the cowardly ravisher of a Grecian wife? But if it had been fated for thee to fall by the hand of a woman, thou wouldst rather have fallen by the Thermodontean[53] battle-axe.

Now that dread of the Phrygians, the glory and defence of the Pelasgian name, the grandson of Æacus, a head invincible in war, had been burnt: the same Divinity had armed him,[54] and had burned him. He is now {but} ashes; and there remains of Achilles, so renowned, I know not what; that which will not well fill a little urn. But his glory lives, which can fill the whole world: this allowance is befitting that hero, and in this the son of Peleus is equal to himself, and knows not the empty Tartarus. Even his very shield gives occasion for war, that you may know to whom it belongs; and arms are wielded for arms. The son of Tydeus does not dare to claim them, nor Ajax, the son of Oïleus,[55] nor the younger son of Atreus, nor he who is his superior both in war and age, nor {any} others; the hope of so much glory exists only in him begotten by Telamon and {the son} of Laërtes. The descendant of Tantalus[56] removes from himself the burden and the

odium {of a decision}, and orders the Argive leaders to sit in the midst of the camp, and transfers the judgment of the dispute to them all.

[Footnote 48: *Tlepolemus*.--Ver. 537. He was a son of Hercules, by Astioche.]

[Footnote 49: *Polydamas*.--Ver. 547. He was a noble Trojan, of great bravery, who had married a daughter of Priam.]

[Footnote 50: *Rhodian fleet*.--Ver. 575. Tlepolemus, when a youth, slew his uncle, Lycimnius, the son of Mars. Flying from his country with some followers, he retired to the Island of Rhodes, where he gained the sovereignty. He went to the Trojan war with nine ships, to aid the Greeks, where he fell by the hand of Sarpedon.]

[Footnote 51: *After the son*.--Ver. 578-9. 'A sermone senis repetito munere Bacchi Surrexere toris.' These words are thus quaintly rendered in Clarke's translation: 'From listening to the old gentleman's discourse, they return again to their bottle; and taking the other glass, they departed.']

[Footnote 52: *Smintheus*.--Ver. 585. Apollo was so called, in many of the cities of Asia, and was worshipped under this name, in the Isle of Tenedos. He is said by Eustathius, to have been so called from Smynthus, a town near Troy. But, according to other accounts, he received the epithet from the Cretan word σμίνθος, a mouse; being supposed to protect man against the depredations of that kind of vermin.]

[Footnote 53: *Thermodontean*.--Ver. 611. He alludes to Penthesilea, the Queen of the Amazons, who, aiding the Trojans against the Greeks, was slain by Achilles. The battle-axe was the usual weapon of the Amazons]

[Footnote 54: *Had armed him*.--Ver. 614. Vulcan, the God of Fire, made his armour at the request of his mother, Thetis; and now his body was burned by fire.]

[Footnote 55: *Son of Oïleus*.--Ver. 622. This was Ajax, the King of the Locrians.]

[Footnote 56: *Descendant of Tantalus*.--Ver. 626. Agamemnon was the son of Atreus, grandson of Pelops, and great-grandson of Tantalus. He wisely refused to take upon himself alone the onus of deciding the contention between Ajax and Ulysses.]

## Riley's Explanation

Periclymenus was the son of Neleus and Chloris, as we are told by Homer, Apollodorus, and other authors. According to these authors, Neleus, king of Orchomenus, was the son of Neptune, who assumed the form of the river Enipeus, the more easily to deceive Tyro, the daughter of

Salmoneus. Neleus married Chloris, the daughter of Amphion, king of Thebes, who bore him eleven sons and one daughter, of which number, Homer names but three. Periclymenus, the youngest of the family, was a warlike prince, and, according to Apollodorus, accompanied Jason in the expedition of the Argonauts. Hercules, after having instituted the Olympic games, marched into Messenia, and declared war with Neleus. The ancient writers differ as to the cause of this expedition; but they agree in stating, that Hercules made himself master of Pylos, a town which Neleus had built, as a refuge from the capricious humours of his brother Pelias; and that Neleus and all his children were killed, except Nestor, who had been brought up among the Geranians, and who afterwards reigned in Pylos. The story which here relates how Periclymenus transformed himself into an eagle, and was then killed by Hercules, may possibly mean, that having long resisted the attacks of his formidable enemy, he was at length put to flight, and slain by an arrow. It is said that Neptune had given him the power to metamorphose himself into different figures, very probably because his grandfather, who was a maritime prince, had taught him the art of war and various stratagems, which he industriously made use of, to avert the ruin of his family.

In relation to the story of the death of Achilles, Dictys the Cretan tells us, that Achilles having seen Polyxena, the daughter of Priam, along with Cassandra, as she was sacrificing to Apollo, fell in love with her, and demanded her in marriage and that Hector would not consent to it, except on condition of his betraying the Greeks. This demand, so injurious to his honour, provoked Achilles so much, that he forthwith slew Hector, and dragged his body round the walls of the city. He further says that when Priam went to demand the body of Hector, he took Polyxena with him, in order to soften Achilles. His design succeeded, and Priam then agreed to give her to him in marriage. On the day appointed for the solemnity in the temple of Apollo, Paris, concealing himself behind the altar, while Deiphobus pretended to embrace Achilles, wounded him in the heel, and killed him on the spot, either because the arrow was poisoned, or because he was wounded on the great tendon, which has since been called ‘tendon Achillis,’ a spot where a wound might very easily be mortal.

This story of the death of Achilles does not seem to have been known to Homer; for he appears, in the twenty-fourth book of the Odyssey, to insinuate that that hero died in battle, fighting for the Grecian cause.

After his death Achilles was honoured as a Demigod, and Strabo says that he had a temple near the promontory of Sigæum. Pausanias and Pliny the Elder make mention of an island in the Euxine Sea, where the memory of Achilles was expressly honoured, from which circumstances it had the name of Achillea.

## Book XIII, Fable I (lines 1–438)

*After the death of Achilles, Ajax and Ulysses contend for his armour; the Greek chiefs having adjudged it to the last, Ajax kills himself in despair, and his blood is changed into a flower. When Ulysses has brought Philoctetes, who is possessed of the arrows of Hercules, to the siege, and the destinies of Troy are thereby accomplished, the city is taken and sacked, and Hecuba becomes the slave of Ulysses.*

The chiefs were seated; and a ring of the common people standing {around}, Ajax, the lord of the seven-fold shield, arose before them. And as he was impatient in his wrath, with stern features he looked back upon the Sigæan shores, and the fleet upon the shore, and, stretching out his hands, he said, "We are pleading,[1] O Jupiter, our cause before the ships, and Ulysses vies with me! But he did not hesitate to yield to the flames of Hector, which I withstood, {and} which I drove from this fleet. It is safer, therefore, for him to contend with artful words than with his {right} hand. But neither does my talent lie in speaking, nor his[2] in acting; and as great ability as I have in fierce warfare, so much has he in talking. Nor do I think, O Pelasgians, that my deeds need be related to you; for you have been eye-witnesses of them. Let Ulysses recount his, which he has performed without any witness, {and} of which night alone[3] is conscious. I own that the prize that is sought is great; but the rival of Ajax lessens its value. It is no proud thing, great though it may be, to possess any thing which Ulysses has hoped for. Already has he obtained the reward of this contest, in which, when he shall have been worsted, he will be said to have contended with me. And I, if my prowess were to be questioned, should prevail by the nobleness of my birth, being the son of Telamon, who took the city[4] of Troy under the valiant Hercules, and entered the Colchian shores in the Pagasæan ship. Æacus was his father, who there gives laws to the silent {shades}, where the heavy stone urges {downward} Sisyphus,[5] the son of Æolus.

"The supreme Jupiter owns Æacus, and confesses that he is his offspring. Thus Ajax is the third[6] from Jupiter. And yet, O Greeks, let not this line of descent avail me in this cause, if it be not common to me with the great Achilles. He was my cousin;[7] I ask for what belonged to my cousin? Why does one descended from the blood of Sisyphus, and very like him in thefts and fraud, intrude the name of a strange family among the descendants of Æacus? Are the arms to be denied me, because I took up arms before {him}, and through the means of no informer?[8] and shall one seem preferable who was the last to take them up, and who, by feigning madness, declined war, until the son of Nauplius,[9] more cunning than he, but more unhappy for himself, discovered the contrivance[10] of his cowardly mind, and dragged him forth to the arms which he had avoided. Now let him take the best arms who would have taken none. Let me be

dishonoured, and stripped of the gifts that belonged to my cousin, who presented myself in the front of danger. And I could wish that that madness had been either real or believed {so to be}, and that he had never attended us as a companion to the Phrygian towers, this counsellor of evil! Then, son of Pœas,[11] Lemnos would not have had thee exposed {there} through our guilt; who now, as they say, concealed in sylvan caves, art moving the {very} rocks with thy groans, and art wishing for the son of Laërtes what he has deserved; which, may the Gods, the Gods, {I say}, grant thee not to pray in vain.

"And now, he that was sworn upon the same arms with ourselves, one of our leaders, alas! by whom, as his successor, the arrows of Hercules are used, broken by disease and famine, is being clothed[12] and fed by birds; and in shooting fowls, he is employing the shafts destined for the destruction of Troy. Still, he lives, because he did not accompany Ulysses. And the unhappy Palamedes would have preferred that he had been left behind; {then} he would have been living, or, at least, he would have had a death without any criminality. Him, {Ulysses} remembering too well the unlucky discovery of his madness, pretended to be betraying the Grecian interests, and proved his feigned charge, and shewed {the Greeks} the gold, which he had previously hidden in the ground. By exile then, or by death,[13] has he withdrawn from the Greeks their {best} strength. Thus Ulysses fights, thus is he to be dreaded. Though he were to excel even the faithful Nestor in eloquence, yet he would never cause me to believe that the forsaking of Nestor[14] was not a crime; who, when he implored {the aid of} Ulysses, retarded by the wound of his steed, and wearied with the years of old age, was deserted by his companion. The son of Tydeus knows full well that these charges are not invented by me, who calling on him often by name, rebuked him, and upbraided[15] his trembling friend with his flight. The Gods above behold the affairs of men with just eyes. Lo! he wants help, himself, who gave it not; and as he left {another}, so was he doomed to be left: {such} law had he made for himself.

"He called aloud to his companions. I came, and I saw him trembling, and pale with fear, and shuddering at the impending death. I opposed the mass of my shield {to the enemy}, and covered him[16] as he lay; and I preserved (and that is the least part of my praise) his dastardly life. If thou dost persist in vying, let us return to that place; restore the enemy, and thy wound, and thy wonted fear; and hide behind my shield, and under that contend with me. But, after I delivered him, he to whom his wounds {before} gave no strength for standing, fled, retarded by no wound {whatever}. Hector approaches, and brings the Gods along with him to battle, and where he rushes on, not only art thou alarmed, Ulysses, but even the valiant {are}; so great terror does he bring. Him, as he exulted in the successes of his bloodstained slaughter, in close conflict, I laid flat with a huge stone. Him demanding one with whom he might engage, did I alone withstand; and you, Greeks, prayed {it might fall} to my lot;[17] and your prayers prevailed. If you inquire into the issue of this fight, I was not beaten by him.

“Lo! the Trojans bring fire and sword, and Jove, {as well}, against the Grecian fleet. Where is now the eloquent Ulysses? I, forsooth, protected a thousand ships, the hopes of your return, with my breast. Grant me the arms, in return for so many ships. But, if I may be allowed to speak the truth, a greater honour is sought for them than is for me, and our glory is united; and Ajax is sought for the arms, and not the arms by Ajax. Let the Ithacan {Ulysses} compare with these things Rhesus,[18] and the unwarlike Dolon,[19] and Helenus,[20] the son of Priam, made captive with the ravished Pallas. By daylight nothing was done; nothing when Diomedes was afar. If once you give these arms for services so mean, divide them, and that of Diomedes would be the greater share of them. But, why these for the Ithacan? who, by stealth and unarmed, ever does his work, and deceives the unwary enemy by stratagem? The very brilliancy of his helmet, as it sparkles with bright gold, will betray his plans, and discover him as he lies hid. But neither will the Dulichian[21] head, beneath the helm of Achilles, sustain a weight so great; and the spear[22] from Pelion must be heavy and burdensome for unwarlike arms. Nor will the shield, embossed with the form of the great globe, beseem a dastard left hand, and one formed for theft. Why {then}, caitiff, dost thou ask for a gift that will {but} weaken thee? should the mistake of the Grecian people bestow it on thee, there would be a cause for thee to be stripped, not for thee to be dreaded by the enemy. Thy flight, too, (in which, alone, most dastardly {wretch}! thou dost excel all {others},) will be retarded, when dragging a load so great. Besides, that shield of thine, which has so rarely experienced the conflict, is unhurt; for mine, which is gaping in a thousand wounds from bearing the darts, a new successor must be obtained. In fine, what need is there for words? Let us be tried in action. Let the arms of that brave hero be thrown in the midst of the enemy: order them to be fetched thence, and adorn him that brings them back, with them so brought off.”

The son of Telamon had {now} ended, and a murmur among the multitude ensued upon his closing words, until the Laërtian hero stood up, and fixing his eyes, for a short time, on the ground, raised them towards the chiefs, and opened his mouth in the accents that were looked for; nor was gracefulness wanting to his eloquent words.

“If my prayers had been of any avail together with yours, Pelasgians, the successor to a prize so great would not {now} be in question, and thou wouldst now be enjoying thine arms, and we thee, O Achilles. But since the unjust Fates have denied him to me and to yourselves, (and here he wiped his eyes with his hands as though shedding tears,) who could better succeed the great Achilles than he through whom[23] the great Achilles joined the Greeks? Only let it not avail him that he seems to be as stupid as he {really} is; and let not my talents, which ever served you, O Greeks, be a prejudice to me: and let this eloquence of mine, if there is any, which now pleads for its possessor, and has often {done so} for yourselves, stand clear of envy, and let each man not disown his own advantages. For {as to} descent and ancestors, and the things which we have

not made ourselves, I scarce call these our own. But, indeed, since Ajax boasts that he is the great grandson of Jove, Jupiter, too, is the founder of my family, and by just as many degrees am I distant from him. For Laërtes is my father, Arcesius his, Jupiter his; nor was any one of these {ever} condemned[24] and banished. Through the mother,[25] too, Cyllenian {Mercury}, another noble stock, is added to myself. On the side of either parent there was a God. But neither because I am more nobly born on my mother's side, nor because my father is innocent of his brother's blood, do I claim the arms {now} in question. By {personal} merit weigh the cause. So that it be no merit in Ajax that Telamon and Peleus were brothers; and {so that} not consanguinity, but the honour of merit, be regarded in {the disposal of} these spoils. Or if nearness of relationship and the next heir is sought, Peleus is his sire, and Pyrrhus is his son. What room, {then}, is there for Ajax? Let them be taken to Phthia[26] or to Scyros. Nor is Teucer[27] any less a cousin of Achilles than he; and yet does he sue for, does he expect to bear away the arms?

"Since then the contest is simply one of deeds; I, in truth, have done more than what it is easy for me to comprise in words. Yet I shall proceed in the order of events. {Thetis}, the Nereid mother, prescient of coming death, conceals her son by his dress. The disguise of the assumed dress deceived all, among whom was Ajax. Amid woman's trinkets I mixed arms such as would affect the mind of a man. And not yet had the hero thrown aside the dress of a maiden, when, as he was brandishing a shield and a spear, I said, 'O son of a Goddess, Pergamus reserves itself to fall through thee. Why, {then}, dost thou delay to overthrow the mighty Troy?' And {then} I laid my hands on him, and to brave deeds I sent forth the brave. His deeds then are my own. 'Twas I that subdued Telephus, as he fought with his lance; 'twas I that recovered him, vanquished, and begging {for his life}. That Thebes has fallen, is my doing. Believe me, that I took Lesbos, that I {took} Tenedos, Chrysa[28] and Cylla, cities of Apollo, and Scyros {too}. Consider too, that the Lyrnessian[29] walls were levelled with the ground, shaken by my right hand. And, not to mention other things, 'twas I, in fact, that found one who might slay the fierce Hector; through me the renowned Hector lies prostrate. By those arms through which Achilles was found out, I demand these arms. To him when living I gave them; after his death I ask them back again.

"After the grief of one[30] had reached all the Greeks, and a thousand ships had filled the Eubœan Aulis, the breezes long expected were either not existing or adverse to the fleet; and the ruthless oracles commanded Agamemnon to slay his innocent daughter for the cruel Diana. This the father refuses, and is enraged against the Gods themselves, and, a king, he is still a father. By my words I swayed the gentle disposition of the parent to the public advantage. Now, indeed, I make this confession, and let the son of Atreus forgive me as I confess it; before a partial judge I upheld a difficult cause. Yet the good of the people and his brother, and the supreme power of the sceptre granted to him, influence him to balance praise against blood. I was sent, too, to the

mother, who was not to be persuaded, but to be deceived with craft; to whom, if the son of Telamon had gone, until even now would our sails have been without wind. A bold envoy, too, I was sent to the towers of Ilium, and the senate-house of lofty Troy was seen and entered by me; and still was it filled with their heroes. Undaunted, I pleaded the cause which all Greece had entrusted to me; and I accused Paris, and I demanded back the plunder, and Helen {as well}; and I moved Priam and Antenor[31], related to Priam. But Paris and his brothers, and those who, under him, had been ravishers, scarce withheld their wicked hands; {and} this thou knowest, Menelaüs, and that was the first day of my danger in company with thee. It were a tedious matter to relate the things which, by my counsel and my valour, I have successfully executed in the duration of this tedious warfare.

"After the first encounter, the enemy for a long time kept themselves within the walls of the city, and there was no opportunity for open fight. At length, in the tenth year we fought. {And} what wast thou doing in the mean time, thou, who knowest of nothing but battles? what was the use of thee? But if thou inquirest into my actions: I lay ambuscades for the enemy; I surround the trenches[32] with redoubts; I cheer our allies that they may bear with patient minds the tediousness of a protracted war; I show, {too}, how we are to be supported, and how to be armed; I am sent[33] whither necessity requires. Lo! by the advice of Jove, the king, deceived by a form in his sleep, commands him to dismiss all care of the war {thus} begun. He is enabled, through the author of it, to defend his own cause. Ajax should not have allowed this, and should have demanded that Troy be razed. And he should have fought, the {only} thing he could do. Why, does he not stop them when about to depart? Why does he not take up arms, and {why not} suggest some course for the fickle multitude to pursue? This was not too much for him, who never says any thing but what is grand. Well, and didst thou take to flight? I was witness of it, and ashamed I was to see, when thou wast turning thy back, and wast preparing the sails of disgrace. Without delay, I exclaimed, 'What are you doing? What madness made you, O my friends, quit Troy, {well nigh} taken? And what, in this tenth year, are you carrying home but disgrace?'

"With these and other {words}, for which grief itself had made me eloquent, I brought back the resisting {Greeks} from the flying fleet. The son of Atreus calls together his allies, struck with terror; nor, even yet, does the son of Telamon dare to utter a word; yet Thersites[34] dares to launch out against the kings with impudent remarks, although not unpunished by myself. I am aroused, and I incite the trembling citizens against the foe, and by my voice I reclaim their lost courage. From that time, whatever that man, whom I drew away as he was turning his back, may seem to have done bravely, is {all} my own. In fine, who of the Greeks is either praising thee, or resorts to thee; but with me the son of Tydeus shares his exploits; he praises me, and is ever confident while Ulysses is his companion. It is something, out of so many thousands of the

Greeks, to be singled out alone by Diomedes. Nor was it lot that ordered me to go forth; and yet, despising the dangers of the night and of the enemy, I slew Dolon, {one} of the Phrygian race, who dared the same things that we {dared}; though not before I had compelled him[35] to disclose everything, and had learned what perfidious Troy designed. Everything had I {now} discovered, and I had nothing {further} to find out, and I might now have returned, with my praises going before me. Not content with that, I sought the tent of Rhesus, and in his own camp slew himself and his attendants. And thus, as a conqueror, and having gained my own desires, I returned in the captured chariot, resembling a joyous triumph. Deny me the arms of him whose horses the enemy had demanded as the price for {one} night's service; and let Ajax be {esteemed} your greater benefactor.

"Why should I make reference to the troops of Lycian Sarpedon,[36] mowed down by my sword? With much bloodshed I slew Cœranos, the son of Iphitus, and Alastor, and Chromius, and Alcander, and Halius, and Noëmon, and Prytanis, and I put to death Thoön, with Chersidamas, and Charops, and Ennomos, impelled by his relentless fate; five of less renown fell by my hand beneath the city walls. I, too, fellow-citizens, have wounds, honourable in their place.[37] Believe not {his} crafty words; here! behold them." And {then}, with his hand, he pulls aside his garment, and, "this is the breast," says he, "that has been ever employed in your service."

"But the son of Telamon has spent none of his blood on his friends for so many years, and he has a body without a {single} wound.[38] But what signifies that, if he says that he bore arms for the Pelasgian fleet against both the Trojans and Jupiter himself? I confess it, he did bear them; nor is it any part of mine with malice to detract from the good deeds {of others;} but let him not alone lay claim to what belongs to all, and let him give to yourselves, as well, some of the honour. The descendant of Actor, safe under the appearance of Achilles, repelled the Trojans, with their defender, from the ships on the point of being burnt. He, too, unmindful of the king, and of the chiefs, and of myself, fancies that he alone dared to engage[39] with Hector in combat, being the ninth in that duty, and preferred by favour of the lot. But yet, most brave {chief}, what was the issue of thy combat? Hector came off, injured by no wound. Ah, wretched me! with how much grief am I compelled to recollect that time at which Achilles, the bulwark of the Greeks, was slain: nor tears, nor grief, nor fear, hindered me from carrying his body aloft from the ground; on these shoulders, I say, on these shoulders I bore the body of Achilles, and his arms together {with him}, which now, too, I am endeavouring to bear off. I have strength to suffice for such a weight, {and}, assuredly, I have a soul that will be sensible of your honours.

"Was then, forsooth! his azure mother {so} anxious in her son's behalf that the heavenly gifts, a work of so great ingenuity, a rough soldier, and one without any genius, should put on? For he will not understand the engravings on the shield; the ocean, and the earth, and the stars with the lofty heavens and the Pleïades, and the Hyades, and the Bear that avoids the sea, and the

different cities, and the blazing sword of Orion; arms he insists on receiving, which he does not understand. What! and does he charge that I, avoiding the duties of this laborious war, came but late to the toil begun? and does he not perceive that {in this} he is defaming the brave Achilles? If he calls dissembling a crime, we have both of us dissembled. If delay {stands} for a fault, I was earlier than he. A fond wife detained me, a fond mother Achilles. The first part of our time was given to them, the rest to yourselves. I am not alarmed, if now I am unable to defend myself against this accusation, in common with so great a man. Yet he was found out by the dexterity of Ulysses, but not Ulysses {by that} of Ajax.

"And that we may not be surprised at his pouring out on me the reproaches of his silly tongue, against you, too, does he make objections worthy of shame. Is it base for me, with a false crime to have charged Palamedes, {and} honourable for you to have condemned him? But neither could {Palamedes}, the son of Nauplius, defend a crime so great, and so manifest; nor did you {only} hear the charges against him, {but} you witnessed them, and in the bribe {itself} the charge was established. Nor have I deserved to be accused, because Lemnos, {the isle} of Vulcan, {still} receives {Philoctetes}, the son of Pœas. {Greeks}, defend your own acts! for you consented to it. Nor yet shall I deny that I advised him to withdraw himself from the toils of the warfare and the voyage, and to try by rest to assuage his cruel pains. He consented, and {still} he lives. This advice was not only well-meant, but {it was} fortunate as well, when 'twas enough to be well-meant. Since our prophets demand him for the purpose of destroying Troy, entrust not that to me. The son of Telamon will be better to go, and by his eloquence will soften the hero, maddened by diseases and anger, or by some wile will skilfully bring him thence. Sooner will Simoïs flow backward, and Ida stand without foliage, and Achaia promise aid to Troy, than, my breast being inactive in your interest, the skill of stupid Ajax shall avail the Greeks.

"Though thou be, relentless Philoctetes, enraged against thy friends and the king, and myself, though thou curse and devote my head, everlastingly, and though thou wish to have me in thy anguish thrown in thy way perchance, and to shed my blood; and though if I meet thee, so thou wilt have the opportunity of meeting me, still will I attempt {thee, and} will endeavour to bring thee back with me. And, if Fortune favours me, I will as surely be the possessor of thy arrows, as I was the possessor of the Dardanian prophet[40] whom I took {prisoner; and so} I revealed the answers of the Deities and the fates of Troy; {and} as I carried off the hidden statue[41] of the Phrygian Minerva from the midst of the enemy. And does Ajax, {then}, compare himself with me? The Fates, in fact, would not allow Troy to be captured without that {statue}. Where is the valiant Ajax? where are the boastful words of that mighty man? Why art thou trembling here? Why dares Ulysses to go through the guards, and to entrust himself to the night, and, through fell swords, to enter not only the walls of Troy, but even its highest towers, and to tear the Goddess from her shrine, and, {thus} torn, to bear her off amid the enemy?

“Had I not done these things, in vain would the son of Telamon been bearing the seven hides of the bulls on his left arm. On that night was the victory over Troy gained by me; then did I conquer Pergamus, when I rendered it capable of being conquered. Forbear by thy looks,[42] and thy muttering, to show me the son of Tydeus; a part of the glory in these things is his own. Neither wast thou alone, when for the allied fleet thou didst grasp thy shield: a multitude was attending thee, {while} but one fell to me: who, did he not know that a fighting man is of less value than a wise one, and that the reward is not the due of the invincible right hand, would himself, too, have been suing for these {arms}; the more discreet Ajax would have been suing, and the fierce Eurypilus,[43] and the son of the famous Andremon;[44] no less, {too} would Idomeneus,[45] and Meriones[46] sprung from the same land, and the brother of the greater son of Atreus have sought them. But these, brave in action, (nor are they second to thee in war,) have {all} yielded to my wisdom. Thy right hand is of value in war, {but} thy temper is one that stands in need of my direction. Thou hast strength without intelligence; I have a care for the future. Thou art able to fight; with me, the son of Atreus chooses the {proper} time for fighting. Thou only art of service with thy body; I with my mind: and as much as he who guides the bark, is superior to the capacity of the rower, as much as the general is greater than the soldier, so much do I excel thee; and in my body there is an intellect that is superior to hands: in that {lies} all my vigour.

“But you, ye chieftains, give the reward to your watchful {servant;} and for the cares of so many years which I have passed in anxiety, grant this honour as a compensation for my services. Our toil is now at its close; I have removed the opposing Fates, and by rendering it capable of being taken, {in effect} I have taken the lofty Pergamus. Now, by our common hopes, and the walls of the Trojans doomed to fall, and by those Gods whom lately I took from the enemy, by anything that remains, through wisdom to be done; if, too, anything {remains} of bold enterprize, and to be recovered from a dangerous spot; if you think that anything is still wanting for the downfall of Troy; {then} remember me; or if you give not me the arms, concede them to this;” and {then} he discovers the fatal statue of Minerva.

The body of the chiefs is moved, and {then}, in fact appears what eloquence can do; and the fluent man receives the arms of a brave one. He, who so often has alone withstood both Hector, and the sword, and flames, and Jove {himself}, cannot {now} withstand his wrath alone, and grief conquers the man that is invincible. He seizes his sword, and he says:-- “This, at least, is my own; or will Ulysses claim this, too, for himself. This must I use against myself; and {the blade}, which has often been wet with the blood of the Phrygians, will now be wet with the slaughter of its owner: that no one but Ajax {himself}, may be enabled to conquer Ajax.”

{Thus} he said; and he plunged the fatal sword into his breast, then for the first time suffering a wound, where it lay exposed to the steel. Nor were his hands able to draw out the weapon there

fixed: the blood itself forced it out. And the earth, made red by the blood, produced a purple flower from the green turf, {the same} which had formerly been produced from the Œbalian wound. Letters common to {that} youth and to the hero, were inscribed in the middle of the leaves; the latter {belonging to} the name,[47] the former to the lamentation.

The conqueror, Ulysses, set sail for the country of Hypsipyle,[48] and of the illustrious Thoas, and the regions infamous for the slaughter {there} of the husbands of old; that he might bring back the arrows, the weapons of the Tirynthian {hero}. After he had carried them back to the Greeks, their owner attending too, the concluding hand was put, at length, to this protracted war. Troy and Priam fell together; the wretched wife of Priam lost after every thing {else} her human form, and alarmed a foreign air[49] with her barkings. Where the long Hellespont is reduced into a narrow compass, Ilion was in flames; nor had the flames yet ceased; and the altar of Jove had drank up the scanty blood of the aged Priam. The priestess of Apollo[50] dragged by the hair, extends her unavailing hands towards the heavens. The victorious Greeks drag along the Dardanian matrons, embracing, while they may, the statues of their country's Gods, and clinging to the burning temples, an envied spoil. Astyanax[51] is hurled from those towers from which he was often wont, when shown by his mother, to behold his father, fighting for himself, and defending the kingdom of his ancestors.

And now Boreas bids them depart, and with a favourable breeze, the sails, as they wave, resound, {and} the sailors bid them take advantage of the winds. "Troy, farewell!" the Trojan women cry;-- "We are torn away!" and they give kisses to the soil, and leave the smoking roofs of their country. The last that goes on board the fleet, a dreadful sight, is Hecuba, found amid the sepulchres of her children. Dulichian hands have dragged her away, while clinging to their tombs and giving kisses to their bones; yet the ashes of one has she taken out, and, {so} taken out, has carried with her in her bosom the ashes of Hector. On the tomb of Hector she leaves the grey hair of her head, an humble offering, her hair and her tears. There is opposite to Phrygia, where Troy stood, a land inhabited by the men of Bistonia. There, was the rich palace of Polymnestor, to whom thy father, Polydorus, entrusted thee, to be brought up privately, and removed thee {afar} from the Phrygian arms. A wise resolution; had he not added, {as well}, great riches, the reward of crime, the incentive of an avaricious disposition. When the fortunes of the Phrygians were ruined, the wicked king of the Phrygians took a sword, and plunged it in the throat of his fosterchild; and, as though the crime could be removed with the body, he hurled him lifeless from a rock into the waters below.

[Footnote 1: *We are pleading*.--Ver. 5. The skill of the Poet is perceptible in the abrupt commencement of the speech of the impetuous Ajax.]

[Footnote 2: *Nor his*.--Ver. 11. Ajax often uses the pronoun 'iste' as a term of reproach.]

[Footnote 3: *Night alone*.--Ver. 15. By this he means that the alleged exploits of Ulysses were altogether fictitious; or that they were done in the dark to conceal his fear.]

[Footnote 4: *Took the city*.--Ver. 23. Telamon, was the companion of Hercules when he sacked Troy, as a punishment for the perfidy of Laomedon.]

[Footnote 5: *Sisyphus*.--Ver. 26. This is intended as a reproachful hint against Ulysses, whose mother, Anticlea, was said to have been seduced by Sisyphus before her marriage to Laërtes.]

[Footnote 6: *Ajax is the third*.--Ver. 28. That is the third, exclusive of Jupiter; for Ajax was the grandson of Æacus, and the great grandson of Jupiter.]

[Footnote 7: *My cousin*.--Ver. 31. 'Frater' here means, not 'brother,' but 'cousin,' as Peleus and Telamon, the fathers of Achilles and Ajax, were brothers.]

[Footnote 8: *No informer*.--Ver. 34. He alludes to the means which Ulysses adopted to avoid going to the Trojan war. Pretending to be seized with madness, he ploughed the sea-shore, and sowed it with salt. To ascertain the truth, Palamedes placed his infant son, Telemachus, before the plough; on which Ulysses turned on one side, to avoid hurting the child, which was considered a proof that his madness was not real.]

[Footnote 9: *Son of Nauplius*.--Ver. 39. Palamedes was the son of Nauplius, the king of Eubœa, and a son of Neptune.]

[Footnote 10: *The contrivance*.--Ver. 38. Ulysses forged a letter from Priam, in which the king thanked Palamedes for his intended assistance to the Trojan cause, and begged to present him a sum of money. By bribing the servants of Palamedes, he caused a large quantity of gold to be buried in the ground, under his tent. He then caused the letter to be intercepted, and to be carried to Agamemnon. On the appearance of Palamedes to answer the charge, Ulysses appeared seemingly as his friend, and suggested, that if no gold should be found in his possession, he must be innocent. The gold, however, being found, Palamedes was stoned to death.]

[Footnote 11: *Son of Pœas*.--Ver. 45. Philoctetes was the possessor of the arrows of Hercules, without the presence of which Troy could not be taken. Accompanying the Greeks to the Trojan war, he was wounded in the foot by one of the arrows; and the smell arising from the wound was so offensive, that, by the advice of Ulysses, he was left behind, in the island of Lemnos, one of the Cyclades.]

[Footnote 12: *Is being clothed*.--Ver. 53. The Poet Attius, as quoted by Cicero, says that Philoctetes, while in Lemnos, made himself clothing out of the feathers of birds.]

[Footnote 13: *Or by death*.--Ver. 61. Exile in the case of Philoctetes; death, in that of Palamedes.]

[Footnote 14: *Forsaking of Nestor*.--Ver. 64. Nestor having been wounded by Paris, and being overtaken by Hector, was on the point of perishing, when Diomedes came to his rescue, Ulysses having taken to flight. See the Iliad, Book iii.]

[Footnote 15: *And upbraided*.--Ver. 69. He alludes to the words in the Iliad, which Homer puts in the mouth of Diomedes.]

[Footnote 16: *And covered him*.--Ver. 75. Ajax, at the request of Menelaüs, protected Ulysses with his shield, when he was wounded.]

[Footnote 17: *Fall to my lot*.--Ver. 85. He alludes to the occasion when some of the bravest of the Greeks drew lots which should accept the challenge of Hector: the Greeks wishing, according to Homer, that the lot might fall to Ajax Telamon, Ajax Oïleus, or Agamemnon.]

[Footnote 18: *Rhesus*.--Ver. 98. He was slain by Ulysses and Diomedes on the night on which he arrived, Iliad, Book x.]

[Footnote 19: *Dolon*.--Ver. 98. Being sent out by Hector to spy, he was intercepted by Ulysses and Diomedes, and slain at Troy. Iliad, Book x.]

[Footnote 20: *Helenus*.--Ver. 99. Being skilled in prophesy, after he was taken prisoner by Diomedes and Ulysses, his life was saved; and marrying Andromache, after the death of Pyrrhus, he succeeded to the throne of part of the kingdom of Chaonia.]

[Footnote 21: *Dulichian*.--Ver. 107. Dulichium was an island of the Ionian Sea, near Ithaca, and part of the realms of Ulysses.]

[Footnote 22: *The spear*.--Ver. 109. The spear of Achilles had been cut from the wood on Mount Pelion, and given by the Centaur Chiron to his father Peleus.]

[Footnote 23: *He through whom*.--Ver. 134. Through whom Achilles had been discovered, concealed among the daughters of Lycomedes, king of Seyros.]

[Footnote 24: *Ever condemned*.--Ver. 145. He alludes to the joint crime of Peleus the uncle, and Telamon, the father of Ajax, who were banished for the murder of their brother Phocus.]

[Footnote 25: *Through the mother*.--Ver. 146. Anticlea, the mother of Ulysses, was the daughter of Autolycus, of whom Mercury was the father by Chione, the daughter of Dædalion.]

[Footnote 26: *Phthia*.--Ver. 156. Phthia was the city of Thessaly, where Peleus, the father of Achilles, was residing; while Pyrrhus, his son, was living with his mother Deidamia, in the isle of

Scyros, one of the Cyclades.]

[Footnote 27: *Teucer*.--Ver. 157. Teucer was the cousin of Achilles, being the son of Telamon, and the half-brother of Ajax; Hesione being the mother of Teucer, while Ajax was the son of Eubœa.]

[Footnote 28: *Chrysa*.--Ver. 174. Chrysa and Cylla were cities in the vicinity of Troy. This Scyros was, probably, not the island of that name, but some place near Troy.]

[Footnote 29: *Lyrnessian*.--Ver. 176. This was a city of the Troad, on the taking of which by Achilles, Hippodamia, or Briseïs, the daughter of Bryses, was made captive by Achilles.]

[Footnote 30: *Grief of one*.--Ver. 181. He alludes to the misfortune of Menelaüs in losing his wife, if, indeed, it could be deemed a misfortune.]

[Footnote 31: *Antenor*.--Ver. 201. Antenor, who was related to Priam, always advocated peace with the Greeks; for which reason, according to Livy, the Greeks did not treat him as an enemy.]

[Footnote 32: *Surround the trenches*.--Ver. 212. He probably alludes to the trenches thrown up before the ships of the Greeks, and defended by embankments, which were afterwards destroyed by Neptune.]

[Footnote 33: *I am sent*.--Ver. 215. As on the occasion when he was sent to restore Chryseis to her father Chryses, the priest of Apollo, that the pestilence might be stayed, which had been sent by the offended God.]

[Footnote 34: *Thersites*.--Ver. 233. He was the most deformed, cowardly, and impudent of the Greeks, who, always abusing his betters, was beaten by Ulysses, and was at last killed by Achilles with a blow of his fist.]

[Footnote 35: *Compelled him*.--Ver. 245. When he was taken prisoner by them, Ulysses and Diomedes compelled Dolon to disclose what was going on in the Trojan camp, and learned from him the recent arrival of Rhesus, the son of either Mars or Strymon, and the king of Thrace.]

[Footnote 36: *Sarpedon*.--Ver. 255. He was the son of Jupiter and Europa, and was king of Lycia. Aiding the Trojans, he was slain by Patroclus.]

[Footnote 37: *In their place*.--Ver. 263. That is, inflicted on the breast, and not on the back.]

[Footnote 38: *A single wound*.--Ver. 267. He alludes to his being invulnerable, from having been wrapped in the lion's skin of Hercules.]

[Footnote 39: *Dared to engage*.--Ver. 275. Hector and Ajax Telamon meeting in single combat, neither was the conqueror; but on parting they exchanged gifts, which were fatal to them both. Hector was dragged round the walls of Troy by the belt which he received from Ajax; while the latter committed suicide with the sword which was given to him by Hector.]

[Footnote 40: *Dardanian prophet*.--Ver. 335. Helenus, the son of Priam.]

[Footnote 41: *The hidden statue*.--Ver. 337. This was the Palladium, or statue of Minerva, which was destined to be the guardian of the safety of Troy, so long as it was in the possession of the Trojans.]

[Footnote 42: *By thy looks*.--Ver. 350. We are to suppose, that here Ajax is nodding at, or pointing towards Diomedes, as having helped Ulysses on all the occasions which he names, he having been his constant companion in his exploits.]

[Footnote 43: *Eurypilus*.--Ver. 357. He was the son of Evæmon, and came with forty ships to aid the Greeks. He was from Ormenius, a city of Thessaly.]

[Footnote 44: *Andremon*.--Ver. 357. Thoas, the son of Andremon, was the leader of the Ætolians; he came with forty ships to the Trojan war.]

[Footnote 45: *Idomeneus*.--Ver. 358. He was the son of Deucalion, king of Crete. After the siege of Troy, he settled at Salentinum, a promontory of Calabria, in Italy.]

[Footnote 46: *Meriones*.--Ver. 359. He was the nephew and charioteer of Idomeneus.]

[Footnote 47: *To the name*.--Ver. 398. See note to Book x., line 207.]

[Footnote 48: *Country of Hypsipyle*.--Ver. 399. The island of Lemnos is here called the country of Hypsipyle, who saved the life of her father Thoas, when the other women of the island slew the males.]

[Footnote 49: *A foreign air*.--Ver. 406. Namely, Thrace, which was far away from her native country.]

[Footnote 50: *Priestess of Apollo*.--Ver. 410. Cassandra was the priestess of Apollo. Being ravished by Ajax Oïleus, she became the captive of Agamemnon, and was slain by Clytemnestra.]

[Footnote 51: *Astyanax*.--Ver. 415. He was the only child of Hector and Andromache. Ulysses threw him from the top of a high tower, that none of the royal blood might survive.]

## Riley's Explanation

It may with justice be said, that in the speeches of Ajax Telamon, and Ulysses, here given, the Poet has presented us with a masterpiece of genius; both in the lively colours in which he has described the two rivals, and the ingenious manner in which he has throughout sustained the contrast between their respective characters.

The ancient writers are not agreed upon the question, who was the mother of Ajax Telamon; Dares says that it was Hesione; while Apollodorus, Plutarch, Tzetzes and others, allege that it was Peribœa, the daughter of Alcathoüs, the son of Pelops. Pindar and Apollodorus say, that Hercules, on going to visit his friend Telamon, prayed to Jupiter that Telamon might have a son, whose skin should be as impenetrable as that of the Nemæan lion, which he then wore. As he prayed, he espied an eagle; upon which, he informed his friend that a favourable event awaited his prayer, and desired him to call his son after the name of an eagle, which in the Greek is αἰετὸς. The Scholiast on Sophocles, Suidas and Tzetzes, say further, that when Hercules returned to see Telamon, after the birth of Ajax, he covered him with the lion's skin, and that by this means Ajax became invulnerable except in that spot of his body, which was beneath the hole which the arrow of Hercules had made in the skin of the beast.

Dictys, Suidas, and Cedrenus affirm, that the dispute of Ulysses and Ajax Telamon was about the Palladium, to which each of them laid claim. They add, that the Grecian nobles, having adjudged it to Ulysses, Ajax threatened to slay them, and was found dead in his tent the next morning; but it is more generally stated to the effect here related by Ovid, that he killed himself, because he could not obtain the armour of Achilles. Filled with grief and anger combined, he became distracted; and after falling on some flocks, which in his madness he took for enemies, he at last stabbed himself with the sword which he had received from Hector. This account has been followed by Euripides, in his tragedy on the subject of the death of Ajax; and Homer seems to allude to this story, when he makes Ulysses say, that on his descent to the Infernal Regions, the shades of all the Grecian heroes immediately met him, except that of Ajax, whose resentment at their former dispute about the armour of Achilles was still so warm, that he would not come near him. The Scholiast on Homer, and Eustathius, say that Agamemnon being much embarrassed how to behave in a dispute which might have proved fatal to the Grecian cause, ordered the Trojan prisoners to come before the council to give their opinion, as to which of them had done the most mischief; and that they answered in favour of Ulysses. The Scholiast on Aristophanes also adds, that Agamemnon, not satisfied with this enquiry, sent out spies to know what was the opinion of the Trojans on the relative merits of Ulysses and Ajax; and that upon their report, he decided in favour of Ulysses.

According to Pliny and Pausanias, Ajax was buried near the promontory of Sigæum, where a tomb was erected for him; though other writers, on the authority of Dictys, place his tomb on the

promontory of Rhœtæum. Horace speaks of him as being denied the honour of a funeral; but he evidently alludes to a passage in the tragedy of Sophocles, where the poet introduces Agamemnon as obstinately refusing to allow him burial, till he is softened by the entreaties of Teucer.

It is probable that Homer knew nothing of the story here mentioned relative to the concealment of Achilles, disguised in female apparel, by Thetis, in the court of Lycomedes, her brother; for speaking of the manner in which Achilles engaged in the war, he says that Nestor and Ulysses went to visit Peleus and Menœtius, and easily prevailed with them that Achilles and Patroclus should accompany them to the war. It was, however, at the court of Lycomedes that Achilles fell in love with and married Deidamia, by whom he had Pyrrhus, or Neoptolemus, who was present at the taking of Troy, at a very early age.

The story of Polydorus is related in the third Book of the Æneid, and is also told by Hyginus, with some variations. He says that Polydorus was sent by Priam to Polymnestor, king of Thrace, while he was yet in his cradle; and that Ilione, the daughter of Priam, distrusting the cruelty and avarice of Polymnestor, who was her husband, educated the child as her own son, and made their own son Deiphylus pass for Polydorus, the two infants being of the same age. He also says that the Greeks, after the taking of Troy, offered Electra to Polymnestor in marriage, on condition that he should divorce Ilione, and slay Polydorus, and that Polymnestor, having acceded to their proposal, unconsciously killed his own son Deiphylus. Polydorus going to consult the oracle concerning his future fortune, was told, that his father was dead, and his native city reduced to ashes; on which he imagined that the oracle had deceived him; but returning to Thrace, his sister informed him of the secret, on which he deprived Polymnestor of his sight.

## Book XIII, Fables III and IV (lines 439–622)

*In returning from Troy, the Greeks are stopped in Thrace by the shade of Achilles, who requests that Polyxena shall be sacrificed to his manes. While Hecuba is fetching water with which to bathe the body of her daughter, she espies the corpse of her son Polydorus. In her exasperations she repairs to the court of Polymnestor; and having torn out his eyes, is transformed into a bitch. Memnon, who has been slain by Achilles, is honoured with a magnificent funeral, and, at the prayer of Aurora, his ashes are transformed by Jupiter into birds, since called Memnonides.*

On the Thracian shore the son of Atreus had moored his fleet, until the sea was calm, {and} until the wind was more propitious. Here, on a sudden, Achilles, as great as he was wont to be when alive, rises from the ground, bursting far and wide, and, like to one threatening, revives the countenance of that time when he fiercely attacked Agamemnon with his lawless sword. “And are you departing, unmindful of me, ye Greeks?” he says; “and is all grateful remembrance of my valour buried together with me? Do not so. And that my sepulchre may not be without honour, let Polyxena slain appease the ghost of Achilles.” {Thus} he said; and his companions obeying the implacable shade, the noble and unfortunate maid, and more than {an ordinary} woman, torn from the bosom of her mother, which she now cherished almost alone, was led to the tomb, and became a sacrifice at his ruthless pile.

She, mindful of herself, after she was brought to the cruel altar, and had perceived that the savage rites were preparing for her; and when she saw Neoptolemus standing {by}, and wielding his sword, and fixing his eyes upon her countenance, said-- “Quickly make use of this noble blood: {in me} there is no resistance: and do thou bury thy weapons either in my throat or in my breast!” and, at the same time she laid bare her throat and her breast; “should I, Polyxena, forsooth,[52] either endure to be the slave of any person, or will any sacred Deity be appeased by such a sacrifice. I only wish that my death could be concealed from my mother. My mother is the impediment; and she lessens my joys at death. Yet it is not my death, but her own life, that should be lamented by her. Only, stand ye off, lest I should go to the Stygian shades not a free woman: if {in this} I demand what is just; and withhold the hands of males from the contact of a virgin. My blood will be the more acceptable to him, whoever it is that you are preparing to appease by my slaughter. Yet, if the last prayers of my lips move any of you,--’tis the daughter of king Priam, {and} not a captive that entreats--return my body unconsumed to my mother, and let her not purchase for me with gold, but with tears, the sad privilege of a sepulchre. When {in former times} she could, then used she to purchase with gold.”

{Thus} she said; but the people did not restrain those tears which she restrained. Even the priest himself, weeping and reluctant, divided her presented breast with the piercing steel. She, sinking to the earth on her failing knees, maintained an undaunted countenance to the last moment of her life. Even then was it her care, when she fell, to cover the features that ought to be concealed, and to preserve the honour of her chaste modesty. The Trojan matrons received her, and reckoned the children of Priam whom they had had to deplore; and how much blood one house had expended. And they lament thee, Oh virgin! and thee, Oh thou! so lately called a royal wife {and} a royal mother, {once} the resemblance of flourishing Asia, but now a worthless prey amid the plunder {of Troy}; which the conquering Ulysses would have declined as his, but that thou hadst brought Hector forth. {And} scarce did Hector find an owner for his mother. She, embracing the body bereft of a soul so brave, gave to that as well, those tears which so oft she had given for her country, her children, and her husband; {and} her tears she poured in his wounds. And she impressed kisses with her lips, and beat her breast {now} accustomed to it; and trailing her grey hairs in the clotted blood, many things indeed did she say, but these as well, as she tore her breast:

"My daughter, the last affliction (for what now remains?) to thy mother: my daughter, thou liest prostrate, and I behold thy wound {as} my own wounds. Lo! lest I should have lost any one of my children without bloodshed, thou, too, dost receive thy wound. Still, because {thou wast} a woman, I supposed thee safe from the sword; and {yet}, a woman, thou hast fallen by the sword. The same Achilles, the ruin of Troy, and the bereaver of myself, the same has destroyed thus many of thy brothers, {and} thyself. But, after he had fallen by the arrows of Paris and of Phœbus, 'Now, at least,' I said, 'Achilles is no {longer} to be dreaded;' and yet even now, was he to be dreaded by me. The very ashes of him, as he lies buried, rage against this family; and {even} in the tomb have we found him an enemy. For the descendant of Æacus have I been {thus} prolific. Great Ilion lies prostrate, and the public calamity is completed by a dreadful catastrophe; if indeed, it is completed. Pergamus alone remains for me: and my sorrow is still in its career. So lately the greatest woman in the world, powerful in so many sons-in-law, and children[53], and daughters-in-law, and in my husband, now I am dragged into exile, destitute, {and} torn away from the tombs of my kindred, as a present to Penelope. She, pointing me out to the matrons of Ithaca, as I tease my allotted task, will say, 'This is that famous mother of Hector; this is the wife of Priam.' And, now thou, who after the loss of so many {children}, alone didst alleviate the sorrows of thy mother, hast made the atonement at the tomb of the enemy. Atoning sacrifices for an enemy have I brought forth. For what purpose, lasting like iron, am I reserved? and why do I linger {here}? To what end dost thou, pernicious age, detain me? Why, ye cruel Deities, unless to the end that I may see fresh deaths, do ye reprieve an aged woman of years so prolonged? Who could have supposed, that after the fall of Troy, Priam could have been

pronounced happy? Blessed in his death, he has not beheld thee, my daughter, {thus} cut off; and at the same moment, he lost his life and his kingdom.

“But, I suppose, thou, a maiden of royal birth, wilt be honoured with funeral rites, and thy body will be deposited in the tombs of thy ancestors. This is not the fortune of thy house; tears and a handful of foreign sand will be thy lot, the {only} gifts of a mother. We have lost all; a child most dear to his mother, now alone remains as a reason for me to endure to live yet for a short time, once the youngest of {all} my male issue, Polydorus, entrusted on these coasts to the Ismarian king. Why, in the mean time, am I delaying to bathe her cruel wounds with the stream, her features, too, besmeared with dreadful blood?”

{Thus} she spoke; and with aged step she proceeded towards the shore, tearing her grey locks. “Give me an urn, ye Trojan women,” the unhappy {mother} had just said, in order that she might take up the flowing waters, {when} she beheld[54] the body of Polydorus thrown up on the shore, and the great wounds made by the Thracian weapons. The Trojan women cried out aloud; with grief she was struck dumb; and very grief consumed both her voice and the tears that arose within; and much resembling a hard rock she became benumbed. And at one moment she fixed her eyes on the ground before her; {and} sometimes she raised her haggard features towards the skies; {and} now she viewed the features, now the wounds of her son, as he lay; the wounds especially; and she armed and prepared herself for vengeance by rage. Soon as she was inflamed by it, as though she {still} remained a queen, she determined to be revenged, and was wholly {employed} in {devising} a {fitting} form of punishment. And as the lioness rages when bereft of her sucking whelp, and having found the tracks of his feet, follows the enemy that she sees not; so Hecuba, after she had mingled rage with mourning, not forgetful of her spirit, {but} forgetful of her years, went to Polymnestor, the contriver of this dreadful murder, and demanded an interview; for that it was her wish to show him a concealed treasure left for him to give to her son.

The Odrysian {king} believes her, and, inured to the love of gain, comes to a secret spot. Then with soothing lips, he craftily says, “Away with delays, Hecuba, {and} give the present to thy son; all that thou givest, and what thou hast already given, I swear by the Gods above, shall be his.” Sternly she eyes him as he speaks, and falsely swears; and she boils with heaving rage; and so flies on him, seized by a throng of the captive matrons, and thrusts her fingers into his perfidious eyes; and of their sight she despoils his cheeks, and plunges her hands {into the sockets}, (’tis rage that makes her strong); and, defiled with his guilty blood, she tears not his eyes, for they are not left, {but} the places for his eyes.

Provoked by the death of their king, the Thracian people begin to attack the Trojan {matron} with the hurling of darts and of stones. But she attacks the stones thrown at her with a hoarse

noise, and with bites; and attempting to speak, her mouth just ready for the words, she barks aloud. The place {still} exists, and derives its name[55] from the circumstance; and long remembering her ancient misfortunes, even then did she howl dismally through the Sithonian plains. Her {sad} fortune moved both her own Trojans, and her Pelasgian foes, and all the Gods as well; so much so, that even the wife and sister of Jove herself denied that Hecuba had deserved that fate.

Although she has favoured those same arms, there is not leisure for Aurora to be moved by the calamities and the fall of Troy. A nearer care and grief at home for her lost Memnon is afflicting her. Him his rosy-coloured mother saw perish by the spear of Achilles on the Phrygian plains. {This} she saw; and that colour with which the hours of the morning grow ruddy, turned pale, and the æther lay hid in clouds. But the parent could not endure to behold his limbs laid on the closing flames. But with loose hair, just as she was, she disdained not to fall down at the knees of great Jove, and to add these words to her tears: “Inferior to all {the Goddesses} which the golden æther does sustain, (for throughout all the world are my temples the fewest), still, a Goddess, I am come; not that thou shouldst grant me temples and days of sacrifice, and altars to be heated with fires. But if thou considerest how much I, a female, perform for thee, at the time when, with the early dawn, I keep the confines of the night, thou wouldst think that some reward ought to be given to me. But that is not my care, nor is such now the condition of Aurora such that she should demand the honours deserved by her. Bereft of my Memnon am I come; {of him} who, in vain, wielded valiant arms for his uncle, and who in his early years (’twas thus ye willed it,) was slain by the brave Achilles. Give him, I pray, supreme ruler of the Gods, some honour, as a solace for his death, and ease the wounds of a mother.”

Jove nods his assent; when {suddenly} the lofty pile of Memnon sinks with its towering fires, and volumes of black smoke darken the {light of} day. Just as when the rivers exhale the rising fogs, and the sun is not admitted below them. The black embers fly, and rolling into one body, they thicken, and take a form, and assume heat and life from the flames. Their own lightness gives them wings; and first, like birds, {and} then real birds, they flutter with their wings. At once innumerable sisters are fluttering, whose natal origin is the same. And thrice do they go around the pile, and thrice does their clamour rise in concert into the air. In the fourth flight they separate their company. Then two fierce tribes wage war from opposite sides, and with their beaks and crooked claws expend their rage, and weary their wings and opposing breasts; and down their kindred bodies fall, a sacrifice to the entombed ashes, and they remember that from a great man they have received their birth. Their progenitor gives a name to these birds so suddenly formed, called Memnonides after him; when the Sun has run through the twelve signs {of the Zodiac}, they fight, doomed to perish in battle, in honour of their parent.[56]

To others, therefore, it seemed a sad thing, that the daughter of Dymas was {now} barking; {but} Aurora was intent on her own sorrows; and even now she sheds the tears of affection, and sprinkles them in dew over all the world.

[Footnote 52: *Forsooth*.--460. Clarke translates 'scilicet,' 'I warrant ye.']

[Footnote 53: *And children*.--Ver. 509. Hyginus names fifty-four children of Priam, of whom seventeen were by Hecuba.]

[Footnote 54: *She beheld*.--Ver. 536. Euripides represents, in his tragedy of Hecuba, that a female servant, sent by Hecuba to bring water from the sea shore for the purpose of washing the body of Polyxena, was the first to see the corpse of Polydorus.]

[Footnote 55: *Derives its name*.--Ver. 569. Strabo places it near Sestos, in the Thracian Chersonesus, and calls it κυνὸς σῆμα, 'The bitches' tomb.']

[Footnote 56: *Of their parent*.--Ver. 619. He perhaps alludes to the fights of the Gladiators, on the occasion of the funerals of the Roman patricians. 'Parentali perituræ Marte,' is rendered by Clarke, 'to fall in the fight of parentation.']

### Riley's Explanation

The particulars which Ovid here gives of the misfortunes that befell the family of Priam, with the exception of a few circumstances, agree perfectly with the narratives of the ancient historians.

According to Dictys, Philostratus, and Hyginus, after Achilles was slain by the treachery of Paris, on the eve of his marriage with Polyxena, she became inconsolable at his death, and returning to the Grecian camp, she was kindly received by Agamemnon; but being unable to get the better of her despair, she stole out of the camp at night, and stabbed herself at the tomb of Achilles. Philostratus adds, that the ghost of Achilles appeared to Apollonius Tyanæus, the hero of his story, and gave him permission to ask him any questions he pleased, assuring him, that he would give him full information on the subject of them. Among other things, Apollonius desired to know if it was the truth that the Greeks had sacrificed Polyxena on his tomb; to which the ghost replied, that her grief made her take the resolution not to survive her intended husband, and that she had killed herself.

Other writers, agreeing with Ovid as to the manner of her death, tell us that it was Pyrrhus who sacrificed Polyxena to his father's shade, to revenge his death, of which, though innocently, she had been the cause. Pausanias, who says that this was the general opinion, avers, on what ground it is difficult to conceive, that Homer designedly omitted this fact, because it was so dishonourable to the Greeks; and in his description of the paintings at Delphi, by Polygnotus, of

the destruction of Troy, he says that Polyxena was there represented as being led out to the tomb of Achilles, where she was sacrificed by the Greeks. He also says, that he had seen her story painted in the same manner at Pergamus, Athens, and other places. Many of the poets, and Virgil in the number, affirm that Polyxena was sacrificed in Phrygia, near Troy, on the tomb of Achilles, he having desired it at his death; while Euripides says that it was in the Thracian Chersonesus, on a cenotaph, which was erected there in honour of Achilles: and that his ghost appearing, Calchas was consulted, who answered, that it was necessary to sacrifice Polyxena, which was accordingly done by Pyrrhus.

The ancient writers are divided as to the descent of Hecuba. Homer, who has been followed by his Scholiast, and by Ovid and Suidas, says that she was the daughter of Dymas, King of Phrygia. Euripides says that she was the daughter of Cisscus, and with him Virgil and Servius agree. Apollodorus, again, makes her to be descended from Sangar and Merope. In the distribution of spoil after the siege of Troy, Hecuba fell to the share of Ulysses, and became his slave; but died soon after, in Thrace. Plautus and Servius allege that the Greeks themselves circulated the story of her transformation into a bitch, because she was perpetually railing at them, to provoke them to put her to death, rather than condemn her to pass her life as a slave. According to Strabo and Pomponius Mela, in their time, the place of her burial was still to be seen in Thrace. Euripides, in his Hecuba, has not followed this tradition, but represents her as complaining that the Greeks had chained her to the door of Agamemnon like a dog. Perhaps she became the slave of Agamemnon after Ulysses had left the army, on his return to Ithaca; and it is possible that the story of her transformation may have been solely founded on this tradition. She bore to Priam ten sons and seven daughters, and survived them all except Helenus; most of her sons having fallen by the hand of Achilles.

Many ancient writers, with whom Ovid here agrees, affirm that Memnon was the son of Tithonus, the brother of Priam, and Aurora, or Eos, the Goddess of the morn. They also say that he came to assist the Trojans with ten thousand Persians, and as many Æthiopians. Diodorus Siculus asserts that Memnon was said to have been the son of Aurora, because he left Phrygia, and went to settle in the East. It is not clear in what country he fixed his residence. Some say that it was at Susa, in Persia; others that it was in Egypt, or in Æthiopia, which perhaps amounts to the same, as Æthiopia was not in general distinguished from the Higher or Upper Egypt. Marsham is of opinion that Memnon was the same with Amenophis, one of the kings of Egypt: while Le Clerc considers him to have been the same person as Ham, the son of Noah; and Vossius identifies him with Boalcis, a God of the Syrians. It seems probable that he was an Egyptian, who had perhaps formed an alliance with the reigning family of Troy.

## Book XIII, Fables V and VI (lines 623–718)

*After the taking of Troy, Æneas escapes with his father and his son, and goes to Delos. Anius, the priest of Apollo, recounts to him how his daughters have been transformed into doves, and at parting they exchange presents. The Poet here introduces the story of the daughters of Orion, who, having sacrificed their lives for the safety of Thebes, when ravaged by a plague, two young men arise out of their ashes.*

But yet the Fates do not allow the hope of Troy to be ruined even with its walls. The Cytherean hero bears on his shoulders the sacred relics and his father, another sacred relic, a venerable burden. In his affection, out of wealth so great, he selects that prize, and his own Ascanius, and with his flying fleet is borne through the seas from Antandros,[57] and leaves the accursed thresholds of the Thracians, and the earth streaming with the blood of Polydorus; and, with good winds and favouring tide, he enters the city of Apollo, his companions attending him.

Anius, by whom, as king, men were, {and} by whom, as priest, Phœbus was duly provided for, received him both into his temple and his house, and showed him the city and the dedicated temples, and the two trunks of trees once grasped[58] by Latona in her labour. Frankincense being given to the flames, and wine poured forth on the frankincense, and the entrails of slain oxen[59] being duly burnt, they repair to the royal palace, and reclining on lofty couches, with flowing wine, they take the gifts of Ceres. Then the pious Anchises {says}, “O chosen priest of Phœbus, am I deceived? or didst thou not have a son, also, when first I beheld these walls, and twice two daughters, so far as I remember?” To him Anius replies, shaking his temples wreathed with snow-white fillets, and says, “Thou art not mistaken, greatest hero; thou didst see me the parent of five children, whom now (so great a vicissitude of fortune affects mankind) thou seest almost bereft {of all}. For what assistance is my absent son to me, whom Andros, a land {so} called after his name, possesses, holding that place and kingdom on behalf of his father?

“The Delian {God} granted him {the art of} augury; to my female progeny Liber gave other gifts, exceeding {both} wishes and belief. For, at the touch of my daughters, all things were transformed into corn, and the stream of wine, and the berry of Minerva; and in these were there rich advantages. When the son of Atreus, the destroyer of Troy, learned this (that thou mayst not suppose that we, too, did not in some degree feel your storms) using the force of arms, he dragged them reluctantly from the bosom of their father, and commanded them to feed, with their heavenly gifts, the Argive fleet. Whither each of them could, they made their escape. Eubœa was sought by two; and by as many of my daughters, was Andros, their brother’s {island}, sought. The forces came, and threatened war if they were not given up. Natural affection, subdued by fear, surrendered to punishment those kindred breasts; and, that thou

mayst be able to forgive a timid brother, there was no Æneas, no Hector to defend Andros, through whom you {Trojans} held out to the tenth year. And now chains were being provided for their captive arms. Lifting up towards heaven their arms still free, they said, 'Father Bacchus, give us thy aid!' and the author of their gift did give them aid; if destroying them, in a wondrous manner, be called giving aid. By what means they lost their shape, neither could I learn, nor can I now tell. The sum of their calamity is known {to me}: they assumed wings, and were changed into birds of thy consort,[60] the snow-white doves."

With such and other discourse, after they have passed the {time of} feasting, the table being removed, they seek sleep. And they rise with the day, and repair to the oracle of Phœbus, who bids them seek the ancient mother and the kindred shores. The king attends, and presents them with gifts when about to depart; a sceptre to Anchises, a scarf and a quiver to his grandson, {and} a goblet to Æneas, which formerly Therses, his Ismenian guest, had sent him from the Aonian shores; this Therses had sent to him, {but} the Mylean Alcon had made it, and had carved it with this long device:

There was a city, and you might point out {its} seven gates: these were in place of[61] a name, and showed what {city} it was. Before the city was a funeral, and tombs, and fires, and funeral piles; and matrons, with hair dishevelled and naked breasts, expressed their grief; the Nymphs, too, seem to be weeping, and to mourn their springs dried up. Without foliage the bared tree runs straight up; the goats are gnawing the dried stones. Lo! he represents the daughters of Orion in the middle of Thebes; the one, as presenting her breast, more than woman's, with her bared throat; the other, thrusting a sword in her valorous wounds, as dying for her people, and as being borne, with an honoured funeral, through the city, and as being burnt in a conspicuous part {of it}; {and} then from the virgin embers, lest the race should fail, twin youths arising, whom Fame calls 'Coronæ,'[62] and for their mothers' ashes leading the {funeral} procession.

Thus far for the figures that shine on the ancient brass; the summit of the goblet is rough with gilded acanthus. Nor do the Trojans return gifts of less value than those given; and to the priest they give an incense-box, to keep the frankincense; they give a bowl, {too}, and a crown, brilliant with gold and gems. Then recollecting that the {Trojans}, {as} Teucrians, derived their origin from the blood of Teucer, they make for Crete, and cannot long endure the air of that place;[63] and, having left behind the hundred cities, they desire to reach the Ausonian harbours. A storm rages, and tosses the men to and fro; and winged Aëllo frightens them, when received in the unsafe harbours of the Strophades.[64] And now, borne along, they have passed the Dulichian harbours, and Ithaca, and Same,[65] and the Neritian abodes, the kingdom of the deceitful Ulysses; and they behold Ambracia,[66] contended for in a dispute of the Deities, which now is renowned for the Actian Apollo,[67] and the stone in the shape of the transformed judge, and

the land of Dodona, vocal with its oaks; and the Chaonian bays, where the sons of the Molossian king escaped the unavailing flames, with wings attached {to them}.

[Footnote 57: *Antandros*.--Ver. 628. This was a city of Phrygia, at the foot of Mount Ida, where the fleet of Æneas was built.]

[Footnote 58: *Trees once grasped*.--Ver. 635. These were a palm and an olive tree, which were pointed out by the people of Delos, as having been held by Latona, when in the pangs of labour.]

[Footnote 59: *Of slain oxen*.--Ver. 637. This, however, was contrary to the usual practice; for if we credit Macrobius, no victim was slain on the altars of Apollo, in the island of Delos.]

[Footnote 60: *Of thy consort*.--Ver. 673. It must be remembered, that he is addressing Anchises, who was said to have enjoyed the favour of Venus; to which Goddess the dove was consecrated.]

[Footnote 61: *In place of*.--Ver. 686. For the seven gates, would at once lead to the conclusion that it represented the city of Thebes, in Bœotia. Myla, before referred to, was a town of Sicily.]

[Footnote 62: *Calls 'Coronæ'*.--Ver. 698. The word 'Coronas' is here employed as the plural of a female name 'Corona;' in Greek Κώρωνις.]

[Footnote 63: *Of that place*.--Ver. 707. Æneas and his followers founded in Crete the city of Pergamea; but the pestilence which raged there, and a continued drought, combined with the density of the atmosphere, obliged them to leave the island.]

[Footnote 64: *The Strophades*.--Ver. 709. These were two islands in the Ionian Sea, on the western side of Peloponnesus. They received their name from the Greek work στροφὴ, 'a return,' because Calais and Zethes pursued the Harpies, which persecuted Phineus so far, and then returned home by the command of Jupiter.]

[Footnote 65: *Same*.--Ver. 711. This island was also called Cephalenia. It was in the Ionian Sea, and formed part of the kingdom of Ulysses.]

[Footnote 66: *Ambracia*.--Ver. 714. This was a famous city of Epirus, which gave its name to the gulf of Ambracia.]

[Footnote 67: *Actian Apollo*.--Ver. 715. Augustus built a temple to Apollo, at Actium, in Epirus, near which he had defeated the fleet of Antony and Cleopatra. He also instituted games, to be celebrated there every fifth year in honour of his victory.]

## Riley's Explanation

Virgil describes Anius as the king of Delos, and the priest of Apollo at the same time. 'Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique sacerdos.' *Æneid*, Book III. He was descended from Cadmus, through his mother Rhea, the daughter of Staphilus. Having engaged in some intrigue, as Diodorus Siculus conjectures, her father exposed her on the sea in an open boat, which drove to Delos, and she was there delivered of Anius, who afterwards became the king of the island. By his wife Dorippe he had three daughters, who were extremely frugal, and by means of the offerings and presents that were brought to the temple of Apollo, amassed a large store of provisions. During the siege of Troy, the Greeks sent Palamedes to Delos, to demand food for the army; and, as a security for his compliance with these demands, they exacted the daughters of Anius as hostages. The damsels soon afterwards finding means to escape, it was said that Bacchus, who was their kinsman through Cadmus, had transformed them into doves. Probably the story of their transforming every thing they touched, into wine, corn, and oil, was founded solely on their thriftiness and parsimony. Bochart, however, explains the story from the circumstance of their names being, as he conjectures, Oëno, Spermo, and Elaï, which, in the old Phœnician dialect, signified wine, corn, and oil; and he thinks that the story was confirmed in general belief by the fact that large quantities of corn, wine, and oil were supplied from Delos to the Grecian army when before Troy.

In the reign of Orion, Thebes being devastated by a plague, the oracles were consulted, and the Thebans were told that the contagion would cease as soon as the daughters of the king should be sacrificed to the wrath of heaven. The two maidens immediately presented themselves at the altar; and on their immolation, the Gods were appeased, and the plague ceased. This example of patriotism and fortitude filled the more youthful Thebans with so much emulation, that they shook off their former inactivity, and soon became conspicuous for their bravery: which sudden change gave occasion to the saying, that the ashes of these maidens had been transformed into men.

The Poet follows Æneas on his voyage, to gain an opportunity of referring to several other current stories. Among other places, he passes the city of Ambracia, about which the Gods had contended, and sees the rock into which the umpire of their dispute, who had decided in favour of Hercules, was changed. Ambracia was on the coast of Epirus, and gave its name to an adjacent inlet of the sea, called the Ambracian Gulf. Antoninus Liberalis tells us, on the authority of Nicander, that Apollo, Diana, and Hercules disputed about this city, and left the decision to Cragaleus, who gave it in favour of Hercules; on which, Apollo transformed him into a rock. Very possibly the meaning of this may be, that when the people of Ambracia were considering to which of these Deities they should dedicate their city, Cragaleus preferred Hercules to the other two, or, in other words, the feats of war to the cultivation of the arts and sciences. Apollo was

said to have turned him into a stone, either because he met with his death near the promontory where a temple of Apollo stood, or to show the stupidity of his decision. Antoninus Liberalis is the only writer besides Ovid that makes mention of the adventure of the sons of the Molossian king; he tells us that Munychus, king of the Molossi, had three sons, Alcander, Megaletor, and Philæus, and a daughter named Hyperippe. Some robbers setting fire to their father's house, they were transformed by Jupiter into birds. This, in all probability, is a poetical way of saying that the youths escaped from the flames, contrary to universal expectation.

The opinions of writers have been very conflicting as to the origin of the oracle of Dodona. Silius Italicus says that two pigeons flew from Thebes in Egypt, one of which went to Libya, and occasioned the founding of the oracle of Jupiter Ammon; while the other settled upon an oak in Chaonia, and signified thereby to the inhabitants, that it was the will of heaven that there should be an oracle in that place. Herodotus says that two priestesses of Egyptian Thebes being carried off by some Phœnician merchants, one of them was sold to the Greeks, after which she settled in the forest of Dodona, where a little chapel was founded by her in honour of Jupiter, in which she gave responses. He adds, that they called her 'the dove,' because being a foreigner they did not understand her language. At length, having learned the language of the Pelasgians, it was said that the dove had spoken. On that foundation grew the tradition that the oaks themselves uttered oracular responses.

Notwithstanding this plausible account of Herodotus, it is not impossible that some equivocal expressions in the Hebrew and Arabian languages may have given rise to the story. 'Himan,' in the one language, signified 'a priest;' and 'Heman,' in the other, was the name for 'a pigeon.' Possibly those who found the former word in the history of ancient Greece, written in the dialect of the original Phœnician settlers, did not understand it, and by their mistake, caused it to be asserted that a dove had founded the oracle of Dodona. Bochart tells us that the same word, in the Phœnician tongue, signifies either 'pigeons,' or 'women;' but the Abbè Sallier has gone still further, and has shown that, in the language of the ancient inhabitants of Epirus, the same word had the two significations mentioned by Bochart.

This oracle afterwards grew famous for its responses, and the priests used considerable ingenuity in the delivery of their answers. They cautiously kept all who came to consult them at a distance from the dark recess where the shrine was situated; and took care to deliver their responses in a manner so ambiguous, as to make people believe whatever they pleased. In this circumstance originates the variation in the descriptions of the oracle which the ancients have left us. According to some, it was the oaks that spoke; according to others, the beeches; while a third account was that pigeons gave the answers; and, lastly, it was said that the ringing of certain cauldrons there suspended, divulged the will of heaven. Stephanus Byzantinus has left a curious account of this contrivance of the cauldrons; he says that in that part of the forest of

Dodona, where the oracle stood, there were two pillars erected, at a small distance from each other. On one there was placed a brazen vessel, about the size of an ordinary cauldron: and on the other a little boy, which was most probably a piece of mechanism, who held a brazen whip with several thongs which hung loose, and were easily moved. When the wind blew, the lashes struck against the vessel, and occasioned a noise while the wind continued. It was from them, he says, that the forest took the name of Dodona; 'dodo,' in the ancient language, signifying 'a cauldron.'

Strabo says that the responses were originally given by three priestesses: and he gives the reason why two priests were afterwards added to them. The Bœotians having been treacherously attacked by the people of Thrace during a truce which they had made, went to consult the oracle of Dodona; and the priestess answering them that if they would act impiously their design would succeed to their wish, the envoys suspected that this response had been suggested by the enemy, and burned her in revenge; after which they vindicated their cruelty by saying that if the priestess designed to deceive them, she well deserved her punishment; and that if she spoke with truthfulness, they had only followed the advice of the oracle. This argument not satisfying the people of the district, the Bœotian envoys were seized; but as they pleaded that it was unjust that two women already prejudiced against them should be their judges, two priests were added to decide the matter. These, in return for their being the occasion of putting them in an office so honourable and lucrative, acquitted the Bœotians; whose fellow countrymen were always in the habit from that time of addressing the priests when they consulted the oracle. These priests were called by the name of 'Selli.'

## Book XIII, Fable VII (lines 719–897)

*Polyphemus, one of the Cyclops, jealous of Acis, who is in love with Galatea, kills the youth with a rock which he hurls at him; on which, his blood is changed into a river which bears his name.*

They make for the neighbouring land of the Phæacians,[68] planted with beauteous fruit. After this, Epirus and Buthrotos,[69] ruled over by the Phrygian prophet, and a fictitious Troy, are reached. Thence, acquainted with the future, all which, Helenus, the son of Priam, in his faithful instructions has forewarned them of, they enter Sicania. With three points this projects into the sea. Of these, Pachynos is turned towards the showery South: Lilybæum is exposed to the soft Zephyrs: but Peloros looks towards the Bear, free from the sea, and towards Boreas. By this {part} the Trojans enter; and with oars and favouring tide, at nightfall the fleet makes the Zanclæan sands. Scylla infests the right hand side, the restless Charybdis the left. This swallows and vomits forth again ships taken down; the other, having the face of a maiden, has her swarthy stomach surrounded with fierce dogs; and (if the poets have not left the whole a fiction) once on a time, too, {she was} a maiden. Many suitors courted her; who being repulsed, she, most beloved by the Nymphs of the ocean, went to the ocean Nymphs, and used to relate the eluded loves of the youths.

While Galatea[70] was giving her hair be to combed, heaving sighs, she addressed her in such words as these: "{And} yet, O maiden, no ungentle race of men does woo thee; and as thou dost, thou art able to deny them with impunity. But I, whose sire is Nereus, whom the azure Doris bore, who am guarded, too, by a crowd of sisters, was not able, but through the waves, to escape the passion of the Cyclop;" and as she spoke, the tears choked her utterance. When, with her fingers like marble, the maiden had wiped these away, and had comforted the Goddess, "Tell me, dearest," said she, "and conceal not {from me} ({for} I am true to thee) the cause of thy grief." In these words did the Nereid reply to the daughter of Cratæis:[71] "Acis was the son of Faunus and of the Nymph Symæthis, a great delight, indeed, to his father and his mother, yet a still greater to me. For the charming {youth} had attached me to himself alone, and eight birth-days having a second time been passed, he had {now} marked his tender cheeks with the dubious down. Him I {pursued}; incessantly did the Cyclop me pursue. Nor can I, shouldst thou enquire, declare whether the hatred of the Cylops, or the love of Acis, was the stronger in me. They were equal. O genial Venus! how great is the power of thy sway. For that savage, and one to be dreaded by the very woods, and beheld with impunity by no stranger, the contemner of great Olympus with the Gods {themselves}, {now} feels what love is; and, captivated with passion for me, he burns, forgetting his cattle and his caves.

“And now, Polyphemus, thou hast a care for thy looks, and now for {the art of} pleasing; now thou combest out thy stiffened hair with rakes, {and} now it pleases thee to cut thy shaggy beard with the sickle, and to look at thy fierce features in the water, and {so} to compose them. Thy love for carnage, and thy fierceness, and thy insatiate thirst for blood, {now} cease; and the ships both come and go in safety. Telemus, in the mean time arriving at the Sicilian Ætna, Telemus, the son of Eurymus, whom no omen had {ever} deceived, accosts the dreadful Polyphemus, and says, ‘The single eye that thou dost carry in the midst of thy forehead, Ulysses shall take away from thee.’ He laughed, and said, ‘O most silly of the prophets, thou art mistaken, {for} another has already taken it away.’ Thus does he slight him, in vain warning him of the truth; and he either burdens the shore, stalking along with huge strides, or, wearied, he returns to his shaded cave.

“A hill, in form of a wedge, runs out with a long projection into the sea: {and} the waves of the ocean flow round either side. Hither the fierce Cyclop ascended, and sat down in the middle. His woolly flocks followed, there being no one to guide them. After the pine tree,[72] which afforded him the service of a staff, {but more} fitted for sail-yards, was laid before his feet, and his pipe was taken up, formed of a hundred reeds; all the mountains were sensible of the piping of the shepherd: the waves, {too}, were sensible. I, lying hid within a rock, and reclining on the bosom of my own Acis, from afar caught such words as these with my ears, and marked them {so} heard in my mind: ‘O Galatea, fairer than[73] the leaf of the snow-white privet,[74] more blooming than the meadows, more slender than the tall alder, brighter than glass, more wanton than the tender kid, smoother than the shells worn by continual floods, more pleasing than the winter’s sun, {or} than the summer’s shade, more beauteous than the apples, more sightly than the lofty plane tree, clearer than ice, sweeter than the ripened grape, softer than both the down of the swan, and than curdled milk, and, didst thou not fly me, more beauteous than a watered garden. {And yet} thou, the same Galatea, {art} wilder than the untamed bullocks, harder than the aged oak, more unstable than the waters, tougher than both the twigs of osier and than the white vines, more immoveable than these rocks, more violent than the torrent, prouder than the bepraised peacock, fiercer than the fire, rougher than the thistles, more cruel than the pregnant she-bear, more deaf than the ocean waves, more savage than the trodden water-snake: and, what I could especially wish to deprive thee of, fleeter not only than the deer when pursued by the loud barkings, but even than the winds and the fleeting air.

“‘But didst thou {but} know me well, thou wouldst repine at having fled, and thou thyself wouldst blame thy own hesitation, and wouldst strive to retain me. I have a part of the mountain for my cave, pendent with the native rock; in which the sun is not felt in the middle of the heat, nor is the winter felt: there are apples that load the boughs; there are grapes on the lengthening vines, resembling gold; and there are purple ones {as well}; both the one and the other do I

reserve for thee. With thine own hands thou shalt thyself gather the soft strawberries growing beneath the woodland shade; thou thyself {shalt pluck} the cornels of autumn, and plums not only darkened with their black juice, but even of the choicest kinds, and resembling new wax. Nor, I being thy husband, will there be wanting to thee chesnuts, nor the fruit of the arbute tree: [75] every tree shall be at thy service. All this cattle is my own: many, too, are wandering in the valleys: many the wood conceals: many {more} are penned in my caves. Nor, shouldst thou ask me perchance, could I tell thee, how many there are; 'tis for the poor man to count his cattle. For the praises of these trust not me at all; in person thou thyself mayst see how they can hardly support with their legs their distended udders. Lambs, too, a smaller breed, are in the warm folds: there are kids, too, of equal age {to them} in other folds. Snow-white milk I always have: a part of it is kept for drinking, {another} part the liquified rennet hardens. Nor will common delights, and ordinary enjoyments alone fall to thy lot, {such as} does, and hares, and she-goats, or a pair of doves, or a nest taken from the tree top. I have found on the mountain summit the twin cubs of a shaggy she-bear, which can play with thee, so like each other that thou couldst scarce distinguish them. {These} I found, and I said, 'These for my mistress will I keep.'

"'Do now but raise thy beauteous head from out of the azure sea; now, Galatea, come, and do not scorn my presents. Surely I know myself, and myself but lately I beheld in the reflection of the limpid water; and my figure[76] pleased me as I saw it. See how huge I am. Not Jove, in heaven, is greater than this body; for thou art wont to tell how one Jupiter reigns, who he is I know not. Plenty of hair hangs over my grisly features, and, like a grove, overshadows my shoulders; nor think it uncomely that my body is rough, thick set with stiff bristles. A tree without leaves is unseemly; a horse is unseemly, unless a mane covers his tawny neck. Feathers cover the birds; their wool is an ornament to the sheep; a beard and rough hair upon their body is becoming to men. I have but one eye in the middle of my forehead, but it is like a large buckler. Well! and does not the Sun from the heavens behold all these things? and yet the Sun has but one eye. And, besides, in your seas does my father reign. Him do I offer thee for a father-in-law; only do take pity on a suppliant, and hear his prayer, for to thee alone do I give way. And I, who despise Jove, and the heavens, and the piercing lightnings, dread thee, daughter of Nereus; than the lightnings is thy wrath more dreadful to me. But I should be more patient under these slights, if thou didst avoid all men. For why, rejecting the Cyclop, dost thou love Acis? And why prefer Acis to my embraces? Yet, let him please himself, and let him please thee, too, Galatea, {though} I wish he could not; if only the opportunity is given, he shall find that I have strength proportioned to a body so vast. I will pull out his palpitating entrails; and I will scatter his torn limbs about the fields, and throughout thy waves, {and} thus let him be united to thee. For I burn: and my passion, {thus} slighted, rages with the greater fury; and I seem to be carrying in my breast Ætna, transferred there with {all} its flames; and yet, Galatea, thou art unmoved.'

“Having in vain uttered such complaints (for all this I saw), he rises; and like an enraged bull, when the heifer is taken away from him, he could not stand still, and he wandered in the wood, and the well known forests. When the savage {monster} espied me, and Acis unsuspecting and apprehensive of no such thing; and he exclaimed:-- ‘I see you, and I shall cause this to be the last union for your affection.’ And that voice was as loud as an enraged Cyclop ought, {for his size}, to have. Ætna trembled at the noise; but I, struck with horror, plunged into the adjoining sea. The hero, son of Symæthis, turned his back and fled, and cried,-- ‘Help me, Galatea, I entreat thee; help me, ye parents {of hers}; and admit me, {now} on the point of destruction, within your realms.’ The Cyclop pursued, and hurled a fragment, torn from the mountain; and though the extreme angle only of the rock reached him, yet it entirely crushed Acis. But I did the only thing that was allowed by the Fates to be done, that Acis might assume the properties of his grandsire. The purple blood flowed from beneath the rock, and in a little time the redness began to vanish; and at first it became the colour of a stream muddied by a shower; and, in time, it became clear. Then the rock, that had been thrown, opened, and through the chinks, a reed vigorous and stately arose, and the hollow mouth of the rock resounded with the waters gushing forth. And, wondrous event! a youth suddenly emerged, as far as the midriff, having his new-made horns encircled with twining reeds. And he, but that he was of larger stature, and azure in all his features, was Acis {still}. But, even then, still it was Acis, changed into a river; and the stream has since retained that ancient name.”

[Footnote 68: *The Phæacians*.--Ver. 719. The Phæacians were the people of the Island of Corcyra (now Corfu), who were so called from Phæax, the son of Neptune. This island was famous for the gardens of Alcinoüs, which are mentioned in the Odyssey. The Corcyrans were the originators of the disastrous Peloponnesian war.]

[Footnote 69: *Buthrotos*.--Ver. 721. This was a city of Epirus, not far from Corcyra. It received its name from its founder.]

[Footnote 70: *Galatea*.--Ver. 738. She was a sea Nymph, the daughter of Nereus and Doris.]

[Footnote 71: *Daughter of Cratæis*.--Ver. 749. Cratæis was a river of Calabria, in Italy. Symæthis was a stream of Sicily, opposite to Calabria.]

[Footnote 72: *The pine tree*.--Ver. 782. By way of corroborating this assertion, Boccaccio tells us, that the body of Polyphemus was found in Sicily, his left hand grasping a walking-stick longer than the mast of a ship.]

[Footnote 73: *Fairer than*.--Ver. 789. This song of Polyphemus is, in some measure, imitated from that of the Cyclop, in the Eleventh Idyll of Theocritus.]

[Footnote 74: *Snow-white privet*.--Ver. 789. Hesiod says, that Galatea had her name from her extreme fairness; γάλα being the Greek word for milk. To this the Poet here alludes.]

[Footnote 75: *Arbute tree*.--Ver. 820. The fruit of the arbutus, or strawberry tree, were so extremely sour, that they were called, as Pliny the Elder tells us, 'unedones;' because people could not eat more than one. The tree itself was valued for the beauty and pleasing shade of its foliage.]

[Footnote 76: *My figure*.--Ver. 841. Virgil and Theocritus also represent Polyphemus as boasting of his good looks.]

## Riley's Explanation

Homer, who, in the ninth Book of the Odyssey, has entered fully into the subject of Polyphemus and the other Cyclops, does not recount this adventure, which Ovid has borrowed from Theocritus, the Sicilian poet. Some writers have suggested that Acis was a Sicilian youth, who, having met with a repulse from Galatea, threw himself into the river, which was afterwards called by his name. It is, however, more probable that this river was so called from the rapidity of its course. Indeed, the scholiast on Theocritus and Eustathius distinctly say that the stream was called Acis, because the swiftness of its course resembled that of an arrow, which was called ἀκὶς, in the Greek language.

Homer, in describing the Cyclops, informs us that they were a lawless race, who, neglecting husbandry, lived on the spontaneous produce of a rich soil, and dwelling in mountain caves, devoted themselves entirely to the pleasures of a pastoral life. He says that they were men of monstrous stature, and had but one eye, in the middle of their forehead. Thucydides supposes them to have been the original inhabitants of Sicily. As their origin was unknown, it was said that they were the offspring of Neptune, or, in other words, that they had come by sea, to settle in Sicily. According to Justin, they retained possession of the island till the time of Cocalus; but in that point he disagrees with Homer, who represents them as being in the island after the time of Cocalus, who was a contemporary of Minos, and lived long before the Trojan war.

They inhabited the western parts of Sicily, near the promontories of Lilybæum and Drepanum; and from that circumstance, according to Bochart, they received their name. He supposes that the Cyclopes were so called from the Phœnician compound word Chek-lub, contracted for Chek-le-lub, which, according to him, was the name of the Gulf of Lilybæum. Because, in the Greek language κυκλὸς signified 'a circle,' and ὤπς, 'an eye,' it was given out that the name of Cyclops was given to them, because they had but one round eye in the middle of the forehead. It is possible that they may have acquired their character of being cannibals on true grounds, or, perhaps, only because they were noted for their extreme cruelty. Living near the volcanic

mountain of Ætna, they were called the workmen of Vulcan; and Virgil describes them as forging the thunderbolts of Jupiter. Some writers represent them as having armed the three Deities, who divided the empire of the world: Jupiter with thunder; Pluto with his helmet; and Neptune with his trident. Statius represents them as the builders of the walls of Argos and Virgil as the founders of the gates of the Elysian fields. Aristotle supposes that they were the first builders of towers.

Diodorus Siculus and Tzetzes say that Polyphemus was king of a part of Sicily, when Ulysses landed there; who, falling in love with Elpe, the daughter of the king, carried her off. The Læstrygons, the neighbours of Polyphemus, pursued him, and obliged him to give up the damsel, who was brought back to her father. Ulysses, in relating the story to the Phæacians, artfully concealed circumstances so little to his credit, and with impunity invented the absurdities which he related concerning a country to which his audience were utter strangers.

## Book XIII, Fable VIII (lines 898–968)

*Glaucus having observed some fishes which he has laid upon the grass revive and leap again into the water, is desirous to try the influence of the grass on himself. Putting some of it into his mouth, he immediately becomes mad, and leaping into the sea, is transformed into a sea God.*

Galatea ceases[77] speaking, and the company breaking up, they depart; and the Nereids swim in the becalmed waves. Scylla returns, (for, in truth, she does not trust herself in the midst of the ocean) and either wanders about without garments on the thirsty sand, or, when she is tired, having lighted upon some lonely recess of the sea, cools her limbs in the enclosed waves. {When}, lo! cleaving the deep, Glaucus comes, a new-made inhabitant of the deep sea, his limbs having been lately transformed at Anthedon,[78] near Eubœa; and he lingers from passion for the maiden {now} seen, and utters whatever words he thinks may detain her as she flies. Yet still she flies, and, swift through fear, she arrives at the top of a mountain, situate near the shore.

In front of the sea, there is a huge ridge, terminating in one summit, bending for a long distance over the waves, {and} without trees. Here she stands, and secured by the place, ignorant whether he is a monster or a God, she both admires his colour, and his flowing hair that covers his shoulders and his back, and how a wreathed fish closes the extremity of his groin. {This} he perceives; and leaning upon a rock that stands hard by, he says, “Maiden, I am no monster, no savage beast; I am a God of the waters: nor have Proteus, and Triton, and Palæmon, the son of Athamas, a more uncontrolled reign over the deep. Yet formerly I was a mortal; but, still, devoted to the deep sea, even then was I employed in it. For, at one time, I used to drag the nets that swept up the fish; at another time, seated on a rock, I managed the line with the rod. The shore was adjacent to a verdant meadow, one part of which was surrounded with water, the other with grass, which, neither the horned heifers had hurt with their browsing, nor had you, ye harmless sheep, nor {you}, ye shaggy goats, {ever} cropped it. No industrious bee took {thence} the collected blossoms, no festive garlands were gathered thence for the head; and no mower’s hands had ever cut it. I was the first to be seated on that turf, while I was drying the dripping nets. And that I might count in their order the fish that I had taken; I laid out those upon it which either chance had driven to my nets, or their own credulity to my barbed hooks.

“The thing is like a fiction (but of what use is it to me to coin fictions?); on touching the grass my prey began to move, and to shift their sides, and to skip about on the land, as though in the sea. And while I both paused and wondered, the whole batch flew off to the waves, and left behind their new master and the shore. I was amazed, and, in doubt for a long time, I considered what could be the cause; whether some Divinity had done this, or whether the juice of {some} herb. ‘And yet,’ said I, ‘what herb has these properties?’ and with my hand I plucked the grass, and I

chewed it, {so} plucked, with my teeth. Hardly had my throat well swallowed the unknown juices, when I suddenly felt my entrails inwardly throb, and my mind taken possession of by the passions of another nature. Nor could I stay in {that} place; and I exclaimed, 'Farewell, land, never more to be revisited;' and plunged my body beneath the deep. The Gods of the sea vouchsafed me, on being received by them, kindred honours, and they entreated Oceanus and Tethys to take away from me whatever mortality I bore. By them was I purified; and a charm being repeated over me nine times, that washes away {all} guilt, I was commanded to put my breast beneath a hundred streams.

"There was no delay; rivers issuing from different springs, and whole seas, were poured over my head. Thus far I can relate to thee what happened worthy to be related, and thus far do I remember; but my understanding was not conscious of the rest. When it returned {to me}, I found myself different throughout all my body from what I was before, and not the same in mind. Then, for the first time, did I behold this beard, green with its deep colour, and my flowing hair, which I sweep along the spacious seas, and my huge shoulders, and my azurecoloured arms, and the extremities of my legs tapering in {the form of} a finny fish. But still, what does this form avail me, what to have pleased the ocean Deities, {and} what to be a God, if thou art not moved by these things?"

As he was saying such things as these, and about to say still more, Scylla left the God. He was enraged, and, provoked at the repulse, he repaired to the marvellous court of Circe, the daughter of Titan.

[Footnote 77: *Ceases*.--Ver. 898. 'Desierat Galatea loqui,' is translated by Clarke, 'Galatea gave over talking.']

[Footnote 78: *Anthedon*.--Ver. 905. Anthedon was a maritime city of Bœotia, only separated from the Island of Eubœa, by the narrow strait of the Euripus.]

## Riley's Explanation

The ancient writers mention three persons of the name of Glaucus: one was the son of Minos, the second of Hippolochus, and the third is the one here mentioned. Strabo calls him the son of Polybus, while other writers make him to have been the son of Phorbas, and others of Neptune. Being drowned, perhaps by accident, to do honour to his memory, it was promulgated that he had become a sea God, and the city of Anthedon, of which he was a native, worshipped him as such.

Athenæus says that he carried off Ariadne from the isle of Naxos, where Theseus had left her; on which Bacchus punished him by binding him to a vine. According to Diodorus Siculus, he

appeared to the Argonauts, when overtaken by a storm. From Apollonius Rhodius we learn that he foretold to them that Hercules, and Castor and Pollux, would be received into the number of the Gods. It was also said, that in the battle which took place between Jason and the Tyrrhenians, he was the only person that escaped unwounded. Euripides, who is followed by Pausanias, says that he was the interpreter of Nereus, and was skilled in prophecy; and Nicander even says that it was from him that Apollo learned the art of prediction. Strabo and Philostratus say that he was metamorphosed into a Triton, which is a-kin to the description of his appearance here given by Ovid.

The place where he leaped into the sea was long remembered; and in the days of Pausanias 'Glaucus' Leap' was still pointed out by the people of Anthedon. It is not improbable that he drowned himself for some reason which tradition failed to hand down to posterity.

## Book XIV, Fable I (lines 1–74)

*Circe becomes enamoured of Glaucus, who complains to her of his repulse by Scylla. She endeavours, without success, to make him desert Scylla for herself. In revenge, she poisons the fountain where the Nymph is wont to bathe, and communicates to her a hideous form; which is so insupportable to Scylla, that she throws herself into the sea, and is transformed into a rock.*

And now {Glaucus}, the Eubœan plougher of the swelling waves, had left behind Ætna, placed upon the jaws of the Giant, and the fields of the Cyclops, that had never experienced the harrow or the use of the plough, and that were never indebted to the yoked oxen; he had left Zancle, too, behind, and the opposite walls of Rhegium,[1] and the sea, abundant cause of shipwreck, which, confined by the two shores, bounds the Ausonian and the Sicilian lands. Thence, swimming with his huge hands through the Etrurian seas, Glaucus arrived at the grass-clad hills, and the halls of Circe, the daughter of the Sun, filled with various wild beasts. Soon as he beheld her, after salutations were given and received, he said, “Do thou, a Goddess, have compassion on me a God; for thou alone (should I only seem deserving of it,) art able to relieve this passion {of mine}. Daughter of Titan, by none is it better known how great is the power of herbs, than by me, who have been transformed by their agency; and, that the cause of my passion may not be unknown to thee, Scylla has been beheld by me on the Italian shores, opposite the Messenian walls. I am ashamed to recount my promises, my entreaties, my caresses, and my rejected suit. But, do thou, if there is any power in incantations, utter the incantation with thy holy lips; or, if {any} herb is more efficacious, make use of the proved virtues of powerful herbs. But I do not request thee to cure me, and to heal these wounds; and there is no necessity for an end {to them; but} let her share in the flame.” But Circe, (for no one has a temper more susceptible of such a passion, whether it is that the cause of it originates in herself, or whether it is that Venus, offended[2] by her father’s discovery, causes this,) utters such words as these:--

“Thou wilt more successfully court her who is willing, and who entertains similar desires, and who is captivated with an equal passion. Thou art worthy of it, and assuredly thou oughtst to be courted spontaneously; and, if thou givest any hopes, believe me, thou shalt be courted[3] spontaneously. That thou mayst entertain no doubts, or lest confidence in thy own beauty may not exist, behold! I who am both a Goddess, and the daughter of the radiant Sun, and am so potent with my charms, and so potent with my herbs, wish to be thine. Despise her who despises thee; her, who is attached to thee, repay by like attachment, and, by one act, take vengeance on two individuals.”

Glaucus answered her, making such attempts as these,-- “Sooner shall foliage grow in the ocean, and {sooner} shall sea-weed spring up on the tops of the mountains, than my affections shall

change, while Scylla is alive." The Goddess is indignant; and since she is not able to injure him, and as she loves him she does not wish {to do so}, she is enraged against her, who has been preferred to herself; and, offended with these crosses in love, she immediately bruises herbs, infamous for their horrid juices, and, when bruised, she mingles with them the incantations of Hecate. She puts on azure vestments too, and through the troop of fawning wild beasts she issues from the midst of her hall; and making for Rhegium, opposite to the rocks of Zancle, she enters the waves boiling with the tides; on these, as though on the firm shore, she impresses her footsteps, and with dry feet she skims along the surface of the waves.

There was a little bay, curving in {the shape of} a bent bow, a favourite retreat of Scylla, whither she used to retire from the influence both of the sea and of the weather, when the sun was at its height in his mid career, and made the smallest shadow from the head {downwards}. This the Goddess infects beforehand, and pollutes it with monster-breeding drugs; on it she sprinkles the juices distilled from the noxious root, and thrice nine times, with her magic lips, she mutters over the mysterious charm, {enwrapt} in the dubious language of strange words.[4] Scylla comes; and she has {now} gone in up to the middle of her stomach, when she beholds her loins grow hideous with barking monsters; and, at first believing that they are no part of her own body, she flies from them and drives them off, and is in dread of the annoying mouths of the dogs; but those that she flies from, she carries along with {herself}; and as she examines the substance of her thighs, her legs, and her feet, she meets with Cerberean jaws in place of those parts. The fury of the dogs {still} continues, and the backs of savage {monsters} lying beneath her groin, cut short, and her prominent stomach, {still} adhere to them.

Glaucus, {still} in love, bewailed {her}, and fled from an alliance with Circe, who had {thus} too hostilely employed the potency of herbs. Scylla remained on that spot; and, at the first moment that an opportunity was given, in her hatred of Circe, she deprived Ulysses of his companions. Soon after, the same {Scylla} would have overwhelmed the Trojan ships, had she not been first transformed into a rock, which even now is prominent with its crags; {this} rock the sailor, too, avoids.

[Footnote 1: *Rhegium*.--Ver. 5. Rhegium was a city of Calabria, opposite to the coast of Sicily.]

[Footnote 2: *Venus offended*.--Ver. 27. The Sun, or Apollo, the father of Circe, as the Poet has already related in his fourth Book, betrayed the intrigues of Mars with Venus.]

[Footnote 3: *Shalt be courted*.--Ver. 31. She means that he shall be courted, but by herself.]

[Footnote 4: *Of strange words*.--Ver. 57. 'Obscurum verborum ambage novorum' is rendered by Clarke, 'Darkened with a long rabble of new words.']

## Riley's Explanation

According to Hesiod, Circe was the daughter of the Sun and of the Nymph Perse, and the sister of Pasiphaë, the wife of Minos. Homer makes her the sister of Æetes, the king of Colchis, while other authors represent her as the daughter of that monarch, and the sister of Medea. Being acquainted with the properties of simples, and having used her art in mixing poisonous draughts, she was generally looked upon as a sorceress. Apollonius Rhodius says that she poisoned her husband, the king of the Sarmatians, and that her father Apollo rescued her from the rage of her subjects, by transporting her in his chariot into Italy. Virgil and Ovid say that she inhabited one of the promontories of Italy, which afterwards bore her name, and which at the present day is known by the name of Monte Circello.

It is not improbable that the person who went by the name of Circe was never in Colchis or Thrace, and that she was styled the sister of Medea, merely on account of the similarity of their characters; that they both were called daughters of the Sun, because they understood the properties of simples; and that their pretended enchantments were only a poetical mode of describing the effect of their beauty, which drew many suitors after them, who lost themselves in the dissipation of a voluptuous life. Indeed, Strabo says, and very judiciously, as it would seem, that Homer having heard persons mention the expedition of Jason to Colchis, and hearing the stories of Medea and Circe, he took occasion to say, from the resemblance of their characters, that they were sisters.

According to some authors, Scylla was the daughter of Phorcys and Hecate; but as other writers say, of Typhon. Homer describes her in the following terms:-- 'She had a voice like that of a young whelp; no man, not even a God, could behold her without horror. She had twelve feet, six long necks, and at the end of each a monstrous head, whose mouth was provided with a triple row of teeth.' Another ancient writer says, that these heads were those of an insect, a dog, a lion, a whale, a Gorgon, and a human being. Virgil has in a great measure followed the description given by Homer. Between Messina and Reggio there is a narrow strait, where high crags project into the sea on each side. The part on the Sicilian side was called Charybdis, and that on the Italian shore was named Scylla. This spot has ever been famous for its dangerous whirlpools, and the extreme difficulty of its navigation. Several rapid currents meeting there, and the tide running through the strait with great impetuosity, the sea sends forth a dismal noise, not unlike that of the howling or barking of dogs, as Virgil has expressed it, in the words, 'Multis circum latrantibus undis.'

Palæphatus and Fusebius, not satisfied with the story being based on such simple facts, assert that Scylla was a ship that belonged to certain Etrurian pirates, who used to infest the coasts of Sicily, and that it had the figure of a woman carved on its head, whose lower parts were surrounded with dogs. According to these writers, Ulysses escaped them; and then, using the

privileges of a traveller, told the story to the credulous Phæacians in the marvellous terms in which Homer has related it. Bochart, however, says that the two names were derived from the Phœnician language, in which ‘Scol,’ the root of Scylla, signified ‘a ruin,’ and Charybdis, ‘a gulf.’

## Book XIV, Fable II (lines 75–100)

*Dido entertains Æneas in her palace, and falls in love with him. He afterwards abandons her, on which she stabs herself in despair. Jupiter transforms the Cercopes into apes; and the islands which they inhabit are afterwards called 'Pithecusæ,' from the Greek word signifying 'an ape.'*

After the Trojan ships, with their oars, had passed by her and the ravening Charybdis; when now they had approached near the Ausonian shores, they were carried back by the winds[5] to the Libyan coasts. The Sidonian {Dido}, she who was doomed not easily to endure the loss of her Phrygian husband, received Æneas, both in her home and her affection; on the pile, too, erected under the pretext of sacred rites, she fell upon the sword; and, {herself} deceived, she deceived all. Again, flying from the newly erected walls of the sandy regions, and being carried back to the seat of Eryx and the attached Acestes, he performs sacrifice, and pays honour[6] to the tomb of his father. He now loosens {from shore} the ships which Iris, the minister of Juno, has almost burned; and passes by the realms of the son of Hippotas, and the regions that smoke with the heated sulphur, and leaves behind him the rocks of the Sirens,[7] daughters of Acheloüs; and the ship, deprived of its pilot,[8] coasts along Inarime[9] and Prochyta,[10] and Pithecusæ, situate on a barren hill, so called from the name of its inhabitants.

For the father of the Gods, once abhorring the frauds and perjuries of the Cercopians, and the crimes of the fraudulent race, changed these men into ugly animals; that these same beings might be able to appear unlike men, and yet like them. He both contracted their limbs, and flattened their noses; bent back from their foreheads; and he furrowed their faces with the wrinkles of old age. And he sent them into this spot, with the whole of their bodies covered with long yellow hair. Moreover, he first took away from them the use of language, and of their tongues, made for dreadful perjury; he only allowed them to be able to complain with a harsh jabbering.

[Footnote 5: *By the winds*.--Ver. 77. The storm in which Æneas is cast upon the shores of Africa forms the subject of part of the first Book of the Æneid.]

[Footnote 6: *And pays honour*.--Ver. 84. The annual games which Æneas instituted at the tomb of his father, in Sicily, are fully described in the fifth Book of the Æneid.]

[Footnote 7: *The Sirens*.--Ver. 87. The Sirens were said to have been the daughters of the river Acheloüs. Their names are Parthenope, Lysia, and Leucosia.]

[Footnote 8: *Deprived of its pilot*.--Ver. 88. This was Palinurus, who, when asleep, fell overboard, and was drowned. See the end of the fifth Book of the Æneid.]

[Footnote 9: *Inarime*.--Ver. 89. This was an island not far from the coast of Campania, which was also called Ischia and Ænaria. The word 'Inarime' is thought to have been coined by Virgil, from the expression of Homer, εἶν Ἀρίμοις, when speaking of it, as that writer is the first who is found to use it, and is followed by Ovid, Lucan, and others. Strabo tells us, that 'aremus' was the Etrurian name for an ape; if so, the name of this spot may account for the name of Pithecusæ, the adjoining islands, if the tradition here related by the Poet really existed. Pliny the Elder, however, says that Pithecusæ were so called from πίθος, an earthern cask, or vessel, as there were many potteries there.]

[Footnote 10: *Prochyta*.--Ver. 89. This island was said to have been torn away from the isle of Inarime by an earthquake; for which reason it received its name from the Greek verb προχέω, which means 'to pour forth.']

## Riley's Explanation

Although Ovid passes over the particulars of the visit of Æneas to Dido, and only mentions her death incidentally, we may give a few words to a story which has been rendered memorable by the beautiful poem of Virgil. Elisa, or Dido, was the daughter of Belus, king of Tyre. According to Justin, at his death he left his crown to his son Pygmalion jointly with Dido, who was a woman of extraordinary beauty. She was afterwards married to her uncle Sicharbas, who is called Sichæus by Virgil. Being priest of Hercules, an office next in rank to that of king, he was possessed of immense treasures, which the known avarice of Pygmalion caused him to conceal in the earth. Pygmalion having caused him to be assassinated, at which Dido first expressed great resentment, she afterwards pretended a reconciliation, the better to cover the design which she had formed to escape from the kingdom.

Having secured the cooperation of several of the discontented Tyrians, she requested permission to visit Tyre, and to leave her melancholy retreat, where every thing contributed to increase her misery by recalling the remembrance of her deceased husband. Hoping to seize her treasures, Pygmalion granted her request. Putting her wealth on board ship, she mixed some bags filled with sand among those that contained gold, for the purpose of deceiving those whom the king had sent to observe her and to escort her to Tyre. When out at sea, she threw the bags overboard, to appease the spirit of her husband, as she pretended, by sacrificing those treasures that had cost him his life. Then addressing the officers that accompanied her, she assured them that they would meet with but a bad reception from the king for having permitted so much wealth to be wasted, and that it would be more advantageous for them to fly from his resentment. The officers embarking in her design, after they had taken on board some Tyrian nobles, who were

privy to the plan, she offered sacrifice to Hercules, and again set sail. Landing in Cyprus, they carried off eighty young women, who were married to her companions. On discovering her flight, Pygmalion at first intended to pursue her; but the intreaties of his mother, and the remonstrances of the priests, caused him to abandon his design.

Having arrived on the coast of Africa, Dido bargained with the inhabitants of the coast for as much ground as she could encompass with a bull's hide. This being granted, she cut the hide into as many thongs as enclosed ground sufficient to build a fort upon; which was in consequence called 'Byrsa.' In making the foundation, an ox's head was dug up, which being supposed to portend slavery to the city, if built there, they removed to another spot, where, in digging, they found a horse's head, which was considered to be a more favourable omen. The story of the citadel being named from the bull's hide was very probably invented by the Greeks; who, finding in the Phœnician narrative of the foundation of Carthage, the citadel mentioned by the Tyrian name of 'Bostra,' which had that signification, and fancying, from its resemblance to their word βυρσὰ, that it was derived from it, invented the fable of the hide.

Being pressed by Iarbas, king of Mauritania, to marry him, she asked for three months to come to a determination. The time expiring, she ordered a sacrifice to be made as an expiation to her husband's shade, and caused a pile to be erected, avowedly for the purpose of burning all that belonged to him. Ascending it, she pretended to expedite the sacrifice, and then despatched herself with a poniard. Virgil, wishing to deduce the hatred of the Romans and Carthaginians from the very time of Æneas, invented the story of the visit of Æneas to Dido; though he was perhaps guilty of a great anachronism in so doing, as the taking of Troy most probably preceded the foundation of Carthage by at least two centuries. Ovid has also related her story at length in the third book of the Fasti, and has followed Virgil's account of the treacherous conduct of Æneas, while he represents Iarbas as capturing her city after her death, and driving her sister Anna into exile. In the Phœnician language the word 'Dido' signified 'the bold woman,' and it is probable that Elisa only received that name after her death. Bochart has taken considerable pains to prove that she was the aunt of Jezebel, the famous, or rather infamous, wife of King Ahab.

The Poet then proceeds to say that Æneas saw the islands of the Cercopians on his way, whom Jupiter had transformed into apes. Æschines and Suidas say that there were two notorious robbers, inhabitants of an island adjacent to Sicily, named Candulus and Atlas, who committed outrages on all who approached the island. Being about to insult Jupiter himself, he transformed them into apes, from which circumstance the island received its name of Pithecusa. Sabinus says that they were called Cercopes, because in their treachery they were like monkeys, who fawn with their tails, when they design nothing but mischief. Zenobius places the Cercopes in Libya; and says that they were changed into rocks, for having offered to fight with Hercules.

## Book XIV, Fable III (lines 101–153)

*Apollo is enamoured of the Sibyl, and, to engage her affection, offers her as many years as she can grasp grains of sand. She forgets to ask that she may always continue in the bloom of youth, and consequently becomes gray and decrepit.*

After he has passed by these, and has left the walls of Parthenope[11] on the right hand, on the left side he {approaches} the tomb of the tuneful son of Æolus[12]; and he enters the shores of Cumæ, regions abounding in the sedge of the swamp, and the cavern of the long-lived Sibyl[13], and entreats {her}, that through Avernus, he may visit the shade of his father. But she raises her countenance, a long time fixed on the ground; and at length, inspired by the influence of the God, she says, "Thou dost request a great thing, O hero, most renowned by thy achievements, whose right hand has been proved by the sword, whose affection {has been proved} by the flames. Yet, Trojan, lay aside {all} apprehension, thou shalt obtain thy request; and under my guidance thou shalt visit the abodes of Elysium, the most distant realms of the universe, and the beloved shade of thy parent. To virtue, no path is inaccessible."

{Thus} she spoke, and she pointed out a branch refulgent with gold, in the woods of the Juno of Avernus[14], and commanded him to pluck it from its stem. Æneas obeyed; and he beheld the power of the dread Orcus, and his own ancestors, and the aged ghost of the magnanimous Anchises; he learned, too, the ordinances of {those} regions, and what dangers would have to be undergone by him in his future wars. Tracing back thence his weary steps along the path, he beguiled his labour in discourse with his Cumæan guide. And while he was pursuing his frightful journey along darkening shades, he said, "Whether thou art a Goddess personally, or whether {thou art but a woman} most favoured by the Deities, to me shalt thou always be equal to a Divinity; I will confess, too, that I exist through thy kindness, who hast willed that I should visit the abodes of death, and that I should escape those abodes of death {when} beheld {by me}. For this kindness, when I have emerged into the breezes of the air, I will erect a temple to thee, {and} I will give thee the honours of frankincense."

The prophetess looks upon him, and, with heaving sighs, she says, "Neither am I a Goddess, nor do thou honour a human being with the tribute of the holy frankincense. And, that thou mayst not err in ignorance, life eternal and without end was offered me, had my virginity but yielded to Phœbus, in love {with me}. But while he was hoping for this, while he was desiring to bribe me beforehand with gifts, he said: 'Maiden of Cumæ, choose whatever thou mayst wish, thou shalt gain thy wish.' I, pointing to a heap of collected dust, inconsiderately asked that as many birth-days might be my lot, as the dust contained particles. It escaped me to desire as well, at the same time, years vigorous with youth. But yet he offered me these, and eternal youth, had I submitted

to his desires. Having rejected the offers of Phœbus, I remain unmarried. But now my more vigorous years have passed by, and crazy old age approaches with its trembling step, and this must I long endure.

“For thou beholdest me, having now lived seven ages; it remains for me to equal the number of particles of the dust; {yet} to behold three hundred harvests, {and} three hundred vintages. The time will come, when length of days will make me diminutive from a person so large; and when my limbs, wasted by old age, will be reduced to the most trifling weight. {Then} I shall not seem to have {once} been beloved, nor {once} to have pleased a God. Even Phœbus himself will, perhaps, not recognize me; or, {perhaps}, he will deny that he loved me. To that degree shall I be said to be changed; and though perceived by none, I shall still be recognized by my voice. My voice the Destinies will leave me.”

[Footnote 11: *Parthenope*.--Ver. 101. The city of Naples, or Neapolis, was called Parthenope from the Siren of that name, who was said to have been buried there.]

[Footnote 12: *Son of Æolus*.--Ver. 103. Misenus, the trumpeter, was said to have been the son of Æolus. From him the promontory Misenum received its name.]

[Footnote 13: *Long-lived Sibyl*.--Ver. 104. The Sibyls were said by some to have their name from the fact of their revealing the will of the Deities, as in the Æolian dialect, Σιὸς was ‘a God,’ and βουλὴ was the Greek for ‘will.’ According to other writers, they were so called from Σίου βύλλη, ‘full of the Deity.’]

[Footnote 14: *Juno of Avernus*.--Ver. 114. The Infernal, or Avernian Juno, is a title sometimes given by the poets to Proserpine.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The early fathers of the church, and particularly Justin, in their works in defence of Christianity, made use of the Sibylline verses of the ancients. The Emperor Constantine, too, in his harangue before the Nicene Council, quoted them, as redounding to the advantage of Christianity; although he then stated that many persons did not believe that the Sibyls were the authors of them. St. Augustin, too, employs several of their alleged predictions to enforce the truths of the Christian religion.

Sebastian Castalio has warmly maintained the truth of the oracles contained in these verses, though he admits that they have been very much interpolated. Other writers, however, having carefully examined them, have pronounced them to be spurious, and so many pious frauds; which, perhaps, may be pronounced to be the general opinion at the present day. We will, however, shortly enquire how many Sibyls of antiquity there were, and when they lived; whether

any of their works were ever promulgated for the perusal of the public, and whether the verses which still exist under their name have any ground to be considered genuine.

There is no doubt but that in ancient times there existed certain women, who, led by a frenzied enthusiasm, uttered obscure sentences, which passed for predictions with the credulous people who went to consult them. Virgil and Ovid represent Æneas as going to the cave of the Cumæan Sibyl, to learn from her the success of the wars he should be engaged in. Plato, Strabo, Plutarch, Pliny, Solinus, and Pausanias, with many other writers, have mentioned the Sibyls; and it would be absurd, with Faustus Socinus, to affirm that no Sibyls ever existed. Indeed, Plato and other authors of antiquity go so far as to say, that by their productions they were essentially the benefactors of mankind. Some mention but one Sibyl, who was born either at Babylon or at Erythræ, in Phrygia. Diodorus Siculus mentions one only, and assigns Delphi as her locality, calling her by the name of Daphne. Strabo and Stephanus Byzantinus mention two, the one of Gergæ, a little town near Troy, and the other of Mermessus, in the same country. Solinus reckons three; the Delphian, named Herophile, the Erythræan, and the Cumæan. According to Varro, their number amounted to ten, whose names, in the order of time which Pausanias assigns them, were as follows:

The first and the most ancient was the Delphian, who lived before the Trojan war. The second was the Erythræan, who was said to have been the first composer of acrostic verses, and who also lived before the Trojan war. The third was the Cumæan, who was mentioned by Nævius in his book on the first Punic war, and by Piso in his annals. She is the Sibyl spoken of in the Æneid, and her name was Deïphobe. The fourth was the Samian, called Pitho, though Eusebius calls her Herophile, and he makes her to have lived about the time of Numa Pompilius. The fifth, whose name was Amalthea, or Demophile, lived at Cumæ, in Asia Minor. The sixth was the Hellespontine Sibyl, born at Mermessus, near Troy. The seventh was the Libyan, mentioned by Euripides. Some suppose that she was the first who had the name of Sibyl, which was given to her by the people of Africa. The eighth was the Persian or Babylonian Sibyl, whom Suidas names Sambetha. The ninth was the Phrygian, who delivered her oracles at Ancyra, in Phrygia. The tenth was the Tiburtine, who was called Albunea, and prophesied near Tibur, or Tivoli, on the banks of the Anio. In the present story Ovid evidently intends to represent these various Sibyls as being the same person; and to account for her prolonged existence, by representing that Apollo had granted her a life to last for many ages.

Several ages before the Christian era, the Romans had a collection of verses, which were commonly attributed to the Sibyls. These they often consulted; and in the time of Tarquinius Superbus, two officers were appointed for the purpose of keeping the Sibylline books, whose business it was to look in them on the occasion of any public calamity, in order to see whether it had been foretold and to make their report to the Senate. The books were kept in a stone chest,

beneath the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. These Duumvirs continued until the year of Rome 388, when eight others being added, they formed the College of the Decemvirs. About eighty-three years before the Christian era five other keepers of these books were added, who thus formed the body called the Quindecimvirs.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Aulus Gellius, Servius, and many other writers, state the following as the origin of the Sibylline books. An aged woman presented to Tarquinius Superbus three books that contained the oracles of the Sibyls, and demanded a large sum for them. The king refusing to buy them, she went and burned them; and returning, asked the same price for the remaining six, as she had done for the original number. Being again repulsed, she burnt three more, and coming back again, demanded the original price for the three that remained. Astonished at the circumstance, the king bought the books. Pliny and Solinus vary the story a little, in saying that the woman at first presented but three books, and that she destroyed two of them.

It is generally supposed, that on the burning of the Capitol, about eighty-three years before the Christian era, the Sibylline books of Tarquinius Superbus were destroyed in the flames. To repair the loss, the Romans despatched officers to various cities of Italy, and even to Asia and Africa, to collect whatever they could find, under the name of Sibylline oracles. P. Gabinius, M. Ottacilius, and L. Valerius brought back a large collection, of which the greater part was rejected, and the rest committed to the care of the Quindecimvirs. Augustus ordered a second revision of them; and, after a severe scrutiny, those which were deemed to be genuine, were deposited in a box, under a statue of Apollo Palatinus. Tiberius again had them examined, and some portion of them was then rejected. Finally, about the year A.D. 399, Stilcho, according to Rutilius Numatianus, or rather, the Emperor Honorius himself, ordered them to be burnt.

The so-called collection of Sibylline verses which now exists is generally looked upon as spurious; or if any part is genuine, it bears so small a proportion to the fictitious portion, that it has shared in the condemnation. Indeed, their very distinctness stamps them as forgeries; for they speak of the mysteries of Christianity in undisguised language, and the names of our Saviour and the Virgin Mary occur as openly as they do in the Holy Scriptures.

It is a singular assertion of St. Jerome, that the gift of prophecy was a reward to the Sibyls for their chastity. If such was the condition, we have a right to consider that the Deities were very partial in the distribution of their rewards, and in withholding them from the multitudes who, we are bound in charity to believe, were as deserving as the Sibyls themselves of the gift of vaticination.

## Book XIV, Fable IV (lines 154–247)

*Æneas arrives at Caieta, in Italy. Achæmenides, an Ithacan, who is on board his ship, meets his former companion Macareus there; and relates to him his escape from being devoured by Polyphemus. Macareus afterwards tells him how Ulysses had received winds from Æolus in a hide, and by that means had a prosperous voyage; till, on the bag being opened by the sailors in their curiosity, the winds rushed out, and raised a storm that drove them back to Æolia, and afterwards upon the coast of the Læstrygons.*

While the Sibyl was relating such things as these, during the steep ascent, the Trojan Æneas emerged from the Stygian abodes to the Eubœan city,[15] and the sacrifice being performed, after the usual manner, he approached the shores that not yet bore the name of his nurse;[16] here, too, Macareus of Neritos, the companion of the experienced Ulysses, had rested, after the prolonged weariness of his toils. He recognized Achæmenides, once deserted in the midst of the crags of Ætna; and astonished that, thus unexpectedly found again, he was yet alive, he said, "What chance, or what God, Achæmenides, preserves thee? why is a barbarian[17] vessel carrying {thee}, a Greek? What land is sought by thy bark?"

No longer ragged in his clothing, {but} now his own {master},[18] and wearing clothes tacked together with no thorns, Achæmenides says, "Again may I behold Polyphemus, and those jaws streaming with human blood, if my home and Ithaca be more delightful to me than this bark; if I venerate Æneas any less than my own father. And, though I were to do everything {possible}, I could never be sufficiently grateful. 'Tis he that has caused that I speak, and breathe, and behold the heavens and the luminary of the sun; and can I be ungrateful, and forgetful of this? {'Tis through him} that this life of mine did not fall into the jaws of the Cyclop; and though I were, even now, to leave the light of life, I should either be buried in a tomb, or, at least, not in that paunch {of his}. What were my feelings at that moment (unless, indeed, terror deprived me of all sense and feeling), when, left behind, I saw you making for the open sea? I wished to shout aloud, but I was fearful of betraying myself to the enemy; the shouts of Ulysses were very nearly causing[19] the destruction of even your ship. I beheld him when, having torn up a mountain, he hurled the immense rock in the midst of the waves; again I beheld him hurling huge stones, with his giant arms, just as though impelled by the powers of the engine of war. And, forgetful that I was not in it, I was now struck with horror lest the waves or the stones might overwhelm the ship.

"But when your flight had saved you from a cruel death, he, indeed, roaring with rage, paced about all Ætna, and groped out the woods with his hands, and, deprived of his eye, stumbled against the rocks; and stretching out his arms, stained with gore, into the sea, he cursed the

Grecian race, and he said, ‘Oh! that any accident would bring back Ulysses to me, or any one of his companions, against whom my anger might find vent, whose entrails I might devour, whose living limbs I might mangle with my right hand, whose blood might drench my throat, whose crushed members might quiver beneath my teeth: how insignificant, or how trifling, {then}, would be the loss of my sight, that has been taken from me!’ This, and more, he said in his rage. Ghastly horror took possession of me, as I beheld his features, streaming even yet with blood, and the ruthless hands, and the round space deprived of the eye, and his limbs, and his beard matted with human blood. Death was before my eyes, {and} yet that was the least of my woes. I imagined that[20] now he was about to seize hold of me, and that now he was on the very point of swallowing my vitals within his own; in my mind was fixed the impress of that time when I beheld two bodies of my companions three or four times dashed against the ground. Throwing himself on the top of them, just like a shaggy lion, he stowed away their entrails, their flesh, their bones with the white marrow, and their quivering limbs, in his ravenous paunch. A trembling seized me; in my alarm I stood without blood {in my features}, as I beheld him both chewing and belching out his bloody banquet from his mouth, and vomiting pieces mingled with wine; {and} I fancied that such a doom was in readiness for wretched me.

“Concealing myself for many a day, and trembling at every sound, and both fearing death and {yet} desirous to die, satisfying hunger with acorns, and with grass mixed with leaves, alone, destitute, desponding, abandoned to death and destruction, after a length of time, I beheld a ship not far off; by signs I prayed for deliverance, and I ran down to the shore; I prevailed; and a Trojan ship received me, a Greek. Do thou too, dearest of my companions, relate thy adventures, and those of thy chief, and of the company, which, together with thee, entrusted {themselves} to the ocean.”

The other relates how that Æolus rules over the Etrurian seas; Æolus, the grandson of Hippotas, who confines the winds in their prison, which the Dulichean chief had received, shut up in a leather {bag}, a wondrous gift; how, with a favouring breeze, he had proceeded for nine days, and had beheld the land he was bound for; {and how}, when the first morning after the ninth had arrived, his companions, influenced by envy and a desire for booty, supposing it to be gold, had cut the fastenings of the winds; {and how}, through these, the ship had gone back along the waves through which it had just come, and had returned to the harbour of the Æolian king.

“Thence,” said he, “we came to the ancient city[21] of Lamus, the Læstrygon. Antiphates was reigning in that land. I was sent to him, two in number accompanying me; and with difficulty was safety procured by me and one companion, by flight; the third of us stained the accursed jaws of the Læstrygon with his blood. Antiphates pursued us as we fled, and called together his followers; they flocked together, and, without intermission, they showered both stones and beams, and they overwhelmed men, and ships, too, did they overwhelm; yet one, which carried

us and Ulysses himself, escaped. A part of our companions {thus} lost, grieving and lamenting much we arrived at those regions which thou perceivest afar hence. Look! afar hence thou mayst perceive an island,[22] that has been seen by me; and do thou, most righteous of the Trojans, thou son of a Goddess, (for, since the war is ended, thou art not, Æneas, to be called an enemy) I warn thee--avoid the shores of Circe."

[Footnote 15: *Eubœan city*.--Ver. 155. 'Cumæ' was said to have been founded by a colony from Chalcis, in Eubœa.]

[Footnote 16: *Of his nurse*.--Ver. 157. Caieta was the name of the nurse of Æneas, who was said to have been buried there by him.]

[Footnote 17: *Barbarian*.--Ver. 163. That is, Trojan; to the Greeks all people but themselves were βαρβαροὶ.]

[Footnote 18: *His own master*.--Ver. 166. 'Now his own master,' in contradistinction to the time when Macareus looked on himself as the devoted victim of Polyphemus.]

[Footnote 19: *Nearly causing*.--Ver. 181. Homer, in the Ninth Book of the Odyssey, recounts how Ulysses, after having put out the eye of Polyphemus, fled to his own ship, and when the Giant followed, called out to him, disclosing his real name; whereas, he had before told the Cyclop that his name was οὔτις, 'nobody.' By this indiscreet action, the Cyclop was able to ascertain the locality of the ship, and nearly sank it with a mass of rock which he hurled in that direction.]

[Footnote 20: *I imagined that*.--Ver. 203-4. 'Et jam prensurum, jam, jam mea viscera rebar In sua mersurum.' Clarke thus renders these words; 'And now I thought he would presently whip me up, and cram my bowels within his own.']

[Footnote 21: *The ancient city*.--Ver. 233. This city was afterwards known as Formiæ, in Campania.]

[Footnote 22: *An island*.--Ver. 245. Macareus here points towards the promontory of Circæum, which was supposed to have formerly been an island.]

### Riley's Explanation

Æolus, according to Servius and Varro, was the son of Hippotas, and about the time of the Trojan war reigned in those islands, which were formerly called 'Vulcaniæ,' but were afterwards entitled 'Æoliæ,' and are now known as the Lipari Islands. Homer mentions only one of these islands, which were seven in number. He calls it by the name of Æolia, and probably means the one which was called Lipara, and gave its name to the group, and which is now known as

Strombolo. Æolus seems to have been a humane prince, who received with hospitality those who had the misfortune to be cast on his island. Diodorus Siculus says that he was especially careful to warn strangers of the shoals and dangerous places in the neighbouring seas. Pliny adds, that he applied himself to the study of the winds, by observing the direction of the smoke of the volcanos, with which the isles abounded.

Being considered as an authority on that subject, at a time when navigation was so little reduced to an art, the poets readily feigned that he was the master of the winds, and kept them pent up in caverns, under his control. The story of the winds being entrusted to Ulysses, which Ovid here copies from Homer, is merely a poetical method of saying, that Ulysses disregarded the advice of Æolus, and staying out at sea beyond the time he had been recommended, was caught in a violent tempest. It is possible that Homer may allude to some custom which prevailed among the ancients, similar to that of the Lapland witches in modern times, who pretend to sell a favourable wind, enclosed in a bag, to mariners. Homer speaks of the six sons and six daughters of Æolus; perhaps they were the twelve principal winds, upon which he had expended much pains in making accurate observations.

Bochart suggests that the isle of Lipara was called by the Phœnicians 'Nibara,' on account of its volcano, (that word signifying 'a torch,') which name was afterwards corrupted to Lipara.

## Book XIV, Fable V (lines 248–319)

*Achæmenides lands in the isle of Circe, and is sent to her palace with some of his companions. Giving them a favourable reception, she makes them drink of a certain liquor; and, on her touching them with a wand, they are immediately transformed into swine. Eurylochus, who has refused to drink, informs Ulysses, who immediately repairs to the palace, and obliges Circe to restore to his companions their former shape.*

"We, too, having fastened our ships to the shores of Circe, remembering Antiphates and the cruel Cyclop, refused to go and enter her unknown abode. By lot were we chosen; that lot sent both me and the faithful Polytes, and Eurylochus, and Elpenor, too much addicted[23] to wine, and twice nine[24] companions, to the walls of Circe. Soon as we reached them, and stood at the threshold of her abode; a thousand wolves, and bears and lionesses mixed with the wolves, created fear through meeting them; but not one {of them} needed to be feared, and not one was there to make a wound on our bodies. They wagged their caressing tails in the air, and fawning, they attended our footsteps, until the female servants received us, and led us, through halls roofed with marble, to their mistress.

"She is sitting in a beautiful alcove, on her wonted throne, and clad in a splendid robe; over it she is arrayed in a garment of gold tissue. The Nereids and the Nymphs, together, who tease no fleeces with the motion of their fingers nor draw out the ductile threads, are placing the plants in due order, and arranging in baskets the flowers confusedly scattered, and the shrubs variegated in their hues. She herself prescribes the tasks that they perform; she herself is aware what is the use of every leaf; what combined virtue there is in them when mixed; and giving attention, she examines {each} herb as weighed.[25] When she beheld us, having given and received a salutation, she gladdened her countenance, and granted every thing to our wishes. And without delay, she ordered the grains of parched barley to be mingled, and honey, and the strength of wine, and curds with pressed milk. Secretly, she added drugs to be concealed beneath this sweetness. We received the cups presented by her sacred right hand. Soon as, in our thirst, we quaffed them with parching mouth, and the ruthless Goddess, with her wand, touched the extremity of our hair (I am both ashamed, and {yet} I will tell of it), I began to grow rough with bristles, and no longer to be able to speak; and, instead of words, to utter a harsh noise, and to grovel on the ground with all my face. I felt, too, my mouth receive a hard skin, with its crooked snout, and my neck swell with muscles; and with the member with which, the moment before, I had received the cup, with the same did I impress my footsteps.

"With the rest who had suffered the same treatment (so powerful are enchanted potions) I was shut up in a pig-sty; and we perceived that Eurylochus, alone, had not the form of a swine; he,

alone, escaped the proffered draught. And had he not escaped it, I should even, at this moment, have still been one of the bristle-clad animals; nor would Ulysses, having been informed by him of so direful a disaster, have come to Circe as {our} avenger. The Cyllenian peace-bearer had given him a white flower; the Gods above call it 'Moly;'[26] it is supported by a black root. Protected by that, and at the same time by the instruction of the inhabitants of heaven, he entered the dwelling of Circe, and being invited to the treacherous draughts, he repelled her, while endeavouring to stroke his hair with her wand, and prevented her, in her terror, with his drawn sword. Upon that, her promise {was given}, and right hands were exchanged; and, being received into her couch, he required the bodies of his companions as his marriage gift.

"We are {then} sprinkled with the more favouring juices of harmless plants, and are smitten on the head with a blow from her inverted wand; and charms are repeated, the converse of the charms that had been uttered. The longer she chaunts them, the more erect are we raised from the ground; and the bristles fall off, and the fissure leaves our cloven feet; our shoulders return; our arms become attached[27] to their upper parts. In tears, we embrace him {also} in tears; and we cling to the neck of our chief; nor do we utter any words before those that testify that we are grateful.

"The space of a year detained us there; and, as {I was} present for such a length of time, I saw many things; and many things I heard with my ears. This, too, among many other things {I heard}, which one of the four handmaids appointed for such rites, privately informed me of. For while Circe was passing her time apart with my chief, she pointed out to me a youthful statue made of snow-white marble, carrying a woodpecker on its head, erected in the hallowed temple, and bedecked with many a chaplet. When I asked, and desired to know who he was, and why he was venerated in the sacred temple, and why he carried that bird; she said:-- 'Listen, Macareus, learn hence, too, what is the power of my mistress, and give attention to what I say.'"

[Footnote 23: *Too much addicted*.--Ver. 252. He alludes to the fate of Elpenor, who afterwards, in a fit of intoxication, fell down stairs, and broke his neck.]

[Footnote 24: *Twice nine*.--Ver. 253. Homer mentions Eurylochus and twenty-two others as the number, being one more than the number here given by Ovid.]

[Footnote 25: *As weighed*.--Ver. 270. Of course drugs and simples would require to be weighed before being mixed in their due proportions.]

[Footnote 26: *Call it 'Moly.'*--Ver. 292. Homer, in the tenth Book of the Odyssey, says that this plant had a black root, and a flower like milk.]

[Footnote 27: *Become attached*.--Ver. 304-5. ‘Subjecta lacertis Brachia sunt,’ Clarke has not a very lucid translation of these words. His version is, ‘Brachia are put under our lacerti.’ The ‘brachium’ was the forearm, or part, from the wrist to the elbow; while the ‘lacertus’ was the muscular part, between the elbow and the shoulder.]

## Riley’s Explanation

Ulysses having stayed some time at the court of Circe, where all were immersed in luxury and indolence, begins to reflect on the degraded state to which he is reduced, and resolutely abandons so unworthy a mode of life. This resolution is here typified by the herb moly, the symbol of wisdom. His companions, changed into swine, are emblems of the condition to which a life of sensuality reduces its votaries; while the wolves, lions, and horses show that man in such a condition fails not to exhibit the various bad propensities of the brute creation. Thus was the prodigal son, mentioned in the New Testament, reduced to a level with the brutes, ‘and fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat.’

It is not improbable that Circe was the original from which the Eastern romancer depicted the enchantress queen Labè in the story of Beder and Giauhare in the Arabian Nights’ Entertainments. They were both ladies of light reputation, both fond of exercising their magical power on strangers, and in exactly the same manner: and as Ulysses successfully resisted the charms of Circe, so Beder thwarted the designs of Labè; but here the parallel ends.

## Book XIV, Fable VI (lines 320–440)

*Circe, being enamoured of Picus, and being unable to shake his constancy to his wife Canens, transforms him into a woodpecker, and his retinue into various kinds of animals. Canens pines away with grief at the loss of her husband, and the place where she disappears afterwards bears her name.*

"'Picus, the son of Saturn, was a king in the regions of Ausonia, an admirer of horses useful in warfare. The form of this person was such as thou beholdest. Thou thyself {here} mayst view his comeliness, and thou mayst approve of his real form from this feigned resemblance of it. His disposition was equal to his beauty; and not yet, in his age, could he have beheld four times the {Olympic} contest celebrated each fifth year in the Grecian Elis. He had attracted, by his {good} looks, the Dryads, born in the hills of Latium; the Naiads, the fountain Deities, wooed him; {Nymphs}, which Albula,[28] and which the waters of Numicus, and which those of Anio, and Almo but very short[29] in its course, and the rapid Nar,[30] and Farfarus,[31] with its delightful shades, produced, and those which haunt the forest realms of the Scythian[32] Diana, and the neighbouring streams.

"'Yet, slighting all these, he was attached to one Nymph, whom, on the Palatine hill, Venilia is said once to have borne to the Ionian Janus.[33] Soon as she was ripe with marriageable years, she was presented to Laurentine Picus, preferred {by her} before all others; wondrous, indeed, was she in her beauty, but more wondrous still, through her skill in singing; thence she was called Canens.[34] She was wont, with her voice, to move the woods and the rocks, and to tame the wild beasts, and to stop {the course of} the long rivers, and to detain the fleeting birds. While she was singing her songs with her feminine voice, Picus had gone from his dwelling into the Laurentine fields, to pierce the wild boars there bred; and he was pressing the back of his spirited horse, and was carrying two javelins in his left hand, having a purple cloak fastened with yellow gold. The daughter of the Sun, too, had come into the same wood; and that she might pluck fresh plants on the fruitful hills, she had left behind the Circæan fields, {so} called after her own name.

"'Hidden by the shrubs, soon as she beheld the youth, she was astounded; the plants which she had gathered fell from her bosom, and a flame seemed to pervade her entire marrow. As soon as she regained her presence of mind from {so} powerful a shock, she was about to confess what she desired; the speed of his horse, and the surrounding guards, caused that she could not approach. 'And yet thou shalt not escape me,' she said, 'even shouldst thou be borne on the winds, if I only know myself, if all potency in herbs has not vanished, and if my charms do not deceive me.' {Thus} she said; and she formed the phantom of a fictitious wild boar, with no

substance, and commanded it to run past the eyes of the king, and to seem to go into a forest, thick set with trees, where the wood is most dense, and where the spot is inaccessible to a horse. There is no delay; Picus, forthwith, unconsciously follows the phantom of the prey; hastily too, he leaves the reeking back of his steed, and, in pursuit of a vain hope, wanders on foot in the lofty forest. She repeats prayers to herself, and utters magical incantations, and adores strange Gods in strange verses, with which she is wont both to darken the disk of the snow-white moon, and to draw the clouds that suck up the moisture, over the head of her father. Then does the sky become lowering at the repeating of the incantation, and the ground exhales its vapours; and his companions wander along the darkened paths, and his guards are separated from the king.

"'She, having now gained a {favourable} place and opportunity, says, 'O, most beauteous {youth}! by thy eyes, which have captivated mine, and by this graceful person, which makes me, though a Goddess, to be thy suppliant, favour my passion, and receive the Sun, that beholds all things, as thy father-in-law, and do not in thy cruelty despise Circe, the daughter of Titan.' {Thus} she says. He roughly repels her and her entreaties: and he says, 'Whoever thou art, I am not for thee; another female holds me enthralled, and for a long space of time, I pray, may she so hold me. I will not pollute the conjugal ties with the love of a stranger, while the Fates shall preserve for me Canens, the daughter of Janus.' The daughter of Titan, having often repeated her entreaties in vain, says, 'Thou shalt not depart with impunity, nor shalt thou return to Canens; and by experience shalt thou learn what one slighted, what one in love, what a woman, can do; but that one in love, and slighted, and a woman, is Circe.'

"'Then twice did she turn herself to the West, and twice to the East; thrice did she touch the youth with her wand; three charms did she repeat. He fled; wondering that he sped more swiftly than usual, he beheld wings on his body; and indignant that he was added suddenly as a strange bird to the Latian woods, he struck the wild oaks with his hard beak, and, in his anger, inflicted wounds[35] on the long branches. His wings took the purple colour of his robe. The piece of gold that had formed a buckle, and had fastened his garment, became feathers, and his neck was encompassed with {the colour of} yellow gold; and nothing {now} remained to Picus of his former {self}, beyond the name.

"'In the meantime his attendants, having, often in vain, called on Picus throughout the fields, and, having found him in no direction, meet with Circe, (for now she has cleared the air, and has allowed the clouds to be dispersed by the woods and the sun); and they charge her with just accusations, and demand back their king, and are using violence, and are preparing to attack her with ruthless weapons. She scatters noxious venom and poisonous extracts; and she summons together Night, and the Gods of Night, from Erebus and from Chaos, and she invokes Hecate in magic howlings. Wondrous to tell, the woods leap from their spot; the ground utters groans, the neighbouring trees become pallid, the grass becomes moist, besprinkled with drops of blood; the

stones seem to send forth harsh lowings, the dogs {seem} to bark, and the ground to grow loathsome with black serpents, and unsubstantial ghosts of the departed {appear} to flit about. The multitude trembles, astonished at these prodigies; she touches their astonished faces, as they tremble, with her enchanted wand. From the touch of this, the monstrous forms of various wild beasts come upon the young men; his own form remains to no one of them.

"'The setting Sun has {now} borne down upon the Tartessian shores;[36] and in vain is her husband expected, both by the eyes and the longings of Canens. Her servants and the people run about through all the woods, and carry lights to meet him. Nor is it enough for the Nymph to weep, and to tear her hair, and to beat her breast; though all this she does, she rushes forth, and, in her distraction, she wanders through the Latian fields. Six nights, and as many returning lights of the Sun, beheld her, destitute of sleep and of food, going over hills and valleys, wherever chance led her. Tiber, last {of all}, beheld her, worn out with weeping and wandering, and reposing her body on his cold banks. There, with tears, she poured forth words attuned, lamenting, in a low voice, her very woes, as when the swan, now about to die, sings his own funereal dirge.

"'At last, melting with grief, {even} to her thin marrow, she pined away, and by degrees vanished into light air. Yet the Fame of it became attached to the spot, which the ancient Muses have properly called Canens, after the name of the Nymph.' During that long year, many such things as these were told me and were seen {by me}. Sluggish and inactive through idleness, we were ordered again to embark on the deep, again to set our sails. The daughter of Titan had said that dangerous paths, and a protracted voyage, and the perils of the raging sea were awaiting us. I was alarmed, I confess; and having reached these shores, {here} I remained."

[Footnote 28: *Albula*.--Ver. 328. The ancient name of the river Tiber was Albula. It was so called from the whiteness of its water.]

[Footnote 29: *But very short*.--Ver. 329. The Almo falls in the Tiber, close to its own source, whence its present epithet.]

[Footnote 30: *Rapid Nar*.--Ver. 330. The 'Nar' was a river of Umbria, which fell into the Tiber.]

[Footnote 31: *Farfarus*.--Ver. 330. This river, flowing slowly through the valleys of the country of the Sabines, received a pleasant shade from the trees with which its banks were lined.]

[Footnote 32: *Scythian*.--Ver. 331. He alludes to the statue of the Goddess Diana, which, with her worship, Orestes was said to have brought from the Tauric Chersonesus, and to have established at Aricia, in Latium. See the Fasti, Book III. l. 263, and Note.]

[Footnote 33: *Ionian Janus*.--Ver. 334. Janus was so called because he was thought to have come from Thessaly, and to have crossed the Ionian Sea.]

[Footnote 34: *Canens*.--Ver. 338. This name literally means 'singing,' being the present participle of the Latin verb 'cano,' 'to sing.']

[Footnote 35: *Inflicted wounds*.--Ver. 392. The woodpecker is supposed to tap the bark of the tree with his beak, to ascertain, from the sound, if it is hollow, and if there are any insects beneath it.]

[Footnote 36: *Tartessian shores*.--Ver. 416. 'Tartessia' is here used as a general term for Western, as Tartessus was a city of the Western coast of Spain. It afterwards had the name of Carteia, and is thought to have been situated not far from the site of the present Cadiz, at the mouth of the Bætis, now called the Guadalquivir. Some suppose this name to be the same with the Tarshish of Scripture.]

## Riley's Explanation

When names occur in the ancient Mythology, of Oriental origin, we may conclude that they were imported into Greece and Italy from Egypt or Phœnicia; and that their stories were derived from the same sources; such as those of Adonis, Arethusa, Arachne, and Isis. Those that are derived from the Greek languages are attached to fictions of purely Greek origin, such as the fables of Daphne, Galantis, Cygnus, and the Myrmidons; and where the names are of Latin original, we may conclude that their stories originated in Italy: such, for instance, as those of Canens, Picus, Anna Perenna, Flora, Quirinus, and others.

To this rule there are certain exceptions; for both Greece and Italy occasionally appropriated each other's traditions, by substituting the names of one language for those of the other. Thus it would not be safe to affirm positively that the story of Portumnus and Matuta is of Latin origin, since Greece lays an equal claim to it under the names of Leucothoë and Palæmon, while, probably, Cadmus originally introduced it from Phœnicia, under the names of Ino and Melicerta.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, on the authority of Cato the Censor and Asellius Sempronius, says that the original inhabitants of Italy were a Greek colony. Cato and Sempronius state that they were from Achaia, while Dionysius says that they came from Arcadia, under the command of Œnotrius. Picus is generally supposed to have been one of the aboriginal kings of Italy, who was afterwards Deified. Servius, in his Commentary on the seventh Book of the Æneid, informs us that Picus pretended to know future events, and made use of a woodpecker, which he had tamed, for the purpose of his auguries. On this ground, after his death, it was generally reported

that he had been transformed into that bird, and he was ranked among the Dii Indigetes of Latium. Dying in his youth, his wife Canens retired to a solitary spot, where she ended her life, and the intensity of her grief gave rise to the fable that she had pined away into a sound.

It has been suggested that the story took its rise from the oracles of Mars among the Sabines, when a woodpecker was said to give the responses. According to Bochart, it arose from the confusion of the meaning of the Phœnician word ‘picea,’ which signified a ‘diviner.’ It is the exuberant fancy of Ovid alone which connects Picus with the story of Circe.

## Book XIV, Fables VII and VIII (lines 441–526)

*Turnus having demanded succour from Diomedes against Æneas, the Grecian prince, fearing the resentment of Venus, refuses to send him assistance; and relates how some of his followers have been transformed by Venus into birds. An Apulian shepherd surprising some Nymphs, insults them, on which he is changed into a wild olive tree.*

Macareus had concluded. And the nurse of Æneas, {now} buried in a marble urn, had {this} short inscription on her tomb:-- "My foster-child, of proved piety, here burned me, Caieta, preserved from the Argive flames, with that fire which was my due." The fastened cable is loosened from the grassy bank, and they leave far behind the wiles and the dwelling of the Goddess, of whom so ill a report has been given, and seek the groves where the Tiber, darkened with the shade {of trees}, breaks into the sea with his yellow sands. {Æneas}, too, gains the house and the daughter of Latinus, the {son of} Faunus;[37] but not without warfare. A war is waged with a fierce nation, and Turnus is indignant on account of the wife that had been betrothed to him.[38] All Etruria meets {in battle} with Latium, and long is doubtful victory struggled for with ardent arms. Each side increases his strength with foreign forces, and many take the part of the Rutulians, many that of the Trojan side. Nor {had} Æneas {arrived} in vain at the thresholds of Evander,[39] but Venulus came {in vain} to the great city, of the exiled Diomedes. He, indeed, had founded a very great city under the Iapygian Daunus, and held the lands given to him in dower.

But after Venulus had executed the commands of Turnus, and had asked for aid, the Ætolian hero pleaded his resources as an excuse: that he was not wishful to commit the subjects of his father-in-law to a war, and that he had no men to arm of the nation of his own countrymen; "And that ye may not think this a pretext, although my grief be renewed at the bitter recollection, yet I will endure the recital {of it}. After lofty Ilion was burnt, and Pergamus had fed the Grecian flames, and the Narycian hero,[40] having ravished the virgin, distributed that vengeance upon all, which he alone merited, on account of the virgin; we were dispersed and driven by the winds over the hostile seas; we Greeks had to endure lightning, darkness, rain, and the wrath both of the heavens and of the sea, and Caphareus, the completion of our misery. And not to detain you by relating these sad events in their order, Greece might then have appeared even to Priam, worthy of a tear. Yet the care of the armed universe preserved me, rescued from the waves.

"But again was I driven from Argos, {the land} of my fathers; and genial Venus exacted satisfaction in vengeance for her former wound: and so great hardships did I endure on the deep ocean, so great amid arms on shore, that many a time were they pronounced {happy} by me,

whom the storm, common {to all}, and Caphareus, swallowed up in the threatening[41] waves; and I wished that I had been one of them. My companions having now endured the utmost extremities, both in war and on the ocean, lost courage, and demanded an end of their wanderings. But Agmon, of impetuous temper, and then embittered as well by misfortunes, said, 'What does there remain now, ye men, for your patience to refuse to endure? What has Cytherea, (supposing her to desire it), that she can do beyond this? For so long as greater evils are dreaded, there is room for prayers; but where one's lot is the most wretched possible, fear is {trampled} under foot, and the extremity {of misfortune} is free from apprehensions. Let {Venus} herself hear it, if she likes; let her hate, as she does {hate}, all the men under the rule of Diomedes. Yet all of us despise her hate, and this our great power is bought by us at great price.'

"With such expressions does the Pleuronian[42] Agmon provoke Venus against her will, and revive her former anger. His words are approved of by a few. We, the greater number of his friends, rebuke Agmon: and as he is preparing to answer, his voice and the passage of his voice together become diminished; his hair changes into feathers; his neck newly formed, his breast and his back are covered with down; his arms assume longer feathers; and his elbows curve out into light wings. A great part of his foot receives toes; his mouth becomes stiff and hardened with horn, and has its end in a point. Lycus and Idas, and Nycteus, together with Rhetenor, and Abas, are {all} astounded at him; and while they are astounded, they assume a similar form; and the greater portion of my company fly off, and resound around the oars with the flapping of their wings. Shouldst thou inquire what was the form of these birds so suddenly made; although it was not that of swans, yet it was approaching to that of white swans. With difficulty, for my part, do I, the son-in-law of the Iapygian Daunus, possess these abodes and the parched fields with a very small remnant of my companions."

Thus far the grandson of Œneus. Venulus leaves the Calydonian[43] realms and the Peucetian[44] bays, and the Messapian[45] fields. In these he beholds a cavern, which, overshadowed by a dense grove, and trickling with a smooth stream, the God Pan, the half goat, occupies; but once on a time the Nymphs possessed it. An Apulian shepherd alarmed them, scared away from that spot; and, at first, he terrified them with a sudden fear; afterwards, when their presence of mind returned, and they despised him as he followed, they formed dances, moving their feet to time. The shepherd abused them; and imitating them with grotesque capers, he added rustic abuse in filthy language. Nor was he silent, before the {growing} tree closed his throat. But from this tree and its sap you may understand {what} were his manners. For the wild olive, by its bitter berries, indicates the infamy of his tongue; the coarseness of his words passed into them.

[Footnote 37: *Son of Faunus*.--Ver. 449. The parents of Latinus were Faunus and Marica.]

[Footnote 38: *Betrothed to him*.--Ver. 451. Amata, the mother of Lavinia, had promised her to Turnus, in spite of the oracle of Faunus, which had declared that she was destined for a foreign husband.]

[Footnote 39: *Evander*.--Ver. 456. His history is given by Ovid in the first Book of the Fasti.]

[Footnote 40: *Narycian hero*.--Ver. 468. Naryx, which was also called Narycium and Naryce, was a city of Locris. He alludes to the divine vengeance which punished Ajax Oïleus, who had ravished Cassandra in the temple of Minerva. For this reason the Greeks were said to have been afflicted with shipwreck, on their return after the destruction of Troy.]

[Footnote 41: *Threatening*.--Ver. 481. 'Importunis' is translated by Clarke, 'plaguy.' For some account of Caphareus, see the Tristia, or Lament, Book I. El. 1. l. 83. and note.]

[Footnote 42: *Pleuronian*.--Ver. 494. Pleuron was a town of Ætolia, adjoining to Epirus.]

[Footnote 43: *Calydonian*.--Ver. 512. That part of Apulia, which Diomedes received from Daunus, as a dower with his wife, was called Calydon, from the city of Calydon, in his native Ætolia.]

[Footnote 44: *Peucetian*.--Ver. 513. Apulia was divided by the river Aufidus into two parts, Peucetia and Daunia. Peucetia was to the East, and Daunia lay to the West. According to Antoninus Liberalis, Daunus, Iapyx, and Peucetius, the sons of Lycaon, were the first to colonize these parts.]

[Footnote 45: *Messapian*.--Ver. 513. Messapia was a name given to a part of Calabria, from its king Messapus, who aided Turnus against Æneas.]

## Riley's Explanation

Latinus having been told by an oracle that a foreign prince should come into his country and marry his daughter Lavinia, received Æneas hospitably, and formed an alliance with him, promising him his daughter in marriage; on which Turnus, who was the nephew of Amata, his wife, and to whom Lavinia was betrothed, declared war against Æneas.

The ancient historians tell us, that, on returning from the siege of Troy, Diomedes found that his throne had been usurped by Cyllabarus, who had married his wife Ægiale. Not having sufficient forces to dispossess the intruder, he sought a retreat in Italy, where he built the city of Argyripa, or Argos Hippium. Diomedes having married the daughter of Daunus, quarrelled with his father-in-law, and was killed in fight; on which his companions fled to an adjacent island, which, from his name, was called Diomedea. It was afterwards reported, that on their flight they were changed into birds, and that Venus inflicted this punishment, in consequence of Diomedes

having wounded her at the siege of Troy. Of this story a confused version is here presented by Ovid, who makes the transformation to take place in the lifetime of Diomedes. It is supposed that the fact of the island being the favourite resort of swans and herons, facilitated this story of their transformation. Pliny and Solinus add to this marvellous account by stating, that these birds fawned upon all Greeks who entered the island, and fled from the people of all other nations. Ovid says that the birds resembled swans, while other writers thought them to be herons, storks, or falcons.

The ancient authors are utterly silent as to the rude shepherd who was changed into a wild olive, but the story was probably derived by Ovid from some local tradition.

## Book XIV, Fables IX and X (lines 527–608)

*Turnus sets fire to the fleet of Æneas: but Cybele transforms the ships into sea Nymphs. After the death of Turnus, his capital, Ardea, is burnt, and a bird arises out of the flames. Venus obtains of Jupiter that her son, after so many heroic deeds, shall be received into the number of the Gods.*

When the ambassador had returned thence, bringing word that the Ætolian arms had been refused them, the Rutulians carried on the warfare prepared for, without their forces; and much blood was shed on either side. Lo! Turnus bears the devouring torches against the {ships}, fabrics of pine; and those, whom the waves have spared, are {now} in dread of fire. And now the flames were burning the pitch and the wax, and the other elements of flame, and were mounting the lofty mast to the sails, and the benches of the curved ships were smoking; when the holy Mother of the Gods, remembering that these pines were cut down on the heights of Ida, filled the air with the tinkling of the clashing cymbal, and with the noise of the blown boxwood {pipe}. Borne through the yielding air by her harnessed lions, she said: "Turnus, in vain dost thou hurl the flames with thy sacrilegious right hand; I will save {the ships}, and the devouring flames shall not, with my permission, burn a portion, and the {very} limbs of my groves."

As the Goddess speaks, it thunders; and following the thunder, heavy showers fall, together with bounding hailstones; the brothers, sons of Astræus, arouse both the air and the swelling waves with sudden conflicts, and rush to the battle. The genial Mother, using the strength of one of these, first bursts the hempen cables of the Phrygian fleet, and carries the ships headlong, and buries them beneath the ocean. Their hardness being now softened, and their wood being changed into flesh, the crooked sterns are changed into the features of the head; the oars taper off in fingers and swimming feet; that which has been so before, is {still} the side; and the keel, laid below in the middle of the ship, is changed, for the purposes of the back bone. The cordage becomes soft hair, the yards {become} arms. Their colour is azure, as it was before. As Naiads of the ocean, with their virgin sports they agitate those waves, which before they dreaded; and, born on the rugged mountains, they inhabit the flowing sea; their origin influences them not. And yet, not forgetting how many dangers they endured on the boisterous ocean, often do they give a helping hand to the tossed ships; unless any one is carrying men of the Grecian race.

Still keeping in mind the Phrygian catastrophe, they hated the Pelasgians; and, with joyful countenances, they looked upon the fragments of the ship of him of Neritos; and with pleasure did they see the ship of Alcinoüs[46] become hard upon the breakers, and stone growing over the wood.

There is a hope that, the fleet having received life in the form of sea Nymphs, the Rutulian may desist from the war through fear, on account of this prodigy. He persists, {however}, and each side has {its own} Deities;[47] and they have courage, equal to the Gods. And now they do not seek kingdoms as a dower, nor the sceptre of a father-in-law, nor thee, virgin Lavinia, but {only} to conquer; and they wage the war through shame at desisting. At length, Venus sees the arms of her son victorious, and Turnus falls; Ardea falls, which, while Turnus lived, was called 'the mighty.' After ruthless flames consumed it, and its houses sank down amid the heated embers, a bird, then known for the first time, flew aloft from the midst of the heap, and beat the ashes with the flapping of its wings. The voice, the leanness, the paleness, and every thing that befits a captured city, and the very name of the city, remain in that {bird}; and Ardea itself is bewailed by {the beating of} its wings.

And now the merit of Æneas had obliged all the Deities, and Juno herself, to put an end to their former resentment; when, the power of the rising Iülus being now well established, the hero, the son of Cytherea, was ripe for heaven, Venus, too, had solicited the Gods above; and hanging round the neck of her parent had said: "My father, {who hast} never {proved} unkind to me at any time, I beseech thee now to be most indulgent {to me}; and to grant, dearest {father}, to my Æneas, who, {born} of my blood, has made thee a grandsire, a godhead, {even} though of the lowest class; so that thou only grant him one. It is enough to have once beheld the unsightly realms, {enough} to have once passed over the Stygian streams." The Gods assented; nor did his royal wife keep her countenance unmoved; {but}, with pleased countenance, she nodded assent. Then her father said; "You are worthy of the gift of heaven; both thou who askest, and he, for whom thou askest: receive, my daughter, what thou dost desire." {Thus} he decrees. She rejoices, and gives thanks to her parent; and, borne by her harnessed doves through the light air, she arrives at the Laurentine shores; where Numicius,[48] covered with reeds, winds to the neighbouring sea with the waters of his stream. Him she bids to wash off from Æneas whatever is subject to death, and to bear it beneath the ocean in his silent course.

The horned {river} performed the commands of Venus; and with his waters washed away from Æneas whatever was mortal, and sprinkled him. His superior essence remained. His mother anointed his body {thus} purified with divine odours, and touched his face with ambrosia, mingled with sweet nectar, and made him a God. Him the people of Quirinus, called Indiges, [49] and endowed with a temple and with altars.

[Footnote 46: *Ship of Alcinoüs*.--Ver. 565. Alcinoüs, the king of the Phæacians, having saved Ulysses from shipwreck, gave him a ship in which to return to Ithaca. Neptune, to revenge the injuries of his son Polyphemus, changed the ship into a rock.]

[Footnote 47: *Its own Deities*.--Ver. 568. The Trojans were aided by Venus, while Juno favoured the Rutulians.]

[Footnote 48: *Numicius*.--Ver. 599. Livy, in the first Book of his History, seems to say that Æneas lost his life in a battle, fought near the Numicius, a river of Latium. He is generally supposed to have been drowned there.]

[Footnote 49: *Indiges*.--Ver. 608. Cicero says, that 'those, who for their merits were reckoned in the number of the Gods, and who formerly living on earth, and afterwards lived among the Gods (in Diis agerent), were called Indigetes;' thus implying that the word 'Indiges' came from 'in Diis ago;' 'to live among the Gods.' This seems a rather far-fetched derivation. The true meaning of the word seems to be 'native,' or 'indigenous;' and it applies to a person Deified, and considered as a tutelary Deity of his native country. Most probably, it is derived from 'in,' or 'indu,' the old Latin form of 'in,' and γεἰνω (for γἰνομαι), 'to be born.' Some would derive the word from 'in,' negative, and 'ago,' to speak, as signifying Deities, whose names were not be mentioned.]

## Riley's Explanation

It is asserted by some writers, that when the ships of Æneas were set on fire by Turnus, a tempest arose, which extinguished the flames; on which circumstance the story here related by Ovid was founded. Perhaps Virgil was the author of the fiction, as he is the first known to have related it, and is closely followed by Ovid in the account of the delivery of the ships.

The story of the heron arising out of the flames of Ardea seems to be founded on a very simple fact. It is merely a poetical method of accounting for the Latin name of that bird, which was very plentiful in the vicinity of the city of Ardea, and, perhaps, thence derived its name of 'ardea.' The story may have been the more readily suggested to the punning mind of Ovid, from the resemblance of the Latin verb 'ardeo,' signifying 'to burn,' to that name.

Some of the ancient authors say, that after killing Turnus and marrying Lavinia, Æneas was killed in battle with Mezentius, after a reign of three years, leaving his wife pregnant with a son, afterwards known by the name of Sylvius. His body not being found after the battle, it was given out that his Goddess mother had translated him to heaven, and he was thenceforth honoured by the name of Jupiter Indiges.

## Book XIV, Fable XI (lines 609–697)

*Vertumnus, enamoured of Pomona, assumes several shapes for the purpose of gaining her favour; and having transformed himself into an old woman, succeeds in effecting his object.*

From that time Alba and the Latin state were under the sway of Ascanius with the two names; [50] Sylvius[51] succeeded him; sprung of whom, Latinus had a renewed name, together with the ancient sceptre. Alba succeeded the illustrious Latinus; Epitos {sprang} from him; {and} next to him {were} Capetus, and Capys; but Capys was the first {of these}. Tiberinus received the sovereignty after them; and, drowned in the waves of the Etrurian river, he gave his name to the stream. By him Remulus and the fierce Acrota were begotten; Remulus, {who was} the elder, an imitator of the lightnings, perished by the stroke[52] of a thunder-bolt. Acrota, more moderate than his brother {in his views}, handed down the sceptre to the valiant Aventinus, who lies buried on the same mount over which he had reigned; and to that mountain he gave his name. And now Proca held sway over the Palatine nation.

Under this king Pomona lived; than her, no one among the Hamadryads of Latium more skilfully tended her gardens, and no one was more attentive to the produce of the trees; thence she derives her name. She {cares} not {for} woods, or streams; {but} she loves the country, and the boughs that bear the thriving fruit. Her right hand is not weighed down with a javelin, but with a curved pruning-knife, with which, at one time she crops the {too} luxuriant shoots, and reduces the branches that straggle without order; at another time, she is engrafting the sucker in the divided bark, and is {so} finding nourishment for a stranger nursling. Nor does she suffer them to endure thirst; she waters, too, the winding fibres of the twisting root with the flowing waters. This is her delight, this her pursuit; and no desire has she for love. But fearing the violence of the rustics, she closes her orchard within {a wall}, and both forbids and flies from the approach of males.

What did not the Satyrs do, a youthful crew expert at the dance, and the Pans with their brows wreathed with pine, and Sylvanus, ever more youthful than his years, and the God who scares the thieves either with his pruning-hook or with his groin, in order that they might gain her? But yet Vertumnus exceeded even these in his love, nor was he more fortunate than the rest. O! how often did he carry the ears of corn in a basket, under the guise of a hardy reaper; and he was the very picture of a reaper! Many a time, having his temples bound with fresh bay, he would appear to have been turning over the mowed grass. He often bore a whip in his sturdy hand, so that you would have sworn that he had that instant been unyoking the wearied oxen. A pruning-knife being given him, he was a woodman, and the pruner of the vine. {Now} he was carrying a ladder, {and} you would suppose he was going to gather fruit. {Sometimes} he was a soldier, with a

sword, {and sometimes} a fisherman, taking up the rod; in fact, by means of many a shape, he often obtained access for himself, that he might enjoy the pleasure of gazing on her beauty.

He, too, having bound his brows with a coloured cap,[53] leaning on a stick, with white hair placed around his temples, assumed the shape of an old woman, and entered the well-cultivated gardens, and admired the fruit; and he said, "So much better off {art thou}!" and {then} he gave her, thus commended, a few kisses, such as no real old woman {ever} could have given; and stooping, seated himself upon the grass, looking up at the branches bending under the load of autumn. There was an elm opposite, widely spread with swelling grapes; after he had praised it, together with the vine united {to it}, he said, "{Aye}, but if this trunk stood unwedded,[54] without the vine, it would have nothing to attract beyond its leaves; this vine, too, while it finds rest against the elm, joined to it, if it were not united to it, would lie prostrate on the ground; {and} yet thou art not influenced by the example of this tree, and thou dost avoid marriage, and dost not care to be united. I {only} wish that thou wouldst desire it: Helen would not {then} be wooed by more suitors, nor she who caused the battles of the Lapithæ, nor the wife of Ulysses, {so} bold against the cowards. Even now, while thou dost avoid them courting thee, and dost turn away in disgust, a thousand suitors desire thee; both Demigod and Gods, and the Deities which inhabit the mountains of Alba.

"But thou, if thou art wise, {and} if thou dost wish to make a good match, and to listen to an old woman, (who loves thee more than them all, and more than thou dost believe) despise a common alliance, and choose for thyself Vertumnus, as the partner of thy couch; and take me as a surety {for him}. He is not better known, even to himself, than he is to me. He is not wandering about, straying here and there, throughout all the world; these spots only does he frequent; and he does not, like a great part of thy wooers, fall in love with her whom he sees last. Thou wilt be his first and his last love, and to thee alone does he devote his life. Besides, he is young, he has naturally the gift of gracefulness, he can readily change himself into every shape, and he will become whatever he shall be bidden, even shouldst thou bid him be everything. {And} besides, have you {not both} the same tastes? Is {not} he the first to have the fruits which are thy delight? and does he {not} hold thy gifts in his joyous right hand? But now he neither longs for the fruit plucked from the tree, nor the herbs that the garden produces, with their pleasant juices, nor anything else, but thyself. Have pity on his passion! and fancy that he who wooes thee is here present, pleading with my lips; fear, too, the avenging Deities, and the Idalian {Goddess}, who abhors cruel hearts, and the vengeful anger of her of Rhamnus.[55]

"And that thou mayst the more stand in awe of them, (for old age has given me the opportunity of knowing many things) I will relate some facts very well known throughout all Cyprus, by which thou mayst the more easily be persuaded and relent."

[Footnote 50: *The two names*.--Ver. 609. The other name of Ascanius was Iülus. Alba Longa was built by Ascanius.]

[Footnote 51: *Sylvius*.--Ver. 610. See the lists of the Alban kings, as given by Ovid, Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Eusebius, compared in the notes to the Translation of the Fasti, Book IV. line 43.]

[Footnote 52: *By the stroke*.--Ver. 618. Possibly both Remulus (if there ever was such a person) and Tullus Hostilius may have fallen victims to some electrical experiments which they were making; this may have given rise to the story that they had been struck with lightning for imitating the prerogative of Jupiter.]

[Footnote 53: *A coloured cap*.--Ver. 654. 'Pictâ redimitus tempora mitrâ,' is rendered by Clarke, 'Having his temples wrapped up in a painted bonnet.' The 'mitra,' which was worn on the head by females, was a broad cloth band of various colours. The use of it was derived from the Eastern nations, and, probably, it was very similar to our turban. It was much used by the Phrygians, and in later times among the Greeks and Romans. It is supposed that it was worn in a broad fillet round the head, and was tied under the chin with bands. When Clodius went disguised in female apparel to the rites of Bona Dea, he wore a 'mitra.']

[Footnote 54: *Stood unwedded*.--Ver. 663. Ovid probably derived this notion from the language of the Roman husbandmen. Columella and other writers on agricultural matters often make mention of a 'maritus ulmus,' and a 'nupta vitis,' in contradistinction to those trees which stood by themselves.]

[Footnote 55: *Her of Rhamnus*.--Ver. 694. See Book III. l. 406.]

## Riley's Explanation

Among the Deities borrowed by the Romans from the people of Etruria, were Vertumnus and Pomona, who presided over gardens and fruits. Propertius represents Vertumnus as rejoicing at having left Tusculum for the Roman Forum. According to Varro and Festus, the Romans offered sacrifices to these Deities, and they had their respective temples and altars at Rome, the priest of Pomona being called 'Flamen Pomonalis.' It is probable that this story originated in the fancy of the Poet.

The name of Vertumnus, from 'verto,' 'to change,' perhaps relates to the vicissitudes of the seasons; and if this story refers to any tradition, its meaning may have been, that in his taking various forms, to please Pomona, the change of seasons requisite for bringing the fruits to ripeness was symbolized. It is possible that in the disguises of a labourer, a reaper, and an old woman, the Poet may intend to pourtray the spring, the harvest, and the winter.

There was a market at Rome, near the temple of this God, who was regarded as one of the tutelary Deities of the traders. Horace alludes to his temple which was in the Vicus Tuscus, or Etrurian Street, which led to the Circus Maximus. According to some authors, he was an ancient king of Etruria, who paid great attention to his gardens, and, after his death, was considered to have the tutelage of them.

## Book XIV, Fables XII and XIII (lines 698–851)

*Vertumnus relates to Pomona how Anaxarete was changed into a rock after her disdain of his advances had forced her lover Iphis to hang himself. After the death of Amulius and Numitor, Romulus builds Rome, and becomes the first king of it. Tatius declares war against him, and is favoured by Juno, while Venus protects the Romans. Romulus and Hersilia are added to the number of the Deities, under the names of Quirinus and Ora.*

Iphis, born of an humble family, had beheld the noble Anaxarete, sprung from the race of the ancient Teucer;[56] he had seen her, and had felt the flame in all his bones; and struggling a long time, when he could not subdue his passion by reason, he came suppliantly to her doors. And now having confessed to her nurse his unfortunate passion, he besought her, by the hopes {she reposed} in her nursling, not to be hard-hearted to him; and at another time, complimenting each of the numerous servants, he besought their kind interest with an anxious voice. He often gave his words to be borne on the flattering tablets; sometimes he fastened garlands, wet with the dew of his tears, upon the door-posts, and laid his tender side upon the hard threshold, and uttered reproaches against the obdurate bolt.

She, more deaf than the sea, swelling when {the Constellation of} the Kids is setting, and harder than the iron which the Norican fire[57] refines, and than the rock which in its native state is yet held fast by the firm roots, despises, and laughs at him; and to her cruel deeds, in her pride, she adds boastful words, and deprives her lover of even hope. Iphis, unable to endure this prolonged pain, endured his torments no {longer}; and before her doors he spoke these words as his last: “Thou art the conquerer, Anaxarete; and no more annoyances wilt thou have to bear from me. Prepare the joyous triumph, invoke the God Pæan, and crown thyself with the shining laurel. For thou art the conqueror, and of my own will I die; do thou, {woman} of iron, rejoice. At least, thou wilt be obliged to commend something in me, and there will be one point in which I shall be pleasing to thee, and thou wilt confess my merits. Yet remember that my affection for thee has not ended sooner than my life; and that at the same moment I am about to be deprived of a twofold light. And report shall not come to thee as the messenger of my death; I myself will come, doubt it not; and I myself will be seen in person, that thou mayst satiate thy cruel eyes with my lifeless body. But if, ye Gods above, you take cognizance of the fortunes of mortals, be mindful of me; beyond this, my tongue is unable to pray; and cause me to be remembered in times far distant; and give those hours to Fame which you have taken away from my existence.”

{Thus} he said; and raising his swimming eyes and his pallid arms to the door-posts, so often adorned by him with wreaths, when he had fastened a noose at the end of a halter upon the door; he said,-- “Are these the garlands that delight thee, cruel and unnatural {woman}?” And he

placed his head within it; but even then he was turned towards her; and he hung a hapless burden, by his strangled throat. The door, struck by the motion of his feet as they quivered, seemed to utter a sound, as {of one} groaning much, and flying open, it discovered the deed; the servants cried aloud, and after lifting him up in vain, they carried him to the house of his mother (for his father was dead). She received him into her bosom; and embracing the cold limbs of her child, after she had uttered the words that are {natural} to wretched mothers, and had performed the {usual} actions of wretched mothers, she was preceding[58] the tearful funeral through the midst of the city, and was carrying his ghastly corpse on the bier, to be committed to the flames.

By chance, her house was near the road where the mournful procession was passing, and the sound of lamentation came to the ears of the hardhearted Anaxarete, whom now an avenging Deity pursued. Moved, however, she said:-- “Let us behold these sad obsequies;” and she ascended to an upper room[59] with wide windows. And scarce had she well seen Iphis laid out on the bier, {when} her eyes became stiffened, and a paleness coming on, the warm blood fled from her body. And as she endeavoured to turn her steps back again, she stood fixed {there}; and as she endeavoured to turn away her face, this too she was unable to do; and by degrees the stone, which already existed in her cruel breast, took possession of her limbs.

“And, that thou mayst not think this a fiction, Salamis still keeps the statue under the form of the maiden; it has also a temple under the name of ‘Venus, the looker-out.’ Remembering these things, O Nymph, lay aside this prolonged disdain, and unite thyself to one who loves thee. Then, may neither cold in the spring nip thy fruit in the bud, nor may the rude winds strike them off in blossom.” When the God, fitted for every shape, had in vain uttered these words, he returned to his youthful form,[60] and took off from himself the garb of the old woman. And such did he appear to her, as, when the form of the sun, in all his brilliancy, has dispelled the opposing clouds, and has shone forth, no cloud intercepting {his rays}. And he {now} purposed violence, but there was no need for force, and the Nymph was captivated by the form of the God, and was sensible of a reciprocal wound.

Next, the soldiery of the wicked Amulius held sway over the realms of Ausonia; and by the aid of his grandsons, the aged Numitor gained the kingdom that he had lost; and on the festival of Pales, the walls of the City were founded. Tatius and the Sabine fathers waged war; and {then}, the way to the citadel being laid open, by a just retribution, Tarpeia lost her life, the arms being heaped {upon her}. On this, they, sprung from {the town of} Cures, just like silent wolves, suppressed their voices with their lips, and fell upon the bodies {now} overpowered by sleep, and rushed to the gates, which the son of Ilia had shut with a strong bolt. But {Juno}, the daughter of Saturn, herself opened one, and made not a sound at the turning of the hinge. Venus alone perceived that the bars of the gate had fallen down; and she would have shut it, were it

not, that it is never allowed for a Deity to annul the acts of the {other} Gods. The Naiads of Ausonia occupied a spot near {the temple of} Janus, {a place} besprinkled by a cold fountain; of these she implored aid. Nor did the Nymphs resist, the Goddess making so fair a request; and they gave vent to the springs and the streams of the fountain. But not yet were the paths closed to the open {temple of} Janus, and the water had not stopped the way. They placed sulphur, with its faint blue light, beneath the plenteous fountain, and they applied fire to the hollowed channels, with smoking pitch.

By these and other violent means, the vapour penetrated to the very sources of the fountain; and {you}, ye waters, which, so lately, were able to rival the coldness of the Alps, yielded not {in heat} to the flames themselves. The two door-posts smoked with the flaming spray; and the gate, which was in vain left open for the fierce Sabines, was rendered impassable by this new-made fountain, until the warlike soldiers had assumed their arms. After Romulus had readily led them onward, and the Roman ground was covered with Sabine bodies, and was covered with its own {people,} and the accursed sword had mingled the blood of the son-in-law with the gore of the father-in-law; they determined that the war should end in peace, and that they would not contend with weapons to the last extremity, and that Tatius should share in the sovereignty.

Tatius was {now} dead, and thou, Romulus, wast giving laws in common to both peoples; when Mavors,[61] his helmet laid aside, in such words as these addressed the Parent of both Gods and men: “The time is {now} come, O father, (since the Roman state is established on a strong foundation, and is no longer dependent on the guardianship of but one), for thee to give the reward which was promised to me, and to thy grandson {so} deserving of it, and, removed from earth, to admit him to heaven. Thou saidst to me once, a council of the Gods being present, (for I remember it, and with grateful mind I remarked the affectionate speech), he shall be one, whom thou shalt raise to the azure heaven. Let the tenor of thy words be {now} performed.”

The all-powerful {God} nodded in assent, and he obscured the air with thick clouds, and alarmed the City with thunder and lightning. Gradivus knew that this was a signal given to him for the promised removal; and, leaning on his lance, he boldly mounted {behind} his steeds, laden with the blood-stained pole {of the chariot}, and urged them on with the lash of the whip; and descending along the steep air, he stood on the summit of the hill of the woody Palatium; and he took away the son of Ilia, that moment giving out his royal ordinances to his own Quirites. His mortal body glided through the yielding air; just as the leaden plummet, discharged from the broad sling, is wont to dissolve itself[62] in mid air. A beauteous appearance succeeded, one more suitable to the lofty couches[63] of heaven, and a form, such as that of Quirinus arrayed in his regal robe. His wife was lamenting him as lost; when the royal Juno commanded Iris to descend to Hersilia, along her bending path; and thus to convey to the bereft {wife} her commands:--

“O matron, the especial glory of the Latian and of the Sabine race; thou woman, most worthy to have been before the wife of a hero so great, {and} now of Quirinus; cease thy weeping, and if thou hast a wish to see thy husband, under my guidance repair to the grove which flourishes on the hill of Quirinus, and overshadows the temple of the Roman king.” Iris obeys, and gliding down to earth along her tinted bow, she addressed Hersilia in the words enjoined. She, with a modest countenance, hardly raising her eyes, replies, “O Goddess, (for {though} it is not in my power to say who thou art, {yet}, still it is clear that thou art a Goddess), lead me, O lead me on, and present to me the features of my husband. If the Fates should but allow me to be enabled once to behold these, I will confess that I have beheld Heaven.”

There was no delay; with the virgin daughter of Thaumas she ascended the hill of Romulus. There, a star falling from the skies, fell upon the earth; the hair of Hersilia set on fire from the blaze of this, ascended with the star to the skies. The founder of the Roman city received her with his well-known hands; and, together with her body, he changed her former name; and he called her Ora; which Goddess is still united to Quirmus.

[Footnote 56: *Ancient Teucer*.--Ver. 698. When Teucer returned home after the Trojan war, his father Telamon banished him, for not having revenged the death of his brother Ajax, which was imputed to Ulysses, as having been the occasion of it, by depriving him of the armour of Achilles. Thus exiled, he fled to Cyprus, where he founded the city of Salamis.]

[Footnote 57: *Norican fire*.--Ver. 712. Noricum was a district of Germany, between the Danube and the Alps. It is still famous for its excellent steel; the goodness of which, Pliny attributes partly to the superior quality of the ore, and partly to the temperature of the climate.]

[Footnote 58: *She was preceding*.--Ver. 746. It was customary for the relations, both male and female, to attend the body to the tomb or the funeral pile. Among the Greeks, the male relatives walked in front of the body, preceded by the head mourners, while the female relations walked behind. Among the Romans, all the relations walked behind the corpse; the males having their heads veiled, and the females with their heads bare and hair dishevelled, contrary to the usual practice of each sex.]

[Footnote 59: *An upper room*.--Ver. 752. Anaxarete went to an upper room, to look out into the street, as the apartments on the ground floor were rarely lighted with windows. The principal apartments on the ground floor received their light from above, and the smaller rooms there, usually derived their light from the larger ones; while on the other hand, the rooms on the upper floor were usually lighted with windows. The conduct of Anaxarete reminds us of that of Marcella, the hardhearted shepherdess, which so aroused the indignation of the amiable, but unfortunate, Don Quixotte.]

[Footnote 60: *His youthful form*.--Ver. 766-7. 'In juvenem rediit: et anilia demit Instrumenta sibi.' These words are thus translated by Clarke: 'He returned into a young fellow, and takes off his old woman's accoutrements from him.' We hear of the accoutrements of a cavalry officer much more frequently than we do those of an old woman.]

[Footnote 61: *Mavors*.--Ver. 806. Mavors, which is often used by the poets as a name of Mars, probably gave rise to the latter name as a contracted form of it.]

[Footnote 62: *To dissolve itself*.--Ver. 826. Not only, as we have already remarked, was it a notion among the ancients that the leaden plummet thrown from the sling grew red hot; but they occasionally went still further, and asserted that, from the rapidity of the motion, it melted and disappeared altogether. See note to Book II. l. 727.]

[Footnote 63: *Lofty couches*.--Ver. 827. The 'pulvinaria' were the cushions, or couches, placed in the temples of the Gods, for the use of the Divinities; which probably their priests (like their brethren who administered to Bel) did not omit to enjoy. At the festivals of the 'lectisternia,' the statues of the Gods were placed upon these cushions. The images of the Deities in the Roman Circus, were also placed on a 'pulvinar.']

## Riley's Explanation

We are not informed that the story of Iphis, hanging himself for love of Anaxarete, is based upon any actual occurrence, though probably it was, as Salamis is mentioned as the scene of it. The transformation of Anaxarete into a stone, seems only to be the usual metaphor employed by the poets to denote extreme insensibility.

Following the example of Homer, who represents the Gods as divided into the favourers of the Greeks and of the Trojans, he represents the Sabines as entering Rome, while Juno opens the gates for them; on which the Nymphs of the spot pour forth streams of flame, which oblige them to return. He tells the same story in the first Book of the Fasti, where Janus is introduced as taking credit to himself for doing what the Nymphs are here said to have effected.

As Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives some account of these transactions, on the authority of the ancient Roman historians, it will be sufficient here to give the substance thereof. Jealous of the increasing power of Romulus, the Sabines collected an army, and marched to attack his city. A virgin named Tarpeia, whose father commanded the guard, perceiving the golden bracelets which the Sabines wore on their arms, offered Tatius to open the gate to him, if he would give her these jewels. This condition being assented to, the enemy was admitted into the town; and Tarpeia, who is said by some writers only to have intended to disarm the Sabines, by demanding their bucklers, which she pretended were included in the original agreement, was killed on the

spot, by the violence of the blows; Tatius having ordered that they should be thrown on her head.

The same historian says, that opinions were divided as to the death of Romulus, and that many writers had written, that as he was haranguing his army, the sky became overcast, and a thick darkness coming on, it was followed by a violent tempest, in which he disappeared; on which it was believed that Mars had taken him up to heaven. Others assert that he was killed by the citizens, for having sent back the hostages of the Veientes without their consent, and for assuming an air of superiority, which their lawless spirits could ill brook. For these reasons, his officers assassinated him, and cut his body in pieces; each of them carrying off some portion, that it might be privately interred. According to Livy, great consternation was the consequence of his death; and the people beginning to suspect that the senators had committed the crime, Julius Proculus asserted that Romulus had appeared to him, and assured him of the fact of his having been Deified. His speech on the occasion is given by Livy, and Ovid relates the same story in the second Book of the Fasti. On this, the Roman people paid him divine honours as a God, under the name of Quirinus, one of the epithets of Mars. He had a chief priest, who was called ‘Flamen Quirinalis.’

His wife, Hersilia, also had divine honours paid to her, jointly with him, under the name of Ora, or ‘Horta.’ According to Plutarch, she had the latter name from the exhortation which she had given to the youths to distinguish themselves by courage.

## Book XV, Fable I (lines 1–59)

*Myscelos is warned, in a dream, to leave Argos, and to settle in Italy. When on the point of departing, he is seized under a law which forbids the Argives to leave the city without the permission of the magistrates. Being brought up for judgment, through a miracle he is acquitted. He retires to Italy, where he builds the city of Crotona.*

Meanwhile, one is being sought who can bear a weight of such magnitude, and can succeed a king so great. Fame, the harbinger of truth, destines the illustrious Numa for the sovereign power. He does not deem it sufficient to be acquainted with the ceremonials of the Sabine nation; in his expansive mind he conceives greater views, and inquires into the nature of things. 'Twas love of this pursuit, his country and cares left behind, that caused him to penetrate to the city of the stranger Hercules. To him, making the inquiry what founder it was that had erected a Grecian city on the Italian shores, one of the more aged natives, who was not unacquainted with {the history of} the past, thus replied:

"The son of Jove, enriched with the oxen of Iberia, is said to have reached the Lacinian shores, [1] from the ocean, after a prosperous voyage, and, while his herd was straying along the soft pastures, himself to have entered the abode of the great Croton, no inhospitable dwelling, and to have rested in repose after his prolonged labours, and to have said thus at departing: 'In the time of thy grandsons this shall be the site of a city;' and his promise was fulfilled. For there was a certain Myscelos, the son of Alemon, an Argive, most favoured by the Gods in those times. Lying upon him, as he is overwhelmed with the drowsiness of sleep, the club-bearer, {Hercules}, addresses him: 'Come, {now}, desert thy native abodes; go, {and} repair to the pebbly streams of the distant Æsar.'[2] And he utters threats, many and fearful, if he does not obey: after that, at once both sleep and the God depart. The son of Alemon arises, and ponders his recent vision in his thoughtful mind; and for a long time his opinions are divided among themselves. The Deity orders him to depart; the laws forbid his going; and death has been awarded as the punishment of him who attempts to leave his country.

"The brilliant Sun had {now} hidden his shining head in the ocean, and darkest Night had put forth her starry face, {when} the same God seemed to be present, and to give the same commands, and to utter threats, more numerous and more severe, if he does not obey. He was alarmed; and {now} he was also preparing to transfer his country's home to a new settlement, {when} a rumour arose in the city, and he was accused of holding the laws in contempt. And, when the accusation had first been made, and his crime was evident, proved without a witness, the accused, in neglected garb, raising his face and his hands towards the Gods above, says, 'Oh thou! for whom the twice six labours have created the privilege of the heavens, aid me, I pray;

for thou wast the cause of my offence.' It was the ancient custom, by means of white and black pebbles, with the one to condemn the accused, with the other to acquit them of the charge; and on this occasion thus was the sad sentence passed, and every black pebble was cast into the ruthless urn. Soon as it, being inverted, poured forth the pebbles to be counted, the colour of them all was changed from black to white, and the sentence, changed to a favourable one by the aid of Hercules, acquitted the son of Alemon.

"He gives thanks to the parent, the son of Amphitryon,[3] and with favouring gales sails over the Ionian sea, and passes by the Lacedæmonian Tarentum,[4] and Sybaris, and the Salentine Neæthus,[5] and the bay of Thurium,[6] and Temesa, and the fields of Iapyx;[7] and having with difficulty coasted along the spots which skirt these shores, he finds the destined mouth of the river Æsar; and, not far thence, a mound, beneath which the ground was covering the sacred bones of Croton. And there, on the appointed land, did he found his walls, and he transferred the name of him that was {there} entombed to his city. By established tradition, it was known that such was the original of that place, and of the city built on the Italian coasts."

[Footnote 1: *Lacinian shores*.--Ver. 13. Lacinium was a promontory of Italy, not far from Crotona.]

[Footnote 2: *Distant Æsar*.--Ver. 23. The Æsar was a little stream of Calabria, which flowed into the sea, near the city of Crotona.]

[Footnote 3: *Son of Amphitryon*.--Ver. 49. Hercules was the putative son of Amphitryon, king of Thebes, who was the husband of his mother Alcmena.]

[Footnote 4: *Tarentum*.--Ver. 50. Tarentum was a famous city of Calabria, said to have been founded by Taras, the son of Neptune. It was afterwards enlarged by Phalanthus, a Lacedæmonian, whence its present epithet.]

[Footnote 5: *Neæthus*.--Ver. 51. This was a river of the Salentine territory, near Crotona.]

[Footnote 6: *Thurium*.--Ver. 52. Thurium was a city of Calabria, which received its name from a fountain in its vicinity. It was also called Thuria and Thurion.]

[Footnote 7: *Fields of Iapyx*.--Ver. 52. Iapygia was a name which Calabria received from Iapyx, the son of Dædalus. There was also a city of Calabria, named Iapygia, and a promontory, called Iapygium.]

### Riley's Explanation

To the story here told of Micylus, or Myscelus, as most of the ancient writers call him, another one was superadded. Suidas, on the authority of the Scholiast of Aristophanes, says that

Myscelus, having consulted the oracle, concerning the colony which he was about to lead into a foreign country, was told that he must settle at the place where he should meet with rain in a clear sky, ἐξ αἰθρίας. His faith surmounting the apparent impossibility of having both fair and foul weather at the same moment, he obeyed the oracle, and put to sea; and, after experiencing many dangers, he landed in Italy. Being full of uncertainty where to fix his colony, he was reduced to great distress; on which his wife, whose name was Aithrias, with the view of comforting him, embraced him, and bedewed his face with her tears. He immediately adopted the presage, and understood the spot where he then was to be the site of his intended city.

Strabo says that Myscelus, who was so called from the smallness of his legs, designing to found a colony in a foreign land, arrived on the coast of Italy. Observing that the spot which the oracle had pointed out enjoyed a healthy climate, though the soil was not so fertile as in the adjacent plains, he went once more to consult the oracle; but was answered that he must not refuse what was offered him; an answer which was afterwards turned into a proverb. On this, he founded the city of Crotona, and another colony founded the city of Sybaris on the spot which he had preferred; a place which afterwards became infamous for its voluptuousness and profligacy.

## Book XV, Fables II and III (lines 60–478)

*Pythagoras comes to the city of Crotona, and teaches the principles of his philosophy. His reputation draws Numa Pompilius to hear his discourses; on which he expounds his principles, and, more especially, enlarges on the transmigration of the soul, and the practice of eating animal food.*

There was a man, a Samian by birth; but he had fled from both Samos and its rulers,[8] and, through hatred of tyranny, he was a voluntary exile. He too, mentally, held converse with the Gods, although far distant in the region of the heavens; and what nature refused to human vision, he viewed with the eyes of his mind. And when he had examined all things with his mind, and with watchful study, he gave them to be learned by the public; and he sought the crowds of people {as they sat} in silence, and wondered at the revealed origin of the vast universe, and the cause of things, and what nature {meant}, and what was God; whence {came} the snow, what was the cause of lightning; {whether it was} Jupiter, or whether the winds that thundered when the cloud was rent asunder; what it was that shook the earth; by what laws the stars took their course; and whatever {besides} lay concealed {from mortals}.

He, too, was the first to forbid animals to be served up at table, and he was the first that opened his lips, learned indeed, but still not obtaining credit, in such words as these: “Forbear, mortals, to pollute your bodies with {such} abominable food. There is the corn; there are the apples that bear down the branches by their weight, and {there are} the grapes swelling upon the vines; there are the herbs that are pleasant; there are some that can become tender, and be softened by {the action of} fire. The flowing milk, too, is not denied you, nor honey redolent of the bloom of the thyme. The lavish Earth yields her riches, and her agreable food, and affords dainties without slaughter and bloodshed. The beasts satisfy their hunger with flesh; and yet not all of them; for the horse, and the sheep, and the herds subsist on grass. But those whose disposition is cruel and fierce, the Armenian tigers, and the raging lions, and the bears together with the wolves, revel in their diet with blood. Alas! what a crime is it, for entrails to be buried in entrails, and for one ravening body to grow fat on {other} carcases crammed {into} it; and for one living creature to exist through the death of another living creature! And does, forsooth! amid so great an abundance, which the earth, that best of mothers, produces, nothing delight you but to gnaw with savage teeth the sad {produce of your} wounds, and to revive the habits of the Cyclops? And can you not appease the hunger of a voracious and ill-regulated stomach unless you first destroy another? But that age of old, to which we have given the name of ‘Golden,’ was blest in the produce of the trees, and in the herbs which the earth produces, and it did not pollute the mouth with blood.

“Then, both did the birds move their wings in safety in the air, and the hare without fear wander in the midst of the fields; then its own credulity had not suspended the fish from the hook; every place was without treachery, and in dread of no injury, and was full of peace. Afterwards, {some one}, no good adviser[9] (whoever among mortals he might have been), envied this simple food, and engulphed in his greedy paunch victuals made from a carcase; ’twas he that opened the path to wickedness; and I can believe that the steel, {since} stained with blood, first grew warm from the slaughter of wild beasts. And that had been sufficient. I confess that the bodies {of animals} that seek our destruction are put to death with no breach of the sacred laws; but, although they might be put to death, yet they were not to be eaten as well. Then this wickedness proceeded still further; and the swine is believed to have deserved death as the first victim, because it grubbed up the seeds with its turned-up snout, and cut short the hopes of the year. Having gnawed the vine, the goat was led[10] for slaughter to the altars of the avenging Bacchus. Their own faults were the ruin of the two. But why have you deserved this, ye sheep? a harmless breed, and born for the service of man; who carry the nectar in your full udders; who afford your wool as soft coverings for us, and who assist us more by your life than by your death. Why have the oxen deserved this, an animal without guile and deceit, innocent, harmless, born to endure labour? In fact, the man is ungrateful, and not worthy of the gifts of the harvest, who could, just after taking off the weight of the curving plough, slaughter the tiller of his fields; who could strike, with the axe, that neck worn bare with labour, through which he had so oft turned up the hard ground, {and} had afforded so many a harvest.

“And it is not enough for such wickedness to be committed; they have imputed to the Gods themselves this abomination; and they believe that a Deity in the heavens can rejoice in the slaughter of the laborious ox. A victim free from a blemish, and most beauteous in form (for ’tis being sightly that brings destruction), adorned with garlands and gold, is placed upon the altars, and, in its ignorance, it hears one praying, and sees the corn, which it has helped to produce, placed on its forehead between its horns; and, felled, it stains with its blood the knives perhaps before seen by it in the limpid water. Immediately, they examine the entrails snatched from its throbbing breast, and in them they seek out the intentions of the Deities. Whence comes it that men have so great a hankering for forbidden food? Do you presume to feed {on flesh}, O race of mortals? Do it not, I beseech you; and give attention to my exhortations. And when you shall be presenting the limbs of slaughtered oxen to your palates, know and consider that you are devouring your {tillers of the ground}. And since a God impels me to speak, I will duly obey the God that {so} prompts me to speak; and I will pronounce my own Delphic {warnings}, and disclose the heavens themselves; and I will reveal the oracles of the Divine will. I will sing of wondrous things, never investigated by the intellects of the ancients, and {things} which have long lain concealed. It delights me to range among the lofty stars; it delights me, having left the earth and this sluggish spot {far behind}, to be borne amid the clouds, and to be supported on

the shoulders of the mighty Atlas; and to look down from afar on minds wandering {in uncertainty}, and devoid of reason; and so to advise them alarmed and dreading extinction, and to unfold the range of things ordained by fate.

“O race! stricken by the alarms of icy death, why do you dread Styx? why the shades, why empty names, the stock subjects of the poets, and the atonements of an imaginary world? Whether the funeral pile consumes your bodies with flames, or old age with gradual dissolution, believe that they cannot suffer any injury. Souls are not subject to death; and having left their former abode, they ever inhabit new dwellings, and, {there} received, live on.

“I, myself, for I remember it, in the days of the Trojan war, was Euphorbus,[11] the son of Panthoüs, in whose opposing breast once was planted the heavy spear of the younger son of Atreus. I lately recognised the shield, {once} the burden of my left arm, in the temple of Juno, at Argos, the realm of Abas. All things are {ever} changing; nothing perishes. The soul wanders about and comes from that spot to this, from this to that, and takes possession of any limbs whatever; it both passes from the beasts to human bodies, and {so does} our {soul} into the beasts; and in no {lapse} of time does it perish. And as the pliable wax is moulded into new forms, and no {longer} abides as it was {before}, nor preserves the same shape, but yet is still the same {wax}, so I tell you that the soul is ever the same, but passes into different forms. Therefore, that natural affection may not be vanquished by the craving of the appetite, cease, I warn you, to expel the souls of your kindred {from their bodies} by this dreadful slaughter; and let not blood be nourished with blood.

“And, since I am {now} borne over the wide ocean, and I have given my full sails to the winds, there is nothing in all the world that continues in the same state. All things are flowing {onward},[12] and every shape is assumed in a fleeting course. Even time itself glides on with a constant progress, no otherwise than a river. For neither can the river, nor the fleeting hour stop in its course; but, as wave is impelled by wave, and the one before is pressed on by that which follows, and {itself} presses on that before it; so do the moments similarly fly on, and similarly do they follow, and they are ever renewed. For the moment which was before, is past; and that which was not, {now} exists; and every minute is replaced. You see, too, the night emerge and proceed onward to the dawn, and this brilliant light of the day succeed the dark night. Nor is there the same appearance in the heavens, when all things in their weariness lie in the midst of repose, and when Lucifer is coming forth on his white steed; and, again, there is another appearance, when {Aurora}, the daughter of Pallas, preceding the day, tints the world about to be delivered to Phœbus. The disk itself of {that} God, when it is rising from beneath the earth, is of ruddy colour in the morning, and when it is hiding beneath the earth it is of a ruddy colour. At its height it is of brilliant whiteness, because there the nature of the æther is purer, and far away, he avoids {all} infection from the earth. Nor can there ever be the same or a similar appearance

of the nocturnal Diana; and always that of the present day is less than on the morrow, if she is on the increase; {but} greater if she is contracting her orb.

“And further. Do you not see the year, affording a resemblance of our life, assume four {different} appearances? for, in early Spring, it is mild, and {like} a nursling, and greatly resembling the age of youth. Then, the blade is shooting, and void of strength, it swells, and is flaccid, and delights the husbandman in his expectations. Then, all things are in blossom, and the genial meadow smiles with the tints of its flowers; and not as yet is there any vigour in the leaves. The year {now} waxing stronger, after the Spring, passes into the Summer; and in its youth it becomes robust. And indeed no season is there more vigorous, or more fruitful, or which glows with greater warmth. Autumn follows, the ardour of youth {now} removed, ripe, and placed between youth and old age, moderate in his temperature, with a {few} white hairs sprinkled over his temples. Then comes aged Winter, repulsive with his tremulous steps, either stript of his locks, or white with those which he has.

“Our own bodies too are changing always and without any intermission, and to-morrow we shall not be what we were or what we {now} are. The time was, when only as embryos, and the earliest hope of human beings, we lived in the womb of the mother. Nature applied her skilful hands, and willed not that our bodies should be tortured {by} being shut up within the entrails of the distended parent, and brought us forth from our dwelling into the vacant air. Brought to light, the infant lies without {any} strength; soon, {like} a quadruped, it uses its limbs after the manner of the brutes; and by degrees it stands upright, shaking, and with knees still unsteady, the sinews being supported by some assistance. Then he becomes strong and swift, and passes over the hours of youth; and the years of middle age, too, now past, he glides adown the steep path of declining age. This undermines and destroys the robustness of former years; and Milo, [13] {now} grown old, weeps when he sees the arms, which equalled those of Hercules in the massiveness of the solid muscles, hang weak and exhausted. The daughter of Tyndarus weeps, too, as she beholds in her mirror the wrinkles of old age, and enquires of herself why it is that she was twice ravished. Thou, Time, the consumer of {all} things, and thou, hateful Old Age, {together} destroy all things; and, by degrees ye consume each thing, decayed by the teeth of age, with a slow death.

“These things too, which we call elements, are not of unchanging duration; pay attention, and I will teach you what changes they undergo.

“The everlasting universe contains four elementary bodies. Two of these, {namely}, earth and water, are heavy, and are borne downwards by their weight; and as many are devoid of weight, and air, and fire still purer than air, nothing pressing them, seek the higher regions. Although these are separated in space, yet all things are made from them, and are resolved into them.

Both the earth dissolving distils into flowing water; the water, too, evaporating, departs in the breezes and the air; its weight being removed again, the most subtle air shoots upwards into the fires {of the æther} on high. Thence do they return back again, and the same order is unravelled; for fire becoming gross, passes into dense air; this {changes} into water, and earth is formed of the water made dense. Nor does its own form remain to each; and nature, the renewer of {all} things, re-forms one shape from another. And, believe me, in this universe so vast, nothing perishes; but it varies and changes its appearance; and to begin to be something different from what it was before, is called being born; and to cease to be the same thing, {is to be said} to die. Whereas, perhaps, those things are transferred hither, and these things thither; yet, in the whole, all things {ever} exist.

"For my part, I cannot believe that anything lasts long under the same form. 'Twas thus, ye ages, that ye came down to the iron from the gold; 'tis thus, that thou hast so often changed the lot of {various} places. I have beheld that {as} sea, which once had been the most solid earth. I have seen land made from the sea; and far away from the ocean the sea-shells lay, and old anchors were found {there} on the tops of the mountains. That which was a plain, a current of water has made into a valley, and by a flood the mountain has been levelled into a plain; the ground that was swampy is parched with dry sand; and places which have endured drought, are wet with standing pools. Here nature has opened fresh springs, but there she has shut them up; and rivers have burst forth, aroused by ancient earthquakes; or, vanishing, they have subsided.

"Thus, after the Lycus[14] has been swallowed up by a chasm in the earth, it burst forth far thence, and springs up afresh at another mouth. Thus the great Erasinus[15] is at one time swallowed up, and then flowing with its stream concealed, is cast up again on the Argive plains. They say, too, that the Mysus, tired of its spring and of its former banks, now flows in another direction, {as} the Caicus. The Amenanus,[16] too, at one time flows, rolling along the Sicilian sands, {and} at another is dry, its springs being stopped up. Formerly, {the water of} the Anigros[17] was used for drinking; it now pours out water which you would decline to touch; since, (unless all credit must be denied to the poets), the {Centaurs}, the double-limbed mortals, there washed the wounds which the bow of the club-bearing Hercules had made. And what besides? Does not the Hypanis[18] too, which before was sweet, rising from the Scythian mountains, become impregnated with bitter salts? Antissa,[19] Pharos,[20] and Phœnician Tyre,[21] were once surrounded by waves; no one of these is now an island. The ancient inhabitants had Leucas[22] annexed to the continent; now the sea surrounds it. Zancle,[23] too, is said to have been united to Italy, until the sea cut off the neighbouring region, and repelled the land with its waves {flowing} between.

"Should you seek Helice and Buris,[24] cities of Achaia, you will find them beneath the waves, and the sailors are still wont to point out {these} levelled towns, with their walls buried under

water.

“There is a high hill near Trœzen of Pittheus, without any trees, once a very level surface of a plain, {but} now a hill; for (frightful to tell) the raging power[25] of the winds, pent up in dark caverns, desiring to find some vent and having long struggled in vain to enjoy a freer air, as there was no opening in all their prison and it was not pervious to their blasts, swelled out the extended earth, just as the breath of the mouth is wont to inflate a bladder, or the hide[26] stripped from the two-horned goat. That swelling remained on the spot, and {still} preserves the appearance of a high hill, and has grown hard in length of time. Though many other {instances} may occur, either heard of by, or known to, yourselves, {yet} I will mention a few more. And besides, does not water, as well, both produce and receive new forms? In the middle of the day, thy waters, horned Ammon,[27] are frozen, at the rising and at the setting {of the sun} they are warm. On applying its waters, Athamanis[28] is said to kindle wood when the waning moon has shrunk into her smallest orb. The Ciconians have a river,[29] which when drunk of, turns the entrails into stone, and lays {a covering of} marble on things that are touched by it. The Crathis[30] and the Sybaris adjacent to it, in our own country, make the hair similar {in hue} to amber and gold.

“And, what is still more wonderful, there are some streams which are able to change, not only bodies, but even the mind. By whom has not Salmacis,[31] with its obscene waters, been heard of? {Who has not heard}, too, of that lake of Æthiopia,[32] of which, if any body drinks with his mouth, he either becomes mad, or falls into a sleep wondrous for its heaviness? Whoever quenches his thirst from the Clitorian spring[33] hates wine, and in his sobriety takes pleasure in pure water. Whether it is that there is a virtue in the water, the opposite of heating wine, or whether, as the natives tell us, after the son of Amithaon,[34] by his charms and his herbs, had delivered the raving daughters of Prœtus from the Furies, he threw the medicines for the mind in that stream; and a hatred of wine remained in those waters.

“The river Lyncestis[35] flows unlike that {stream} in its effect; for as soon as any one has drunk of it with immoderate throat, he reels, just as if he had been drinking unmixed wine. There is a place in Arcadia, (the ancients called it Pheneos,)[36] suspicious for the twofold nature of its water. Stand in dread of it at night; if drunk of in the night time, it is injurious; in the daytime, it is drunk of without any ill effects. So lakes and rivers have, some, one property, and some another. There was a time when Ortygia[37] was floating on the waves, now it is fixed. The Argo dreaded the Symplegades tossed by the assaults of the waves dashing against them; they now stand immoveable, and resist {the attacks of} the winds.

“Nor will Ætna, which burns with its sulphureous furnaces, always be a fiery {mountain}; nor yet was it always fiery. For, if the earth is an animal, and is alive, and has lungs that breathe

forth flames in many a place, it may change the passages for its breathing, and oft as it is moved, may close these caverns {and} open others; or if the light winds are shut up in its lowermost caverns, and strike rocks against rocks, and matter that contains the elements of flame, {and} it takes fire at the concussion, the winds {once} calmed, the caverns will become cool; or, if the bituminous qualities take fire, or yellow sulphur is being dried up with a smouldering smoke, still, when the earth shall no longer give food and unctuous fuel to the flame, its energies being exhausted in length of time, and when nutriment shall be wanting to its devouring nature, it will not {be able to} endure hunger, and left destitute, it will desert its flames.

"The story is, that in the far Northern Pallene[38] there are persons, who are wont to have their bodies covered with light feathers, when they have nine times entered the Tritonian lake. For my part I do not believe it; {but} the Scythian women, as well, having their limbs sprinkled with poison, are said to employ the same arts. But if we are to give any credit[39] to things proved {by experience}, do you not see that whatever bodies are consumed by length of time, or by dissolving heat, are changed into small animals? Come too, bury some choice bullocks {just} slain, it is a thing well ascertained by experience, {that} flower-gathering bees are produced promiscuously from the putrefying entrails. These, after the manner of their producers, inhabit the fields, delight in toil, and labour in hope. The warlike steed,[40] buried in the ground, is the source of the hornet. If you take off the bending claws from the crab of the sea-shore, {and} bury the rest in the earth, a scorpion will come forth from the part {so} buried, and will threaten with its crooked tail.

"The silkworms, too, that are wont to cover the leaves with their white threads, a thing observable by husbandmen, change their forms into that of the deadly moth.[41] Mud contains seed that generate green frogs; and it produces them deprived of feet;[42] soon it gives them legs adapted for swimming; and that the same may be fitted for long leaps, the length of the hinder ones exceeds {that of} the fore legs. And it is not a cub[43] which the bear produces at the moment of birth, but a mass of flesh hardly alive. By licking, the mother forms it into limbs, and brings it into a shape, such as she herself has. Do you not see, that the offspring of the honey bees, which the hexagonal cell conceals, are produced without limbs, and that they assume both feet and wings {only} after a time. Unless he knew it was the case, could any one suppose it possible that the bird of Juno, which carries stars on its tail, and the {eagle}, the armour-bearer of Jove, and the doves of Cytherea, and all the race of birds, are produced from the middle portion of an egg? There are some who believe that human marrow changes into a serpent,[44] when the spine has putrefied in the enclosed sepulchre.

"But these {which I have named} derive their origin from other particulars; there is one bird which renews and reproduces itself. The Assyrians call it the Phœnix. It lives not on corn or grass, but on drops of frankincense, and the juices of the amomum. This {bird}, when it has

completed the five ages of its life, with its talons and its crooked beak constructs for itself a nest in the branches of a holm-oak, or on the top of a quivering palm. As soon as it has strewed in this cassia and ears of sweet spikenard and bruised cinnamon with yellow myrrh, it lays itself down on it, and finishes its life in the midst of odours. They say that thence, from the body of its parent, is reproduced a little Phœnix, which is destined to live as many years. When time has given it strength, and it is able to bear the weight, it lightens the branches of the lofty tree of the burden of the nest, and dutifully carries both its own cradle and the sepulchre of its parent; and, having reached the city of Hyperion through the yielding air, it lays it down before the sacred doors in the temple of Hyperion.

"And if there is any wondrous novelty in these things, {still more} may we be surprised that the hyæna changes its sex,[45] and that the one which has just now, as a female, submitted to the embrace of the male, is now become a male itself. That animal, too, which feeds upon[46] the winds and the air, immediately assumes, from its contact, any colour whatever. Conquered India presented her lynxes to Bacchus crowned with clusters; {and}, as they tell, whatever the bladder of these discharges is changed into stone,[47] and hardens by contact with the air. So coral, too, as soon as it has come up to the air becomes hard; beneath the waves it was a soft plant.[48] "The day will fail me, and Phœbus will bathe his panting steeds in the deep sea, before I can embrace in my discourse all things that are changed into new forms. So in lapse of time, we see nations change, and these gaining strength, {while} those are falling. So Troy was great, both in her riches and her men, and for ten years could afford so much blood; {whereas}, now laid low, she only shows her ancient ruins, and, instead of her wealth, {she points at} the tombs of her ancestors. Sparta was famed;[49] great Mycenæ flourished; so, too, the citadel of Cecrops, and that of Amphion. {Now} Sparta is a contemptible spot; lofty Mycenæ is laid low. What now is Thebes, the city of Œdipus, but a {mere} story? What remains of Athens, the city of Pandion, but its name?

"Now, too, there is a report that Dardanian Rome is rising; which, close to the waters of Tiber that rises in the Apennines, is laying the foundations of her greatness beneath a vast structure. She then, in her growth, is changing her form, and will one day be the mistress of the boundless earth. So they say that the soothsayers, and the oracles, revealers of destiny, declare; and, so far as I recollect, Helenus, the son of Priam, said to Æneas, as he was lamenting, and in doubt as to his safety, when {now} the Trojan state was sinking, 'Son of a Goddess, if thou dost thyself well understand the presentiment of my mind, Troy shall not, thou being preserved, entirely fall. The flames and the sword shall afford thee a passage. Thou shalt go, and, together with thee, thou shalt bear ruined Pergamus; until a foreign soil, more friendly than thy native land, shall be the lot of Troy and thyself. Even now do I see that our Phrygian posterity are destined {to build} a city, so great as neither now exists, nor will exist, nor has been seen in former times. Through a

long lapse of ages, other distinguished men shall make it powerful, but one born[50] of the blood of Iülus shall make it the mistress of the world. After the earth shall have enjoyed his presence, the æthereal abodes shall gain him, and heaven shall be his destination.' Remembering it, I call to mind that Helenus prophesied this to Æneas, who bore the Penates {from Troy}; and I rejoice that my kindred walls are rising apace, and that to such good purpose for the Phrygians the Pelasgians conquered.

"But that we may not range afar with steeds that forget to hasten to the goal; the heavens, and whatever there is beneath them, and the earth, and whatever is upon it, change their form. We too, {who are} a portion of the universe, (since we are not only bodies, but are fleeting souls as well, and can enter into beasts {as our} abode, and be hidden within the breasts of the cattle), should allow those bodies which may contain the souls of our parents, or of our brothers, or of those allied with us by some tie, or of men at all events, to be safe and unmolested; and we ought not to fill[51] our entrails with victuals fit for Thyestes. How greatly he disgraces himself, how in his impiety does he prepare himself for shedding human blood, who cuts the throat of the calf with the knife, and gives a deaf ear to its lowings! or who can kill the kid as it sends forth cries like those of a child; or who can feed upon the bird to which he himself has given food. How much is there wanting in these instances for downright criminality? A {short} step {only} is there thence {to it}!

"Let the bull plough, or let it owe its death to aged years; let the sheep furnish us a defence against the shivering Boreas; let the well-fed she-goats afford their udders to be pressed by the hand. Away with your nets, and your springes and snares and treacherous contrivances; deceive not the bird with the bird-limed twig; deceive not the deer with the dreaded feather foils;[52] and do not conceal the barbed hooks in the deceitful bait. If any thing is noxious, destroy it, but even then only destroy it. Let your appetites abstain from it for food, and let them consume {a more} befitting sustenance."

[Footnote 8: *And its rulers*.--Ver. 61. Pythagoras is said to have fled from the tyranny of Polycrates, the king of Samos.]

[Footnote 9: *No good adviser*.--Ver. 103. Clarke translates 'Non utilis auctor,' 'Some good-for-nothing introducer.']

[Footnote 10: *The goat is led*.--Ver 114. See the Fasti, Book I. l. 361.]

[Footnote 11: *Was Euphorbus*.--Ver. 161. Diogenes Laërtius, in the life of Pythagoras, says that Pythagoras affirmed, that he was, first, Æthalides; secondly, Euphorbus, which he proved by recognizing his shield hung up among the spoil in the temple of Juno, at Argos; next, Hermotimus; then, Pyrrhus and fifthly, Pythagoras.]

[Footnote 12: *Flowing onward*.--Ver. 178. 'Cuncta fluunt' is translated by Clarke, 'All things are in a flux.']

[Footnote 13: *Milo*.--Ver. 229. Milo, of Crotona, was an athlete of such strength that he was said to be able to kill a bull with a blow of his fist, and then to carry it with ease on his shoulders, and afterwards to devour it. His hands being caught within the portions of the trunk of a tree, which he was trying to cleave asunder, he became a prey to wild beasts.]

[Footnote 14: *Lycus*.--Ver. 273. There were several rivers of this name. The one here referred to was also called by the name of Marsyas, and flowed past the city of Laodicea, in Lydia.]

[Footnote 15: *Erasinus*.--Ver. 276. This was a river of Arcadia, which running out of the Stymphalian marsh, under the name of Stymphalus, disappeared in the earth, and rose again in the Argive territory, under the name of Erasinus.]

[Footnote 16: *Amenanus*.--Ver. 279. This was a little river of Sicily, rising in Mount Ætna, and falling into the sea near the city of Catania.]

[Footnote 17: *Anigros*.--Ver. 282. The Anigros, flowing from the mountain of Lapitha, in Arcadia, had waters of a fetid smell, in which no fish could exist. Pausanias thinks that this smell proceeded from the soil, and not the water. He adds, that some said that Chiron, others that Polenor, when wounded by the arrow of Hercules, washed the wound in the water of this river, which became impure from its contact with the venom of the Hydra.]

[Footnote 18: *Hypanis*.--Ver. 285. Now the Bog. It falls into the Black Sea.]

[Footnote 19: *Antissa*.--Ver. 287. This island, in the Ægean Sea, was said to have been formerly united to Lesbos.]

[Footnote 20: *Pharos*.--Ver. 287. According to Herodotus, this island was once a whole day's sail from the main land of Egypt. In later times, having been increased by the mud discharged by the Nile, it was united to the shore by a bridge.]

[Footnote 21: *Tyre*.--Ver. 288. Tyre once stood on an island, separated from the shore by a strait, seven hundred paces in width. Alexander the Great, when besieging it, united it to the main land by a causeway. This, however, does not aid the argument of Pythagoras, who intends to recount the changes wrought by nature, and not by the hand of man. Besides, it is not easy to see how Pythagoras could refer to a fact which took place several hundred years after his death.]

[Footnote 22: *Leucas*.--Ver. 289. The island of Leucas was formerly a peninsula, on the coast of Acarnania.]

[Footnote 23: *Zancle*.--Ver. 290. Under this name he means the whole of the isle of Sicily, which was supposed to have once joined the shores of Italy.]

[Footnote 24: *Helice and Buris*.--Ver. 293. We learn from Pliny the Elder and Orosius, that Helice and Buris, cities of Achaia at the mouth of the Corinthian gulf, were swallowed up by an earthquake, and that their remains could be seen in the sea. A similar fate attended Port Royal, in the island of Jamaica, in the year 1692. Its houses are said to be still visible beneath the waves.]

[Footnote 25: *The raging power*.--Ver. 299. Pausanias tells us, that in the time of Antigonus, king of Macedonia, warm waters burst from the earth, through the action of subterranean fires, near the city of Trœzen. Perhaps the 'tumulus' here mentioned sprang up at the same time.]

[Footnote 26: *Or the hide*.--Ver. 305. He alludes to the goat-skins, which formed the 'utres,' or leathern bottles, for wine and oil.]

[Footnote 27: *Horned Ammon*.--Ver. 309. The lake of Ammon, in Libya, which is here referred to, is thus described by Quintius Curtius (Book IV. c. 7)-- 'There is also another grove at Ammon; in the middle it contains a fountain, which they call 'the water of the Sun.' At daybreak it is tepid; at mid-day, when the heat is intense, it is ice cold. As the evening approaches, it grows warmer; at midnight, it boils and bubbles; and as the morning approaches, its midnight heat goes off.' Jupiter was worshipped in its vicinity, under the form of a ram.]

[Footnote 28: *Athamanis*.--Ver. 311. This wonderful fountain was said to be in Dodona, the grove sacred to Jupiter.]

[Footnote 29: *Have a river*.--Ver. 313. Possibly the Hebrus is here meant. The petrifying qualities of some streams is a fact well known to naturalists.]

[Footnote 30: *The Crathis*.--Ver. 315. Crathis and Sybaris were streams of Calabria, flowing into the sea, near Crotona. Euripides and Strabo tell the same story of the river Crathis. Pliny the Elder, in his thirty-second Book, says-- 'Theophrastus tells us that Crathis, a river of the Thurians, produces whiteness, whereas the Sybaris causes blackness, in sheep and cattle. Men, too, are sensible of this difference; for those who drink of the Sybaris, become more swarthy and hardy, with the hair curling; while those who drink of the Crathis become fairer, and more effeminate with the hair straight.']

[Footnote 31: *Salmacis*.--Ver. 319. See Book IV. l. 285.]

[Footnote 32: *Lake of Æthiopia*.--Ver. 320. Possibly these may be the waters of trial, mentioned by Porphyry, as being used among the Indians. He says, that, according to their influence on the

person accused, when drunk of by him, he was acquitted or condemned.]

[Footnote 33: *Clitorian spring*.--Ver. 322. Clitorium was a town of Arcadia. Pliny the Elder, quoting from Varro, mentions the quality here referred to.]

[Footnote 34: *Son of Amithaon*.--Ver. 325. Melampus, the physician, the son of Amithaon, cured Mera, Euryale, Lysippe, and Iphianassa, the daughters of Prœtus, king of Argos, of madness, which Venus was said to have inflicted on them for boasting of their superior beauty. Their derangement consisted in the fancy that they were changed into cows. Melampus afterwards married Iphianassa. He was said to have employed the herb hellebore in the cure, which thence obtained the name of 'melampodium.']

[Footnote 35: *Lyncestis*.--Ver. 329. The Lyncesti were the people of the town of Lyncus, in Epirus. This stream flowed past that place.]

[Footnote 36: *Pheneos*.--Ver. 332. Pheneos was the name of a town of Arcadia, afterwards called 'Nonacris.' In its neighbourhood, according to Pausanias, was a rock, from which water oozed drop by drop, which the Greeks called 'the water of Styx.' At certain periods it was said to be fatal to men and cattle, to break vessels with which it came in contact, and to melt all metals. Ovid is the only author that mentions the difference in its qualities by day and by night.]

[Footnote 37: *Ortygia*.--Ver. 337. Ortygia, or Deloe, was said to have floated till it was made fast by Jupiter as a resting-place for Latona, when pregnant with Apollo and Diana. The Symplegades, or Cyanean Islands, were also said to have formerly floated.]

[Footnote 38: *Far Northern Pallene*.--Ver. 356. Pallene was the name of a mountain and a city of Thrace. Tritonis was a lake in the neighbourhood. Vibius Sequester says, 'When a person has nine times bathed himself in the Tritonian lake, in Thrace, he is changed into a bird.' The continuous fall of fleecy snow in that neighbourhood is supposed by some to have given rise to the story.]

[Footnote 39: *Give any credit*.--Ver. 361. This was a very common notion among the ancients. See the story of Aristæus and the recovery of his bees, in the Fourth Book of Virgil's Georgics, I. 281-314. It is also told by Ovid in the Fasti, Book I. l. 377.]

[Footnote 40: *The warlike steed*.--Ver. 368. Pliny the Elder, Nicander, and Varro state that bees and hornets are produced from the carcase of the horse. Pliny also says, that beetles are generated by the putrefying carcase of the ass.]

[Footnote 41: *Deadly moth*.--Ver. 374. Pliny, in the twenty-eighth Book of his History, says, 'The moth, too, that flies at the flame of the lamp, is numbered among the bad potions,' evidently

alluding to their being used in philtres or incantations. There is a kind called the death's head moth; but it is so called simply from the figure of a skull, which appears very exactly represented on its body, and not on account of any noxious qualities known to be inherent in it.]

[Footnote 42: *Deprived of feet*.--Ver. 376. He alludes to frogs when in the tadpole state.]

[Footnote 43: *Not a cub*.--Ver. 379. This was long the common belief. Pliny says, speaking of the cub of the bear, 'These are white and shapeless lumps of flesh, a little bigger than mice, without eyes, and without hair; the claws, however, are prominent. These the dams by degrees reduce to shape.']

[Footnote 44: *Into a serpent*.--Ver. 390. Pliny tells the same story; and Antigonus (on Miracles, ch. 96) goes still further, and says, that the persons to whom this happens, after death, are able to smell the snakes while they are yet alive. The fiction, very probably, was invented with the praiseworthy object of securing freedom from molestation for the bones of the dead.]

[Footnote 45: *Changes its sex*.--Ver. 408. Pliny mentions it as a vulgar belief that the hyæna is male and female in alternate years. Aristotle took the pains to confute this silly notion.]

[Footnote 46: *Which feeds upon*.--Ver. 411. The idea that the chameleon subsists on wind and air, arose from the circumstance of its sitting with its mouth continually open, that it may catch flies and small insects, its prey. That it changes colour according to the hue of the surrounding objects, is a fact well known. It receives its name from the Greek χάμαι λέων, 'The lion on the ground.']

[Footnote 47: *Changed into stone*.--Ver. 415. Pliny says, that this becomes hard, and turns into gems, like the carbuncle, being of a fiery tint, and that the stone has the name of 'lyncurium.' Beckmann (Hist. Inventions) thinks that this was probably the jacinth, or hyacinth, while others suppose it to have been the tourmaline, or transparent amber.]

[Footnote 48: *A soft plant*.--Ver. 417. Modern improvement in knowledge has shown that coral is not a plant, but an animal substance.]

[Footnote 49: *Sparta was famed*.--Ver. 426-30. These lines are looked upon by many Commentators as spurious, as they are omitted in most MSS. Besides, all these cities were flourishing in the time of Pythagoras. If they are genuine, Ovid is here guilty of a series of anachronisms.]

[Footnote 50: *But one born*.--Ver. 447. This was Octavius, the adopted son of Julius Cæsar. According to Suetonius, he traced his descent, through his mother, from Ascanius or Iülus.]

[Footnote 51: *Ought not to fill*.--Ver. 462. Clarke's quaint translation is, 'And let us not cram our g--ts with Thyestian victuals.']

[Footnote 52: *Feather foils*.--Ver. 475. He alludes to the 'formido;' which was made of coloured feathers, and was used to scare the deer into the toils.]

## Riley's Explanation

The Poet having now exhausted nearly all the transformations which ancient history afforded him, proceeds to enlist in the number some of the real phenomena of nature, together with some imaginary ones. As Pythagoras was considered to have pursued metaphysical studies more deeply, perhaps, than any other of the ancient philosophers, Ovid could not have introduced a personage more fitted to discuss these subjects. Having travelled through Asia, it is supposed that Pythagoras passed into Italy, and settled at Crotona, to promulgate there the philosophical principles which he had acquired in his travels through Egypt and Asia Minor.

The Pythagorean philosophy was well-suited for the purpose of mingling its doctrines with the fabulous narratives of the Poet, as it consisted, in great part, of the doctrine of an endless series of transformations. Its main features may be reduced to two general heads; the first of which was the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, or continual transmigration of souls from one body into another. Pythagoras is supposed not to have originated this doctrine, but to have received it from the Egyptians, by whose priesthood there is little doubt that it was generally promulgated. Some writers have suggested that this transmigration was only taught by Pythagoras in a metaphorical sense; as, for instance, when he said that the souls of men were transferred to beasts, it was only to teach us that irregular passions render us brutes; on examination, however, we shall find that there is no ground to doubt that he intended his doctrines to be understood according to the literal meaning of his words; indeed, the more strongly to enforce his doctrine by a personal illustration, he was in the habit of promulgating that he remembered to have been Euphorbus, at the time of the siege of Troy, and that his soul, after several other transmigrations, had at last entered the body which it then inhabited, under the name of Pythagoras. In consequence of this doctrine, it was a favourite tenet of his followers to abstain from eating the flesh of animals, for fear of unconsciously devouring some friend or kinsman.

The second feature of this philosophy consisted in the elucidation of the changes that happen in the physical world, a long series of which is here set forth by the Poet; truth being mingled at random with fiction. While some of his facts are based upon truth, others seem to have only emanated from the fertile invention of the travellers of those days; of the latter kind are the stories of the river of Thrace, whose waters petrified those who drank of it; the fountains that kindled wood, that caused a change of sex, that created an aversion to wine, that transformed men into birds, and fables of a similar nature; such, too, are those stories which were generally

believed by even the educated men of antiquity, but which the wisdom of modern times has long since shown to be utterly baseless, as, for instance, that bees grew from the entrails of the ox, and hornets from those of the horse. The principle of Pythagoras, that everything is continually changing and that nothing perishes, is true to a certain extent; but in his times, and even in those of Ovid, philosophy was not sufficiently advanced to speak with precision on the subject, and to discover the true boundary between truth and fiction.

## Book XV, Fables IV, V and VI (lines 479–621)

*Egeria, the wife of Numa, is inconsolable after his death, and is changed into a fountain. The horses of Hippolytus being frightened by a sea-monster, he is killed by being thrown from his chariot, and becomes a God, under the name of Virbius. Tages, the Diviner, arises out of a clod of earth. The lance of Romulus is changed into a cornel-tree. Cippus becomes horned, and goes into voluntary banishment, rather than his country should be deprived of its liberty by his means.*

With his mind cultivated with precepts such as these and others, they say that Numa returned to his country, and, being voluntarily invited,[53] received the sovereignty of the Roman people. Blest with a Nymph for his wife, and the Muses for his guides, he taught the rites of sacrifice, and brought over to the arts of peace a race inured to savage warfare. After, full of years, he had finished his reign and his life, the Latian matrons and the people and the Senators lamented Numa at his death. But his wife, leaving the city, lay hid, concealed in the thick groves of the valley of Aricia, and by her groans and lamentations disturbed the sacred rites of Diana, brought thither by Orestes. Ah! how oft did the Nymphs of the grove and of the lake entreat her not to do so, and utter soothing words. Ah! how often did the hero, the son of Theseus, say to her as she wept, “Put an end to it; for thy lot is not the only one to be lamented. Consider the like calamities of others, thou wilt {then} bear thine own better. And would that an example, not my own, could lighten thy grief! yet even my own can do so.”

“I suppose, in discourse it has reached thy ears that a certain Hippolytus met with his death through the credulity of his father, by the deceit of his wicked step-mother. Thou wilt wonder, and I shall hardly be able to prove it; but yet I am he. In former times, the daughter of Pasiphaë, having tempted me in vain, pretended that I wished to defile the couch of my father, a thing that she herself wished to do; and having turned the accusation {against me}, (whether it was more through dread of discovery, or through mortification at her repulse) she charged me. And my father expelled me, {thus} innocent, from the city, and as I went he uttered imprecations against my head, with ruthless prayers. I was going to Trœzen, {the city} of Pittheus,[54] in my flying chariot, and I was now proceeding along the shores of the Corinthian gulf, when the sea was aroused, and an enormous mass of waters seemed to bend and to grow in the form of a mountain, and to send forth a roaring noise, and to burst asunder at its very summit. Thence, the waves being divided, a horned bull was sent forth, and erect in the light air as far as his breast, he vomited forth a quantity of sea-water from his nostrils and his open mouth. The hearts of my attendants quailed; my mind remained without fear, intent {only} on my exile, when the fierce horses turned their necks towards the sea, and were terrified, with ears erect;

and they were alarmed with dread of the monster, and precipitated the chariot over the lofty rocks. I struggled, with unavailing hand, to guide the bridle covered with white foam, and, throwing myself backwards, I pulled back the loosened reins. And, indeed, the madness of my steeds would not have exceeded that strength {of mine}, had not the wheel, by running against a stump, been broken and disjoined just where it turns round on the long axle-tree.

"I was hurled from my chariot; and, the reins entwined around my limbs, you might have seen my palpitating entrails dragged, my sinews fasten upon the stump, my limbs partly torn to pieces and partly left behind, being caught by {various obstacles}, my bones in their breaking emit a loud noise, and my exhausted breath become exhaled, and not a part in my body which you could recognize; and the whole of {me} formed {but} one {continued} wound. And canst thou, Nymph, or dost thou venture to compare thy misfortune to mine? I have visited, too, the realms deprived of light, and I have bathed my lacerated body in the waves of Phlegethon.[55] Nor could life have been restored me, but through the powerful remedies of the son of Apollo. After I had received it, through potent herbs and the Pæonian aid,[56] much against the will of Pluto, then Cynthia threw around me thick clouds, that I might not, by my presence, increase his anger at this favour; and that I might be safe, and be seen in security, she gave me a {more} aged appearance, and left me no features that could be recognized. For a long time she was doubtful whether she should give me Crete or Delos for me to possess. Delos and Crete being abandoned, she placed me here, and, at the same time, she ordered me to lay aside my name, which might have reminded me of my steeds, and she said, 'Thou, the same who wast Hippolytus, be thou now Virbius.'[57] From that time I have inhabited this grove; and, as one of the lower Gods, I lie concealed under the protection of my mistress, and to her am I devoted."[58]

But yet the misfortunes of others were not able to alleviate the grief of Egeria; and, throwing herself down at the base of the hill, she dissolved into tears; until, moved by her affection as she grieved, the sister of Phœbus formed a cool fountain from her body, and dissolved her limbs in ever-flowing waters.

But this new circumstance surprised the Nymphs; and the son of the Amazon[59] was astonished, in no other manner than as when the Etrurian ploughman beheld the fate-revealing clod in the midst of the fields move at first of its own accord and no one touching it, and afterwards assume a human form, and lose {that} of earth, and open its new-made mouth with {the decrees of} future destiny. The natives called him Tages. He was the first to teach the Etrurian nation to foretell future events.

Or, as when Romulus once saw his lance, fixed in the Palatine hill, suddenly shoot forth; which {now} stood there with a root newly-formed, {and} not with the iron {point} driven in; and, now

no longer as a dart, but as a tree with limber twigs, it sent forth, for the admiring {spectators}, a shade that was not looked for.

Or, {as} when Cippus beheld his horns in the water of the stream, (for he did see them) and, believing that there was a false representation in the reflection, often returning his fingers to his forehead, he touched what he saw. And now, no {longer} condemning his own eyesight, he stood still, as he was returning victorious from the conquest of the enemy; and raising his eyes towards heaven, and his hands in the same direction, he exclaimed, “Ye Gods above! whatever is portended by this prodigy, if it is auspicious, then be it auspicious to my country and to the people of Quirinus; but if unfortunate, be it {so} for myself.” And {then} he made atonement at the grassy altars built of green turf, with odoriferous fires, and presented wine in bowls, and consulted the panting entrails of slaughtered sheep what the meaning of it was. Soon as the soothsayer of the Etrurian nation had inspected them, he beheld in them the great beginnings of {future} events, but still not clearly. But when he raised his searching eyes from the entrails of the sheep, to the horns of Cippus, he said, “Hail, O king! for thee, Cippus, thee and thy horns shall this place and the Latian towers obey. Only do thou lay aside all delay; hasten to enter the gates wide open; thus the fates command thee. For, {once} received within the City, thou shalt be king, and thou shalt safely enjoy a lasting sceptre.” He retreated backwards, and turning his stern visage away from the walls of the City, he exclaimed, “Far, O far away may the Gods drive such omens! Much more righteously shall I pass my life in exile, than if the Capitol were to see me a king.”

{Thus} he says; and forthwith he convokes the people and the dignified Senate; but first, he veils his horns with laurel that betokens peace, and he stands upon a mound raised by his brave soldiers; and praying to the Gods after the ancient manner, “Behold!” says he, “one is here who will be king, if you do not expel him from the City. I will tell you who he is by a sign, {and} not by name. He wears horns on his forehead; the augur predicts to you, that if he enters the City, he shall give you laws as his slaves. He, indeed, was able to enter the open gates, but I have opposed him; although no one is more nearly allied with him than myself. Forbid your City to this man, ye Romans, or, if he shall deserve it, bind him with heavy fetters; or else end your fears by the death of the destined tyrant.”

As the murmur which arises among the groves of the slender pine,[60] when the furious East wind whistles among them, or as that which the waves of the ocean produce, if any one hears them from afar, such is the noise of the crowd. But yet amid the confused words of the shouting multitude, one cry is distinguished, “Which is he?” And then they examine the foreheads, and seek the predicted horns. Cippus again addresses them: “Him whom you require, ye {now} have;” and, despite of the people, throwing the chaplet from his head, he exhibits his temples, remarkable for two horns. All cast down their eyes, and utter groans, and (who would have

supposed it?) they unwillingly look upon that head famed for its merits. And no longer suffering it to be deprived of its honours, they place upon it the festive chaplet. But the nobles, Cippus, since thou art forbidden to enter the city, give thee as much land, as a mark of honour, as thou canst, with the oxen yoked to the pressed plough, make the circuit of from the rising of the sun to its setting. They carve, too, the horns, imitating their wondrous form, on the door-posts adorned with brass, {there} to remain for long ages.

[Footnote 53: *Voluntarily invited.*--Ver. 481. He was living at the Sabine town of Cures, when the throne was pressed upon him by the desire of both the Roman and the Sabine nations.]

[Footnote 54: *City of Pittheus.*--Ver. 506. Pittheus was the son of Pelops, and the father of Æthra, the mother of Theseus; consequently he was the great-grandfather of Hippolytus.]

[Footnote 55: *Phlegethon.*--Ver. 532. This was said to be one of the rivers of the Infernal Regions, and to be flowing with fire and brimstone.]

[Footnote 56: *Pæonian aid.*--Ver. 536. Pæon was a skilful physician, mentioned by Homer, in the Fifth Book of the Iliad. Eustathius thinks that Apollo is meant under that name.]

[Footnote 57: *Virbius.*--Ver. 544. This name is formed from the words 'vir' and 'bis,' twice a man.]

[Footnote 58: *Am I devoted.*--Ver. 546. In the same relation to her as Adonis was to Venus, Ericthonius to Minerva, and Atys to Cybele.]

[Footnote 59: *Son of the Amazon.*--Ver. 552. Hippolytus was the son either of the Amazon Hippolyta, or Antiope.]

[Footnote 60: *Slender pine.*--Ver. 603-4. The words 'succinctis pinetis' are rendered by Clarke, 'the neat pine-groves.']

## Riley's Explanation

Ovid, following the notion that was generally entertained of the wisdom of Numa, pretends that before he was elected to the sovereignty he went to Crotona, for the purpose of studying under Pythagoras; but he is guilty of a considerable anachronism in this instance, as Pythagoras was not born till very many years after the time of Numa. According to Livy, Pythagoras flourished in the time of Servius Tullius, the sixth Roman king, about one hundred and fifty years after Numa. Modern authors are of opinion that upwards of two hundred years intervened between the days of Numa and Pythagoras. Besides, Dionysius of Halicarnassus distinctly asserts that the city of Crotona was only built in the fourth year of the reign of Numa Pompilius.

Numa is said to have been in the habit of retiring to the Arician grove, to consult the Nymph Egeria upon the laws which he was about to promulgate for the benefit of his subjects. It is probable, that to ensure their observance the more effectually, he wished the people to believe that his enactments were compiled under the inspection of one who partook of the immortal nature, and that in so doing he followed the example of previous lawgivers. Zamolxis pretended that the laws which he gave to the Scythians were dictated to him by his attendant genius or spirit. The first Minos affirmed that Jupiter was the author of the ordinances which he gave to the people of Crete, while Lycurgus attributed his to Apollo. It is not improbable that in this they imitated the example of Moses, a tradition of whose reception of the laws on Mount Sinai they may have received from the people of Phœnicia.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus has an interesting passage relative to Numa, which throws some light upon his alleged intercourse with the Nymph Egeria. His words are-- 'The Romans affirm that Numa was never engaged in any warlike expedition; but that he passed his whole reign in profound peace: that his first care was to encourage piety and justice in his dominions, and to civilize his people by good and wholesome laws. His profound skill in governing made him pass for being inspired, and gave rise to many fabulous stories. Some have said that he had secret interviews with the Nymph Egeria; others, that he frequently consulted one of the Muses, and was instructed by her in the art of government. Numa was desirous to confirm the people in this opinion; but because some hesitated to believe his bare affirmation, and others went so far as to call his alleged converse with the Deities a fiction, he took an opportunity to give them such proofs of it, that the most sceptical among them should have no room left for suspicion. This he effected in the following manner. He one day invited several of the nobles to his palace, and showed them the plainness of the apartments, where no rich furniture was to be seen, nor any thing like an attempt at splendour; and how even the most ordinary necessaries were wanting for anything like a great entertainment; after which, he dismissed them with an invitation to come to sup with him on the same night. At the appointed hour his guests arrived; they were received on stately couches; the tables were decked with a variety of plate, and were loaded with the most exquisite dainties. The guests were struck with the sumptuousness and profusion of the entertainment, and considering how impossible it was for any man to have made such preparations in so short a time, were persuaded that his communication with heaven was not a fiction, and that he must have had the aid of the celestial powers to do things of a nature so extraordinary. 'But,' as the same author says, 'those who were not so ready at adopting fabulous narratives as a part of history, say that it was the policy of Numa which led him to feign a conversation with the Nymph Egeria, to make his laws respected by his people, and that he thence followed the example of the Greek sages, who adopted the same method of enforcing the authority of their laws with the people.'

The Romans were so persuaded of the fact of Numa's conferences with the Nymph Egeria, that they went into the grove of Aricia to seek her; but finding nothing but a fountain in the spot which he used to frequent, they promulgated the story of the transformation of the Nymph. St. Augustin, speaking on this subject, says that Numa made use of the waters of that fountain in the divination which was performed by the aid of water, and was called Hydromancy.

Theseus having left Ariadne in the isle of Naxos, flattered himself with the hopes of marrying her sister Phædra. Deucalion, succeeding Minos in Crete immediately after his death, sent Phædra to Athens. On arriving there, she fell in love with Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, who had been brought up at Trœzen by Pittheus. As she did not dare to request of Theseus that his son might be brought from the court of Pittheus, she built a temple to Venus near Trœzen, that she might the more frequently have the opportunity of seeing Hippolytus, and called it by the name of Hippolyteum. According to Euripides, this youth was wise, chaste, and an enemy to all voluptuousness. He spent his time in hunting and chariot racing, with other exercises which formed the pursuits of youths of high station. According to Plutarch, it was at the time when Theseus was a prisoner in Epirus, that Phædra took the opportunity of disclosing to Hippolytus the violence of her passion for him. Her declaration being but ill received, she grew desperate on his refusal to comply with her desires, and was about to commit self-destruction, when her nurse suggested the necessity of revenging the virtuous disdain of the youth.

Theseus having been liberated by Hercules, Phædra, being fearful lest the intrigue should come to his knowledge, hanged herself, having first written a letter to inform him that she could not survive an attempt which Hippolytus had made on her virtue. Plutarch, Servius and Hyginus, following Euripides, give this account of her death. But Seneca, in his Hippolytus, says that she only appeared before her husband in extreme grief, holding a sword in her hand to signify the violence which Hippolytus had offered her. On this, Theseus implored the assistance of Neptune, who sent a monster out of the sea, to frighten his horses, as he was driving along the sea-shore: on which, they took fright, and throwing him from his chariot, he was killed. It has been suggested that the true meaning of this is, that Theseus having ordered his son to come and justify himself, he made so much haste that his horses ran away with him; and his chariot being dashed over the rocks, he was killed.

Seneca also differs from the other writers, in saying that Phædra did not put herself to death till she had heard of the catastrophe of Hippolytus, on which she stabbed herself. The people of Trœzen, regretting his loss, decreed him divine honours, built a temple, and appointed a priest to offer yearly sacrifices to him. Euripides says, that the young women of Trœzen, when about to be married, cut off their hair and carried it to the temple of Hippolytus. It was also promulgated that the Gods had translated him to the heavens, where he was changed into the Constellation, called by the Latins 'Auriga,' or 'the Charioteer.' Later authors, whom Ovid here follows, added,

that Æsculapius restored him to life, and that he afterwards appeared in Italy under the name of Virbius. This story was probably invented as a source of profit by the priesthood, who were desirous to find some good reason for introducing his worship into the Arician grove near Rome. This story is mentioned by Apollodorus, who quotes the author of the Naupactan verses in favour of it, and by the Scholiasts of Euripides and Pindar.

The ancient Etrurians were great adepts in the art of divination; their favourite method of exercising which was by the inspection of the entrails of beasts, and the observation of the flight of birds; and from them, as we learn from Cicero in his book on Divination, the system spread over the whole of Italy. Tages is supposed to have been the first who taught this art, and he wrote treatises upon it, which, according to Plutarch, were quoted by ancient authors. It not being known whence he came, or who were his parents, he was called, in the language of the poets, a son of the earth. Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of him as being said to have sprung out of the earth in Etruria.

Ovid next makes a passing allusion to the spear of Romulus, which, when thrown by him from the Mount Aventine towards the Capitol, sticking in the ground was converted into a tree, which immediately put forth leaves. This prodigy was taken for a presage of the future greatness of Rome: and Plutarch, in his life of Romulus, says that so long as this tree stood, the Republic flourished. It began to wither in the time of the first civil war; and Julius Cæsar having afterwards ordered a building to be erected near where it stood, the workmen cutting some of its roots in sinking the foundations, it soon after died. It is hardly probable that a cornel tree would stand in a thronged city for nearly seven hundred years; and it is, therefore, most likely, that care was taken to renovate it from time to time, by planting slips from the former tree.

The story of Genucius Cippus is one of those strange fables with which the Roman history is diversified. Valerius Maximus gives the following account of it. He says that Cippus, going one day out of Rome, suddenly found that something which resembled horns was growing out of his forehead. Surprised at an event so extraordinary, he consulted the augurs, who said that he would be chosen king, if he ever entered the city again. As the royal power was abhorred in Rome, he preferred a voluntary banishment to revisiting Rome on those terms. Struck with this heroism, the Romans erected a brazen statue with horns over the gate by which he departed, and it was afterwards called ‘Porta rauduscula na,’ because the ancient Latin name of brass was ‘raudus,’ ‘rodus,’ or ‘rudus.’ The fact is, however, as Ovid represents it, that Cippus was not going out of Rome, but returning to it, when the prodigy happened; he having been to convey assistance to the Consul Valerius. The Senate also conferred certain lands on Cippus, as a reward for his patriotism. He lived about two hundred and forty years before the Christian era. Pliny the Elder considers the story of the horns of Cippus as much a fable as that of Actæon. It appears, however, that the account of the horns may have possibly been founded on fact, as excrescences

resembling them have appeared on the bodies of individuals. Bayle makes mention of a girl of Palermo, who had little horns all over her body, like those of a young calf. In the Ashmolean museum at Oxford, a substance much resembling the horn of a goat is shown, which is said to have sprung from the forehead of a female named Mary Davis, whose likeness is there shown. The excrescence was most probably produced by a deranged secretion of the hair, and something of a similar nature may perhaps have befallen Genucius Cippus, which, of course, would be made the most of in those ages of superstition. Valerius Maximus, with all his credulity, does not say that they were real horns that made their appearance, but that they were 'just like horns.'

It is not improbable that the story originally was, that Cippus, on his return to Rome, dreamt that he had horns on his head, and that having consulted the augurs, and received the answer mentioned by Ovid, he preferred to suffer exile, rather than enslave his country; and that, in length of time, the more wonderful part of the story was added to it.

## Book XV, Fable VII (lines 622–744)

*Rome being wasted by a pestilence, the Delphian oracle is consulted; and the answer is given, that to cause it to cease Æsculapius must be brought to Rome. On this, ambassadors are sent to Epidaurus to demand the God. The people refuse to part with him; but he appears to one of the Romans in a dream, and consents to go. On his arrival at Rome the contagion ceases, and a Temple is built in his honour.*

Relate, now, ye Muses, the guardian Deities of poets (for you know, and remote antiquity conceals it not from you), whence {it is that} the Island surrounded by the channel of the Tiber introduced the son of Coronis into the sacred rites of the City of Romulus. A dire contagion had once infected the Latian air, and the pale bodies were deformed by a consumption that dried up the blood. When, wearied with {so many} deaths, they found that mortal endeavours availed nothing, and that the skill of physicians had no effect, they sought the aid of heaven, and they repaired to Delphi which occupies the centre spot of the world, the oracle of Phœbus, and entreated that he would aid their distressed circumstances by a response productive of health, and put an end to the woes of a City so great. Both the spot, and the laurels, and the quivers which it has, shook at the same moment, and the tripod[61] gave this answer from the recesses of the shrine, and struck {with awe} their astonished breasts:-- “What here thou dost seek, O Roman, thou mightst have sought in a nearer spot: and now seek it in a nearer spot; thou hast no need of Apollo to diminish thy grief, but of the son of Apollo. Go with a good omen, and invite my son.”

After the prudent Senate had received the commands of the Deity, they enquired what city the youthful son of Phœbus inhabited; and they sent some to reach the coasts of Epidaurus[62] with the winds. Soon as those sent had reached them in the curving ship, they repaired to the council and the Grecian elders, and besought them to grant them the Divinity, who by his presence could put an end to the mortality of the Ausonian nation; {for} that so the unerring response had directed. Their opinions were divided, and differed; and some thought that aid ought not to be refused. Many refused it, and advised them not to part with their own protector, and to give up their own guardian Deity. While they were deliberating, twilight had {now} expelled the waning day, and the shadow of the earth had brought darkness over the world; when, in thy sleep, the saving God seemed, O Roman, to be standing before thy couch; but just as he is wont to be in his temple; and, holding a rustic staff in his left hand, {he seemed} to be stroking the long hair of his beard with his right, and to utter such words as these from his kindly breast-- “Lay aside thy fears; I will come, and I will leave these {my} statues. Only observe {now} this serpent, which with its folds entwines around this staff, and accurately mark it with thine eyes, that thou mayst

be able to know it again. Into this shall I be changed; but I shall be greater, and I shall appear to be of a size as great as that into which heavenly bodies ought to be transformed."

Forthwith, with {these} words, the God departs; and with his words and the God sleep {departs}, and genial light follows upon the departure of sleep. The following morn has {now} dispersed the starry fires; uncertain what to do, the nobles meet together in the sumptuous temple of the God {then} sought, and beseech him to indicate, by celestial tokens, in what spot he would wish to abide. Hardly have they well ceased, when the God, all glittering with gold, in {the form of} a serpent, with crest erect, sends forth a hissing, as a notice of his approach; and in his coming, he shakes both his statue, the altars, the doors, the marble pavement, and the gilded roof, and as far as the breast he stands erect in the midst of the temple, and rolls around his eyes that sparkle with fire. The frightened multitude is alarmed; the priest, having his chaste hair bound with a white fillet, recognizes the Deity and exclaims, "The God! Behold the God! Whoever you are that are present, be of good omen, both with your words and your feelings. Mayst thou, most beauteous one, be beheld to our advantage; and mayst thou aid the nations that perform thy sacred rites." Whoever are present, adore the Deity as bidden; and all repeat the words of the priest over again; and the descendants of Æneas give a pious omen, both with their feelings, and in their words. To these the God shows favour; and with crest erected, he gives a hiss, a sure token, repeated thrice with his vibrating tongue. Then he glides down the polished steps,[63] and turns back his head, and, about to depart, he looks back upon his ancient altars, and salutes his wonted abode and the temple that {so long} he has inhabited. Then, with his vast bulk, he glides along the ground covered with the strewn flowers, and coils his folds, and through the midst of the city repairs to the harbour protected by its winding quay.

Here he stops; and seeming to dismiss his train, and the dutiful attendance of the accompanying crowd, with a placid countenance, he places his body in the Ausonian ship. It is sensible of the weight of the God; and the ship {now} laden with the Divinity for its freight, the descendants of Æneas rejoice; and a bull having first been slain on the sea-shore, they loosen the twisted cables of the bark bedecked with garlands. A gentle breeze has {now} impelled the ship. The God is conspicuous aloft,[64] and pressing upon the crooked stern with his neck laid upon it, he looks down upon the azure waters; and with the gentle Zephyrs along the Ionian sea, on the sixth rising of the daughter of Pallas, he makes Italy, and is borne along the Lacinian shores, ennobled by the temple of the Goddess {Juno}, and the Scylacean[65] coasts. He leaves Iapygia behind, and flies from the Amphissian[66] rocks with the oars on the left side; on the right side he passes by the steep Ceraunia, and Romechium, and Caulon,[67] and Narycia, and he crosses the sea and the straits of the Sicilian Pelorus, and the abodes of the king the grandson of Hippotas, and the mines of Temesa; and then he makes for Leucosia,[68] and the rose-beds of the warm Pæstum. Then he coasts by Capreæ,[69] and the promontory of Minerva, and the hills ennobled

with the Surrentine[70] vines, and the city of Hercules,[71] and Stabiæ,[72] and Parthenope made for retirement, and after it the temple of the Cumæan Sibyl. Next, the warm springs[73] are passed by, and Linternum,[74] that bears mastick trees; and {then} Vulturnus,[75] that carries much sand along with its tide, and Sinuessa, that abounds with snow-white snakes,[76] and the pestilential Minturnæ,[77] and she for whom[78] her foster-child erected the tomb, and the abode of Antiphates,[79] and Trachas,[80] surrounded by the marsh, and the land of Circe, and Antium,[81] with its rocky coast.

After the sailors have steered the sail-bearing ship hither (for now the sea is aroused), the Deity unfolds his coils, and gliding with many a fold and in vast coils, he enters the temple of his parent, that skirts the yellow shore. The sea {now} becalmed, the {God} of Epidaurus leaves the altars of his sire; and having enjoyed the hospitality of the Deity, {thus} related to him, he furrows the sands of the sea-shore with the dragging of his rattling scales, and reclining against the helm of the ship, he places his head upon the lofty stern; until he comes to Castrum,[82] and the sacred abodes of Lavinium, and the mouths of the Tiber. Hither, all the people indiscriminately, a crowd both of matrons and of men, rush to meet him; they, too, Vesta! who tend thy fires; and with joyous shouts they welcome the God. And where the swift ship is steered through the tide running out, altars being erected in a line, the frankincense crackles along {the banks} on either side, and perfumes the air with its smoke; the felled victim too, {with its blood} makes warm the knives thrust {into it}.

And now he has entered Rome, the sovereign of the world. The serpent rises erect, and lifts his neck that reclines against the top of the mast, and looks around for a habitation suited for himself. {There is a spot, where} the river flowing around, is divided into two parts; it is called “the Island.” {The river} in the direction of each side extends its arms of equal length, the dry land {lying} in the middle. Hither, the serpent, son of Phœbus, betakes himself from the Latian ship; and he puts an end to the mourning, having resumed his celestial form. And {thus} did he come, the restorer of health, to the City.

[Footnote 61: *The tripod*.--Ver. 635. The tripod on which the priestess of Apollo or ‘Pythia,’ sat when inspired, was called ‘Cortina,’ from the skin, ‘corium,’ of the serpent Python, which, when it had been killed by Apollo was used to cover it.]

[Footnote 62: *Epidaurus*.--Ver. 643. There were several towns of this name. The one here mentioned was in the state of Argolis.]

[Footnote 63: *Polished steps*.--Ver. 685. Clarke translates ‘Gradibus nitidis,’ ‘the neat steps.’]

[Footnote 64: *Is conspicuous aloft*.--Ver. 697. ‘Deus eminet alte.’ This is rendered by Clarke, ‘The God rears up to a good height.’]

[Footnote 65: *Scylacean*.--Ver. 702. Scylace was a town on the Calabrian coast; it was said to have been founded by an Athenian colony.]

[Footnote 66: *Amphissian*.--Ver. 703. Amphissia was the name of a city of Locris; but that cannot be the place here alluded to on the coast of Italy. It is most probably a corrupt reading.]

[Footnote 67: *Caulon*.--Ver. 705. Caulon was a colony of the Achæa on the coast of Calabria. Narycia, or Naritium, or Naricia, was also a town on the Calabrian coast. The localities of Ceraunia and Romechium are not known.]

[Footnote 68: *Leucosia*.--Ver. 708. Leucosia was a little island off the town of Pæstum, which was in Lucania; it was famous for its mild climate, and the beauty of its roses, which are celebrated by Virgil.]

[Footnote 69: *Capreæ*.--Ver. 709. Capreæ was an island near the coast of Naples.]

[Footnote 70: *Surrentine*.--Ver. 710. Surrentum was a city of Campania, famed for its wines.]

[Footnote 71: *City of Hercules*.--Ver. 711. This was Herculaneum, at the foot of Vesuvius; the place which shared so disastrous a fate from the eruption of that mountain.]

[Footnote 72: *Stabiæ*.--Ver. 711. This was a town of Campania, which was destroyed by Sylla in the Social war. It was afterwards rebuilt.]

[Footnote 73: *The warm springs*.--Ver. 711. He alludes to the city of Baiæ, famed for its warm springs and baths.]

[Footnote 74: *Linternum*.--Ver. 714. This place was in Campania. It was famous as the place of retirement of the elder Scipio; he was buried there.]

[Footnote 75: *Vulturnus*.--Ver. 715. This was a river of Campania, which flowed past the city of Capua.]

[Footnote 76: *Snow-white snakes*.--Ver. 715. Sinuessa was a town of Campania; Heinsius very properly suggests ‘columbis,’ ‘doves;’ for ‘colubris,’ ‘snakes.’ We are told by Pliny the Elder, that Campania was famed for its doves.]

[Footnote 77: *Minturnæ*.--Ver. 716. This was a town of Latium; the marshes in its neighbourhood produced pestilential exhalations.]

[Footnote 78: *She for whom*.--Ver. 716. This was Caieta, who, being buried there by her foster-child Æneas, gave her name to the spot.]

[Footnote 79: *Abode of Antiphates*.--Ver. 717. Formiæ.]

[Footnote 80: *Trachas*.--Ver. 717. This place was also called ‘Anxur.’ Its present name is Terracina. Livy mentions it as lying in the marshes.]

[Footnote 81: *Antium*.--Ver. 718. This was the capital of the ancient Volscians.]

[Footnote 82: *Castrum*.--Ver. 727. This was ‘Castrum Inui,’ or ‘the tents of Pan;’ an old town of the Rutulians.]

## Riley’s Explanation

The story here narrated by Ovid is derived from the Roman history, to which we will shortly refer for an explanation.

Under the consulate of Quintus Fabius Gurges, and Decimus Junius Brutus Scæva, Rome was ravaged by a frightful pestilence. The resources of physic having been exhausted, the Sibylline books were consulted to ascertain by what expedient the calamity might be put an end to, and they found that the plague would not cease till they had brought Æsculapius from Epidaurus to Rome. Being then engaged in war, they postponed their application to the Epidaurians for a year, at the end of which time they despatched an embassy to Epidaurus; on which a serpent was delivered to them, which the priests of the Deity assured them was the God himself. Taking it on board their ship, the delegates set sail. When near Antium, they were obliged to put in there by stress of weather, and the serpent, escaping from the ship, remained three days on shore; after which it came on board of its own accord, and they continued their voyage. On arriving at the Island of the Tiber the serpent escaped, and concealed itself amid the reeds; and as they, in their credulity, fancied that the God had chosen the place for his habitation, they built a temple there in his honour. From this period, which was about the year of Rome 462, the worship of Æsculapius was introduced in the city, and to him recourse was had in cases of disease, and especially in times of pestilence.

## Book XV, Fable VIII (lines 745–879)

*Julius Cæsar is assassinated in the Senate-house, and by the intercession of Venus, his ancestor, he is changed into a star. The Poet concludes his work with a compliment to Augustus, and a promise of immortality to himself.*

And still, he came a stranger to our temples; Cæsar is a Deity in his own city; whom, {alike} distinguished both in war and peace, wars ending with triumphs, his government at home, and the rapid glory of his exploits, did not more {tend to} change into a new planet, and a star with brilliant train, than did his own progeny. For of {all} the acts of Cæsar, there is not one more ennobling than that he was the father of this {our Cæsar}. Was it, forsooth, a greater thing to have conquered the Britons surrounded by the ocean, and to have steered his victorious ships along the seven-mouthed streams of the Nile that bears the papyrus, and to have added to the people of Quirinus the rebellious Numidians[83] and the Cinyphian Juba, and Pontus[84] proud of the fame of Mithridates, and to have deserved many a triumph, {and} to have enjoyed some, than it was to have been the father of a personage so great, under whose tutelage over the world, you, ye Gods above, have shewn excessive care for the human race? That he {then} might not be sprung from mortal seed, {'twas fit that Julius} should be made a Divinity. When the resplendent mother of Æneas was sensible of this; and {when} she saw that a sad death was in preparation for the Pontiff, and that the arms of the conspirators were brandished; she turned pale, and said to each of the Deities, as she met them:--

"Behold, on how vast a scale treason is plotted against me, and with how great perfidy that life is sought, which alone remains for me from the Dardanian Iülus. Shall I alone be everlastingly harassed by justified anxieties? I, whom one while the Calydonian lance of the son of Tydeus is wounding, {and} at another time the walls of Troy, defended in vain, are grieving? I, who have seen my son driven about in protracted wanderings, tossed on the ocean, entering the abodes of the departed, and waging war with Turnus; or, if we confess the truth, with Juno rather? {But}, why am I now calling to mind the ancient misfortunes of my own offspring? Present apprehensions do not allow me to remember things of former days. Against me, you behold how the impious swords are {now} being whetted. Avert them, I entreat; hinder this crime, and do not, by the murder of the priest, extinguish the flames of Vesta."

Such expressions as these did Venus, full of anxiety, vainly let fall throughout the heavens, and she moved the Gods above. Although they were not able to frustrate the iron decrees of the aged sisters, yet they afforded no unerring tokens of approaching woe. They say, that arms resounding amid the black clouds, and dreadful {blasts of} the trumpet, and clarions heard through the heavens, forewarned men of the crime. The sad face too of the sun gave a livid light

to the alarmed earth. Often did torches seem to be burning in the midst of the stars; often did drops of blood fall in the showers. The azure-coloured Lucifer had his light tinted with a dark iron colour; the chariot of the moon was besprinkled with blood. The Stygian owl gave omens of ill in a thousand places; in a thousand places did the ivory statues shed tears; dirges, too, are said to have been heard, and threatening expressions in the sacred groves. No victim gave an omen of good; the entrails, too, showed that great tumults were imminent; and the extremity {of the liver} was found cut off among the entrails. They say, too, that in the Forum, and around the houses and the temples of the Gods, the dogs were howling by night; and that the ghosts of the departed were walking, and that the City was shaken by earthquakes. But still the warnings of the Gods could not avert treachery and the approach of Fate, and drawn swords were carried into a temple; and no other place in the {whole} City than the Senate-house pleased them for this crime and this atrocious murder.

But then did Cytherea beat her breast with both her hands, and attempt to hide the descendant of Æneas in a cloud, in which, long since, Paris was conveyed from the hostile son of Atreus,[85] and Æneas had escaped from the sword of Diomedes. In such words as these {did} her father {Jove address her}: "Dost thou, my daughter, unaided, attempt to change the insuperable {decrees} of Fate? Thou, thyself, mayst enter the abode of the three sisters, {and} there thou wilt behold the register of {future} events, {wrought} with vast labour, of brass and of solid iron; these, safe and destined for eternity, fear neither the {thundering} shock of the heavens, nor the rage of the lightnings, nor any {source of} destruction. There wilt thou find the destinies of thy descendants engraved in everlasting adamant. I myself have read them, and I have marked them in my mind; I will repeat them, that thou mayst not still be ignorant of the future. He (on whose account, Cytherea, thou art {thus} anxious), has completed his time, those years being ended which he owed to the earth. Thou, with his son, who, as the heir to his glory, will bear the burden of government devolving {on him}, wilt cause him, as a Deity, to reach the heavens, and to be worshipped in temples; and he, as a most valiant avenger of his murdered parent, will have us to aid him in his battles. The conquered walls of Mutina,[86] besieged under his auspices, shall sue for peace; Pharsalia shall be sensible of him, and Philippi,[87] again drenched with Emathian gore; and the name {of one renowned as} Great, shall be subdued in the Sicilian waves; the Egyptian dame too, the wife[88] of the Roman general, shall fall, vainly trusting in that alliance; and in vain shall she threaten, that our own Capitol shall be obedient to her Canopus.[89] Why should I recount to thee the regions of barbarism, {and} nations situate in either ocean? Whatever the habitable world contains, shall be his; the sea, too, shall be subject to him. Peace being granted to the earth, he will turn his attention to civil rights, and, as a most upright legislator, he will enact laws. After his own example, too, will he regulate manners; and, looking forward to the days of future time, and of his coming posterity, he will order the offspring born of his hallowed wife[90] to assume both his own name and his cares. Nor shall he, until as an

aged man he shall have equalled {his glories with} like years,[91] arrive at the abodes of heaven and his kindred stars. Meanwhile, change this soul, snatched from the murdered body, into a beam of light, that eternally the Deified Julius may look down from his lofty abode upon our Capitol and Forum."

Hardly had he uttered these words, when the genial Venus, perceived by none, stood in the very midst of the Senate-house, and snatched the soul, just liberated {from the body}, away from the limbs of her own Cæsar, and, not suffering it to dissolve in air, she bore it amid the stars of heaven. And as she bore it, she perceived it assume a {train of} light and become inflamed; and she dropped it from her bosom. Above the moon it takes its flight, and, as a star, it glitters, carrying a flaming train with a lengthened track; and, as he beholds the illustrious deeds of his son, he confesses that they are superior to his own, and rejoices that he is surpassed by him. Although {Augustus} forbids his own actions to be lauded before those of his father, still Fame, in her freedom and subject to no commands, prefers him against his will; and, in {this} one point, she disobeys him. Thus does Atreus yield to the glories of the great Agamemnon; thus does Theseus excel Ægeus, {and} thus Achilles Peleus. In fine, that I may use examples that equal themselves, thus too, is Saturn inferior to Jove. Jupiter rules the abodes of heaven and the realms of the threefold world:[92] the earth is under Augustus: each of them is a father and a ruler. Ye Gods, the companions of Æneas,[93] for whom both the sword and the flames made a way; and you, ye native Deities, and thou, Quirinus, the father of the City, and thou, Gradivus, the son of the invincible Quirinus, and thou, Vesta, held sacred among the Penates of Cæsar; and, with the Vesta of Cæsar, thou, Phœbus, enshrined in thy abode, and thou, Jupiter, who aloft dost possess the Tarpeian heights, and whatever other {Deities} it is lawful and righteous for a Poet to invoke; late, I pray, may be that day, and protracted beyond my life, on which the person of Augustus, leaving that world which he rules, shall approach the heavens: and {when} gone, may he propitiously listen to those who invoke him.

And now I have completed a work, which neither the anger of Jove, nor fire, nor steel, nor consuming time will be able to destroy! Let that day, which has no power but over this body {of mine}, put an end to the term of my uncertain life, when it will. Yet, in my better part, I shall be raised immortal above the lofty stars, and indelible shall be my name. And wherever the Roman power is extended throughout the vanquished earth, I shall be read by the lips of nations, and (if the presages of Poets have aught of truth) throughout all ages shall I survive in fame.

[Footnote 83: *Numidians*.--Ver. 754. The Numidians under Syphax, together with Juba, King of Mauritania, aided Cato, Scipio, and Petreius, who had been partizans of Pompey, against Julius Cæsar, and were conquered by him.]

[Footnote 84: *Pontus*.--Ver. 756. Cæsar conquered Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates, king of Pontus, in one battle. It was on this occasion, according to Suetonius, that his despatch was in the words, 'Veni, Vidi, Vici,' 'I came, I saw, I conquered.']

[Footnote 85: *Son of Atreus*.--Ver. 805. This was Menelaüs, from whom Paris was saved by Venus. See the Iliad, book III.]

[Footnote 86: *Mutina*.--Ver. 823. This was a place in Cisalpine Gaul, where Augustus defeated Antony, and took his camp.]

[Footnote 87: *Philippi*.--Ver. 824. Pharsalia was in Thessaly, and Philippi was in Thrace. He uses a poet's license, in treating them as being the same battle-field, as they both formed part of the former kingdom of Macedonia. Pompey was defeated by Julius Cæsar at Pharsalia, while Brutus and Cassius were defeated by Augustus and Antony at Philippi. The fleet of the younger Pompey was totally destroyed off the Sicilian coast.]

[Footnote 88: *The wife*.--Ver. 826. Mark Antony was so infatuated as to divorce his wife, Octavia, that he might be enabled to marry Cleopatra.]

[Footnote 89: *Canopus*.--Ver. 828. This was a city of Egypt, situate on the Western mouth of the river Nile.]

[Footnote 90: *His hallowed wife*.--Ver. 836. Augustus took Livia Drusilla, while pregnant, from her husband, Tiberius Nero, and married her. He adopted her son Tiberius, and constituted him his successor.]

[Footnote 91: *With like years*.--Ver. 838. Julius Cæsar was slain when he was fifty-six years old. Augustus died in his seventy-sixth year.]

[Footnote 92: *Threefold world*.--Ver. 859. This is explained as meaning the realms of the heavens, the æther and the air; but it is difficult to guess exactly what is the Poet's meaning here.]

[Footnote 93: *Companions of Æneas*.--Ver. 861. He probably refers to the Penates which Æneas brought into Latium. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that he had seen them in a temple at Rome, and that they bore the figures of two youths seated and holding spears.]

### Riley's Explanation

The Poet having fulfilled his promise, and having brought down his work from the beginning of the world to his own times, concludes it with the apotheosis of Julius Cæsar. He here takes an opportunity of complimenting Augustus, as being more worthy of divine honours than even his

predecessor, while he promises him a long and glorious reign. Augustus, however, had not to wait for death to receive divine honours, as he enjoyed the glory of seeing himself worshipped as a Deity and adored at altars erected to him, even in his lifetime. According to Appian, he was but twenty-eight years of age when he was ranked among the tutelar Divinities by all the cities of the empire.

The Romans, who deduced their origin from Æneas, were flattered at the idea of Venus interesting herself in behalf of her posterity, and securing the honours of an apotheosis for Julius Cæsar. The historical circumstances which Ovid here refers to were the following:--After Julius Cæsar had been murdered in the Senate house, Augustus ordered public games to be instituted in his honour. We learn from Suetonius, that during their celebration a new star, or rather a comet, made its appearance, on which it was promulgated that the soul of the deified Julius had taken its place among the stars, and that Venus had procured him that honour. It was then remembered, that the light of the Sun had been unusually pallid the whole year following the death of Cæsar; this which is generally supposed to have been caused by some spots which then appeared on the disk of the sun, was ascribed to the grief of Apollo. Various persons were found to assert various prodigies. Some said that it had rained blood, others that the moon and stars had been obscured; while others, still more imaginative, asserted that beasts had uttered words, and that the dead had risen from their graves.

The sorrow of the Gods and of nature at the untimely death of Julius being thus manifested, Augustus proceeded to found a temple in his honour, established priests for his service, and erected a statue of him with a star on its forehead. He was afterwards represented in the attitude of ascending to the heavens, and wielding a sceptre in his hand. While flatterers complimented Augustus upon the care which he had taken to enrol his predecessor among the Deities, there were some, the poet Manilius being of the number, who considered that heaven was almost over-peopled by him. Augustus, however, was not the sole author of the story of the apotheosis of Julius Cæsar. The people had previously attempted to deify him, though opposed by Cicero and Dolabella. In the funeral oration which was delivered over Julius Cæsar by Antony, he spoke of him as a God, and the populace, moved by his eloquence, and struck at his blood-stained garments and his body covered with wounds, were filled with indignation against the conspirators, and were about to take the corpse to the Capitol, there to be buried; but the priests would not permit it, and had it brought back to the Forum, where it was burnt. Dio Cassius says, that the Roman people raised an altar on the spot where the body had been burnt, and endeavoured to make libations and to offer sacrifices there, as to a Divinity, but that the Consuls overthrew the altar. Suetonius says, that a pillar was also erected to him, of about twenty feet in height, with the inscription, ‘parenti patriæ,’ ‘To the father of his country,’ and that for some

time persons resorted to that spot to offer sacrifices and to make vows. He adds, that he was made a Divinity by a public decree, but he does not say at what time.

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Title: The Metamorphoses of Ovid, Books I–VII

Author: Ovid

Translator: Henry T. Riley

Release date: June 8, 2007 [eBook #21765]
Most recently updated: June 28, 2021

Language: English

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Title: The Metamorphoses of Ovid, Books VIII–XV

Author: Ovid

Translator: Henry T. Riley

Release date: July 16, 2008 [eBook #26073]
Most recently updated: October 28, 2023

Language: English

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