

WHITE CATHERINE ANN

THE STUDENT'S
MYTHOLOGY

Catherine White

The Student's Mythology

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Catherine Ann White
The Student's Mythology / A Compendium of
Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian,
Hindoo, Chinese, Thibetian, Scandinavian,
Celtic, Aztec, and Peruvian Mythologies

MYTHOLOGY

CHAPTER I

Ques. What is Mythology?

Ans. This word is derived from the Greek, *Mythos*, a myth or fable, and *logos*, a discourse. A myth is, properly speaking, an allegory or fable invented to convey some important moral or religious truth, or illustrate some operation of nature. Mythology includes also the historical myths, or the narratives of gods, demigods, and heroes, which were current among the heathen in ancient times.

Ques. Why is it necessary to become acquainted with these fables?

Ans. Because ancient literature and art cannot be fully understood or appreciated without some knowledge of Mythology. It was mingled with every theme of the classic poet, and inspired the highest skill of the painter and sculptor.

These subjects keep their place to some extent in modern art, and mythological allusions are so frequent in our literature that an acquaintance with classic fable is considered a necessary part of a liberal education.

Ques. Did all the heathen nations worship the same deities?

Ans. The mythology of different nations varied as to the names and attributes of their divinities. There are, nevertheless, so many points of resemblance, that it is believed by many that the principal mythical systems had one common origin. To trace these analogies, and the developments which gave rise to so great a diversity, is the province of comparative mythology.

Ques. In what important point do all these systems agree?

Ans. In the rite of sacrifice. We meet everywhere the same offerings: flowers, first fruits, libations of milk, honey, and wine; also sacrifices of animals, which were either partaken of by the votaries or consumed as holocausts upon the altar.

This mode of worship varied but little in ceremonial, and the sacrifices of the different heathen nations resembled, in their exterior form, those offered to the true God by the ancient patriarchs. The idea of propitiating the deity in such a manner seems to have been universal both in the old and the new world, and we are forced to believe that it was drawn from a common fount of primeval tradition.

Ques. How did the belief in the heathen deities originate?

Ans. When the early traditions of the human race became corrupt, the sublime idea of one God, self-existent and eternal, was lost or obscured. We find it, though vaguely perhaps, in the character and attributes of certain divinities, as the Zeus (Jupiter) of the Greek, and the Alfädur of Scandinavian mythology. There are passages in the early Greek poets which show clearly a belief in the unity of God. In the verses attributed to the mythic poet Orpheus, and generally known as Orphic Remains, we find the following:

“One self-existent lives; created things
Arise from him; and He is all in all.
No mortal sight may see Him, yet Himself
Sees all that live; * * *
* * * For He alone
All heavenly is, and all terrestrial things
Are wrought by Him. First, midst and last he holds
With His omniscient grasp.”

The same idea is expressed in the verses of the poet Aratus, quoted by St. Paul in his address to the Athenians on the Hill of Mars.

Instead of ministering spirits obeying the will of the Supreme Being, and communicating that will to man, there arose a number of inferior deities, each exercising some peculiar and partial sovereignty. The god whom the warrior invoked in battle was powerless to bless the field he cultivated in time of peace; the power of Jupiter was worshipped in the rolling thunder; but when the earth trembled or fiery torrents burst from the mountain top, the wrath of Pluto must be appeased, and sacrifices were offered to the infernal powers. The strife and turbulence of nature were attributed to the gods, who became in some manner identified with the elements they were supposed to govern.

The honors paid to the memory of departed heroes assumed, in the course of time, the character of religious worship. Hence arose a class of demigods, whose real achievements, transmitted by popular tradition and embellished by the poets, became altogether legendary and mythical.

Ques. Were the Greek and Roman mythologies the same?

Ans. They were, to a great extent. The ancient Latins had, undoubtedly, their own gods and their peculiar superstitions, but they do not appear to have had any regular mythology. When the Romans received the arts and sciences from the Greeks, they adopted, also, their divinities and their entire system of religion.

They shared a tradition, which seems to have been universal, of a time of primeval innocence, when man dwelt in a peaceful world, ignorant alike of sorrow and of sin. This was the Golden Age. Avarice and discord were unknown; men had not learned to slay animals for food, nor had the earth been disturbed by the plough. Neither the labors of the husbandman, nor the merchant's traffic disturbed the joyous leisure of that happy time; no ships ploughed the seas, and the glittering steel rested harmless in the mine. Ovid thus describes the days of innocence:

“The Golden Age was first, when man, yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew,
And, with a native bent did good pursue.
Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere;
Needless was written law where none oppressed;
The law of man was written in his breast:
No suppliant crowds before the judge appeared,
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard,
But all was safe; for conscience was their guard.

* * * * *

No walls were yet, nor fence, nor moat, nor mound,

Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound,
Nor swords were forged; but, void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time."

The Silver Age was far inferior to that of gold; but virtue still dwelt on earth, and the Immortals had not altogether departed from the abodes of men. Jupiter then divided the year into seasons, shortened the winter days, and let loose the northern blasts, so that men were obliged to build dwellings, and cultivate the ungrateful soil.

Their first habitations were caves and grottoes, leafy coverts of the forest, or huts rudely constructed of the trunks of trees and interwoven boughs.

The Brazen Age came next; men grew fierce and warlike, but were not as yet altogether impious.

The Iron Age gave birth to all the calamities that afflict mankind. Avarice and violence reigned supreme; men were not satisfied to till the earth, but dug into its hidden mines, and drew thence gold and iron, potent instruments of ill to man.

The same poet says:

"Then land-marks limited to each his right;
For all before was common as the light.
Nor was the ground alone required to bear
Her annual income to the crooked share,
But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,
Dugged from her entrails first the precious ore
(Which next to hell the prudent gods had laid,)
And that alluring ill to sight displayed.
Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold:
And double death did wretched man invade,
By steel assaulted, and by gold betrayed."

Dryden's Ovid.

MOUNT OLYMPUS

Ques. Where were the gods supposed to dwell?

Ans. On the summit of Mount Olympus, in Thessaly. This mountain hides its head, covered with perpetual snows, in a belt of clouds. The Greeks imagined above these, a sublime abode reposing in eternal sunshine, and free from the storms which vexed the lower world. A gate of clouds, guarded by the goddesses of the seasons, opened to permit the passage of the Celestials when they descended to earth. Each god had his own dwelling, but all were obliged to repair, when summoned, to the palace of Jupiter. Even those deities whose usual abode was on the earth, in the waters, or in the lower shades, were compelled to assemble in Olympus at his command. Here they feasted on ambrosia and nectar, discoursed upon the affairs of heaven and earth, and were delighted at intervals by the music of Apollo's lyre, and the songs of the Muses.

Vulcan was smith, architect and chariot builder to the gods. He built their dwellings on Olympus, and constructed the furniture in so wonderful a manner, that the tripods and tables were endowed with motion, and ranged themselves in order without the aid of hands. The robes of the different divinities were wrought by Minerva and the Graces. Everything of a solid nature was constructed of metal.

THE GODS—DIFFERENT CLASSES OF DEITIES

Ques. Did the Greeks believe that the gods resembled men?

Ans. Yes; in many particulars. They supposed them to have the same passions, both good and evil. They were immortal, yet could suffer pain and receive wounds. Instead of blood a fluid called ichor filled their veins. The deities resembled men also in form, but they were, with some exceptions, of majestic stature and shone with celestial beauty. They could render themselves invisible at will, and were otherwise endowed with supernatural powers. There was this restraint upon their wonder-working gifts: no divinity was permitted to reverse the act of another. For example, when an offended god subjected a mortal to some cruel transformation, no other deity, not even Jupiter himself, could undo the spell.

Ques. Into what classes were the gods divided?

Ans. Ancient writers differ in the classification of the Greek and Roman divinities. According to one division, which we will follow, the Celestial gods were: Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Mercury and Bacchus. The goddesses were: Juno, Minerva or Pallas, Venus, Aurora and Latona.

To these higher divinities, Saturn, Janus, Vesta and others were sometimes added. There were also Terrestrial divinities, Gods of the Sea, Infernal deities, etc. etc.

CHAPTER II

GREEK AND ROMAN DIVINITIES

Celestial Gods

JUPITER, (Greek, *Zeus*.)

Ques. Who was Jupiter?

Ans. He was the king and father of gods and men. He is generally represented as a majestic man with a beard, sitting on a throne of gold and ivory. He brandishes the thunder in his right hand; giants lie prostrate under his feet, and an eagle stands at his side. Jupiter is sometimes called Jove, and as the eagle was sacred to him, it is often called the bird of Jove.

Ques. Relate the story of Dionysus and Jupiter's cloak.

Ans. The statues of this god were sometimes decorated with much magnificence. It is related that Dionysus, the tyrant of Syracuse, visited a temple in Sicily, where he saw a statue of Jupiter arrayed in a mantle of wrought gold. This he took possession of, and ordered in its place a woollen cloak. Dionysus justified the act on the plea that the latter garment would be more comfortable for the god at all seasons, as it was neither so heavy in summer, nor so cold in winter.

Ques. Of whom was Jupiter the son?

Ans. He was the son of Saturn and Ops. According to the fable, Saturn promised his brother Titan, that after his death, the latter should succeed him in his kingdom. To ensure this, Titan made Saturn promise farther to destroy all his male children. In fulfillment of this engagement, Saturn devoured them as soon as they were born. Ops, or Rhea, his wife, succeeded in concealing Jupiter from him. She sent him secretly to Crete where he was educated on Mount Ida, by the nymphs, or, according to some, by the priestesses of Cybele. The goat which suckled him was placed afterwards amongst the constellations. Ops saved Neptune and Pluto in the same manner.

Ques. What were Jupiter's first exploits?

Ans. Titan was so much enraged against Saturn for failing to destroy all his male children, that he assembled the giants, generally called Titans, to avenge the injury. They overcame Saturn, and bound him with Ops, or Rhea, in hell. Jupiter conquered the Titans, and delivered his father and mother. He afterwards took up arms against Saturn himself, whom he overcame and banished. He then shared his power with his two brothers, Neptune and Pluto; to Neptune he gave the command of the seas and rivers, while Pluto received for his portion the subterranean world, or infernal regions.

Ques. What natural phenomena were attributed to Jupiter?

Ans. Thunder, lightning, rain, clouds, snow, and rainbows. These were sent by Jupiter either as signs or warnings, or else to punish the transgressions of men, particularly the perversion of law and justice. It seems certain that the ancients regarded Jupiter as a righteous power, the enemy of tyrants, and the protector of the poor and innocent. It is hard to reconcile this character with the fables which ascribe to this god actions in the last degree base and criminal.

Ques. How would you explain this seeming contradiction?

Ans. Many of these stories were simply allegories, illustrating the dominion of Jupiter over the natural world. Others were invented at later times; and all were embellished by the poets with but little regard for moral or religious sentiment. Whatever their origin, there can be no doubt that they had an unfavorable influence on the pagan world, and that they contributed to weaken whatever respect remained for public or private virtue.

Ques. Relate some of these fables.

Ans. Jupiter was married to Juno, to whom he first appeared in the form of a crow. He constantly excited her jealousy by his admiration of mortal women, and this gave rise to many adventures, celebrated by the poets.

Ques. What was the story of Euro'pa?

Ans. Jupiter was struck by the beauty of Euro'pa, daughter of Age'nor, king of Phœnicia. He took the form of a snow-white bull, and mingled with the herd that grazed in the meadow where the young princess was gathering flowers. Euro'pa, attracted by the beauty and gentleness of the animal, caressed him, crowned him with flowers, and at length fearlessly mounted on his back. He immediately plunged into the sea, and carried her to the unknown shores of Europe, which was named from her.

Ques. On what was the story of Euro'pa probably founded?

Ans. It is probable that some sea captain, or pirate, was attracted by the beauty of the young princess, and carried her off. When her father grieved at her loss, the courtiers, and perhaps the oracles, pretended that it was a god who had taken her away. As this report was flattering to his pride, he would of course be pleased to hear it everywhere repeated. This, however, did not prevent Age'nor from making every effort to recover his lost child.

Ques. Relate the story of Cadmus.

Ans. Cadmus, the son of Age'nor, was ordered by his father to go in search of his sister Euro'pa, with the further injunction, that he should never return to his native land without her. The search proved fruitless, and Cadmus, not daring to appear before his father, went to consult the oracle of Apollo as to what he should do. He was directed by the god to follow a young heifer, which he would meet in the fields, and to mark the place where she should lie down to rest. He was to build a city on that spot, and call the surrounding country Bœotia. Cadmus obeyed these instructions; while preparing to offer sacrifice to Jupiter on the site of his intended town, the solemnity was interrupted by a terrible event. The attendants of Cadmus, in searching for water, had entered a grove sacred to Mars, which was guarded by a mighty dragon. On perceiving him, they turned to fly, but were either crushed in the serpent's folds, or suffocated by blasts of the monster's fiery breath. Cadmus, awaiting their return, and becoming impatient at the delay, proceeded to the spot, and found his servants lifeless, while the dragon was basking at his ease upon the grass. The hero, aroused to vengeance, attacked the monster. A terrible combat ensued, in which Cadmus, through the assistance of Minerva, was victorious. As he gazed upon his expiring foe, he heard a frightful voice which threatened him with the vengeance of the god whose grove he had desecrated. Cadmus was at first dismayed, but Minerva told him to sow the dragon's teeth in the ground, and await the result. Where the teeth were planted, armed men immediately sprung up. Cadmus threw a stone among them, upon which they turned their weapons against one another, and continued to fight until all were killed except five. These assisted the hero in building his city.

Cadmus married Hermi'one, the daughter of Venus; they had four daughters, all of whom suffered persecution, either in their own persons, or in those of their children. Cadmus and Hermi'one were so much afflicted by the misfortunes of their descendants, that they petitioned the gods to deprive them of life. They were soon after changed into serpents.

Ques. Relate the punishment of Lyca'on.

Ans. During the Iron Age the wickedness of men had grown to such a height that Jupiter resolved to satisfy himself of the truth of the reports that reached him. For this purpose he descended to earth, and assuming the disguise of a poor traveller, sought hospitality of Lyca'on, king of Arcadia. The impious prince had just received an ambassador from the Molossians. He ordered him to be slain, and his flesh to be served for the entertainment of his guest. Jupiter was seized with indignation; he overturned the tables, destroyed the palace with lightning, and when the tyrant strove to fly, he was transformed into a savage wolf.

CHAPTER III

PHŒBUS—APOLLO

Ques. Who was Apollo?

Ans. He was the son of Jupiter and Lato'na. This god was, with his twin-sister Diana, born at Delos, an island in which Lato'na had taken refuge from the anger of Juno. This goddess, jealous of Lato'na, sent the serpent Python to destroy her. One of the first exploits of Apollo was to kill the Python with his arrows.

Ques. How is this god generally represented?

Ans. As a young man, comely and graceful. He wears a laurel crown over his flowing hair; his garments are embroidered with gold; in his right hand he carries his bow, and bears on his shoulder a quiver filled with arrows. Apollo and his sister Diana presided respectively over the sun and moon. The sun is often called Phœbus, or Apollo, and in ancient pictures the head of the god is represented as darting rays. Apollo, like other divinities, had many names.

Ques. What was the cause of Apollo's being driven from heaven?

Ans. He had a son named Æsculapius, who was so skilled in medicine that he was even able to restore the dead to life. Hippol'ytus, son of Theseus, king of Athens, was killed by sea-monsters. Æsculapius, by bringing him to life, so offended Jupiter that the latter killed him with a thunderbolt. Apollo was much grieved, and, as he could not take revenge on Jupiter, he killed the Cyclops who forged the thunderbolts. For this reason Jupiter banished Apollo from heaven.

Ques. How did he occupy himself in his banishment?

Ans. He guarded the flocks of Admetus, king of Thessaly. Here he had the misfortune accidentally to kill Hyacinthus, a boy to whom he was much attached. Apollo mourned deeply for the youth, and caused a flower to spring from his blood, which is called the hyacinth. Cyparis'sus was also beloved by the god. The boy grieved so deeply at having unintentionally killed a favorite deer, that he begged Apollo to make his mourning perpetual. The god heard his prayer and changed him to a cypress, the branches of which tree were always used at funerals. After many adventures and wanderings, Apollo was restored to the favor of Jupiter, and to heaven.

Ques. What favor did Apollo confer on King Admetus?

Ans. He obtained from the Fates, that when Admetus should be about to end his existence, his life might be prolonged, provided another died willingly in his stead. When the fatal day came, Alcestis, the wife of Admetus, devoted herself to death for her husband. Admetus grieved so deeply at her loss that Proserpine actually relented, but Pluto remained inexorable. Hercules, however, descended to the shades, and rescued Alcestis, who was restored to her husband. Euripides has founded one of his most beautiful tragedies upon this story.

Ques. Over what sciences did Apollo preside?

Ans. He presided over physic, music, poetry, and rhetoric; and the nine Muses were subject to him. He regulated the day by guiding the chariot of the sun.

Ques. What else is said of Apollo?

Ans. Many absurd and impossible adventures are told. He seems to have been very vain of his musical skill, as we see from the punishment he inflicted on Mar'syas, and King Midas for coming in conflict with him on that point.

Ques. Relate these stories.

Ans. Apollo was challenged by Mar'syas to a contest in music. The god was not content with defeating the presumptuous musician, but flayed him alive, and afterwards changed him into a river, which is still known by his name.

The punishment inflicted on King Midas was not so cruel. This prince had the bad taste to declare his preference for the vulgar music of Pan, in a contest which that god had with Apollo. The insulted deity caused his ears to grow in length and shape like those of an ass. Midas endeavored to cover the deformity by his hair, and since it was impossible to conceal it from his barber, he bound him to silence by great promises. This man, however, found it so painful to keep the secret to himself, that to obtain relief, he dug a little hole in the ground, and whispered it to the earth. What was his dismay at hearing the hollow reeds which grew upon the spot, whispering, whenever the wind blew: "King Midas has asses' ears!"

Ques. Is anything else related of King Midas?

Ans. Yes; he had kindly and hospitably entertained Silenus, the preceptor of Bacchus, and in return, the god bade him choose any recompense he pleased. Midas demanded that whatever he should touch might be turned into gold. This prayer was granted, and he was at first overjoyed to see plants, stones and all around him transformed into glittering metal. He soon perceived his folly, however, for when, pressed by hunger, he tried to partake of the food placed before him, it was suddenly converted into gold, and when he would have quenched his thirst, the water was changed into a golden stream. Famished in the midst of plenty, Midas prayed the god to withdraw the fatal gift. Bacchus kindly consented, and ordered him to bathe in the river Páctolus. Midas obeyed, but the virtue which left his body was communicated to the waters of the stream, which was famous ever after for its golden sands.

Ques. Who was Phæton?

Ans. He was the son of Phœbus and Clym'ene. At the earnest solicitation of his mother, he repaired to the palace of the Sun for the purpose of having his parentage publicly acknowledged. The youth was kindly received, and Apollo swore by the Styx to grant him any favor he should ask. Phæton immediately prayed that he might be allowed to drive, for one day only, the chariot of the Sun. Apollo tried to dissuade him from his foolish wish, but in vain. The rash youth was not able to control the fiery horses of the Sun; they departed from their usual track, and heaven and earth were threatened with one universal conflagration. Jupiter perceived the danger, and struck Phæton with a thunderbolt. His body was hurled into the river Po, where it was found and buried by the nymphs of the place. As his sisters were weeping around his tomb, they were changed by Jupiter into poplars.

Ques. Who was Daphne?

Ans. A nymph beloved by Apollo: she was changed into a laurel while she was flying from the pursuit of the god.

Ques. What things were especially sacred to Apollo?

Ans. Among plants, the laurel; among animals, the wolf; and among birds, the hawk, the crow, and the swan were sacred to this god.

CHAPTER IV

MARS—ARES

Ques. Who was Mars?

Ans. He was the son of Jupiter and Juno, and was worshipped as the god of war.

Ques. How was he represented?

Ans. As a warrior in splendid armor, standing in a chariot driven by Bello'na, a distracted woman, who holds a torch in her hand. Mars is fierce in aspect and brandishes a spear. Sometimes Discord is represented going before him in tattered garments, while Anger and Clamor follow in his train. Fear and Terror are the horses which draw the chariot.

Ques. What animals were sacred to Mars?

Ans. The dog, on account of its sagacity in the pursuit of prey; the horse, for its uses in war; the wolf, for its rapacity and cruelty; the raven, because it follows armies, watching for the carcasses of the slain; and the cock, as an emblem of the vigilance which guards against surprise.

Ques. What other names had Mars?

Ans. He was called Quiri'nus when he was quiet, Gradi'vus when he was raging; therefore the Romans built him two temples, one to Mars Quiri'nus within the walls, that he might keep the city in peace; and one without, to Mars Gradi'vus, that he might defend them against their enemies. Among the Romans, priests called Salii attended to the sacrifices of Mars, and on festival days went about the city dancing with their shields. Their name comes from the Latin word "to dance," and was considered appropriate, because Mars is inconstant in his temper, and inclines now to this side, now to that, in time of war. Except the story of his attachment to Venus, the poets relate but little of Mars.

Bellona, the goddess of war, was, according to some, the sister of Mars. She is generally represented as above, but some poets have described her as rushing through the ranks of war, waving a flaming torch, and exciting the combatants by her cries. The temple of Bellona at Rome, was without the city, near the Carmental gate. Here the Senate gave audience to such ambassadors as they were not willing to admit within the walls. A pillar stood before the temple, over which the herald cast a spear when he proclaimed war. The priests of Bellona, when officiating, held naked swords, with which they gashed their arms and shoulders, making libations of their own blood, to the terrible goddess.

CHAPTER V

MERCURY—HERMES

Ques. Who was Mercury?

Ans. He was the son of Jupiter and Ma'ia, the daughter of Atlas. On his mother's account, sacrifices were generally offered to him during the month of May.

Ques. How is Mercury represented?

Ans. As a young man of cheerful countenance, having wings fixed to his helmet and his sandals, and carrying a rod in his hand, which is also winged, and entwined with serpents.

Ques. How are these different equipments named?

Ans. The rod was called Cadu'ceus, and possessed a wonderful faculty for quieting all disputes. His helmet was called Pet'asus, and his winged sandals Talaria.

Ques. What were the offices of Mercury?

Ans. They were various; his most important function was to carry the commands of Jupiter. Mercury is commonly called the messenger of the gods. He also swept the room where the gods supped, and made their beds.

Ques. What else is said of Mercury?

Ans. He was the inventor of letters, and excelled in eloquence. The Greeks worshipped him as the patron of orators, under the name of Hermes. Mercury was also the inventor of weights and measures, and the patron of commerce.

Ques. Were all his talents equally honorable?

Ans. No; he was most skillful in the art of thieving. On the very day of his birth, he stole some cattle from King Admetus, although Apollo was keeping them; and while that god was bending his bow against him, he contrived to steal his quiver. While yet an infant, he stole the tools of Vulcan, the girdle of Venus, and the sceptre of Jupiter. He intended also to steal Jove's thunderbolts, but was fearful they would burn him. Mercury was, therefore, the patron of thieves.

Ques. Relate the history of Io and Argus.

Ans. Io, the daughter of In'achus, was beloved by Jupiter. He strove to hide her from the anger of Juno by transforming her into a cow. The goddess suspected the deceit, and begged the beautiful heifer as a gift. Jupiter was afraid to refuse, and Juno consigned the unhappy Io to the guardianship of Argus. Escape seemed hopeless, as Argus had a hundred eyes, of which he closed only two in sleep, while the others watched. Jupiter commanded Mercury to slay Argus and deliver Io. To effect this, it was necessary to set all his eyes to sleep. Mercury disguised himself as a shepherd, entered into conversation with Argus, and at length played so sweetly on his pipe, that, one by one, the keeper's hundred eyes were closed. The god then drew his falchion, and cut off the head of Argus with a single blow. Juno was grieved for her servant, and placed his eyes in her peacock's tail. Io, still persecuted by Juno, wandered over the earth, and at length arrived, faint and weary, on the banks of the Nile. There she prayed Jupiter either to restore her to her original form, or to terminate her misfortunes by death. Juno was touched with compassion, and allowed Jupiter to grant her request. Io was restored to human form, and married to Osiris, king of Egypt; she was afterwards worshipped in that country under the name of Isis.

The statues of Mercury were simply wooden posts, surmounted by a rude head with a pointed beard. They were set up in the fields, and at all cross roads. The Greeks had pillars of stone, which they called Hermæ, but the head which surmounted them was not always that of Mercury. These pillars were sometimes placed, by the Athenians, at the entrances of their houses as a protection against

thieves. On one occasion, all the Hermæ in Athens were mutilated in the same night. Alcibiades was accused of this sacrilege, and was obliged to take refuge in Cergos from the indignation of the people.

CHAPTER VI

BACCHUS—DIONYSUS

Ques. Who was Bacchus?

Ans. He was the son of Jupiter and Sem'ele and was worshipped as the god of wine.

Ques. How is he represented?

Ans. As a young man, crowned with ivy and grape leaves; he sits in a chariot, drawn sometimes by panthers and lynxes, and sometimes by tigers and lions. He carries in his hand a thyrsus—that is, a staff encircled by ivy and grape leaves; a troop of demons and drunken satyrs follow him.

Ques. What was the story of Sem'ele?

Ans. She was destroyed by the jealousy of Juno. This goddess visited Sem'ele in the shape of an old woman, and persuaded her to ask Jupiter to visit her with all the glory which encompassed him in heaven. All happened as Juno desired, and Sem'ele was consumed by the lightnings which surrounded Jupiter. Bacchus did not share his mother's fate, but was conveyed to Naxos, where he was educated by some nymphs.

Ques. How did Bacchus reward their care?

Ans. He transformed them into the stars known as the Hyades.

Ques. Who aided the nymphs in their care of Bacchus?

Ans. An old man named Silenus. He was considered a demi-god.

Ques. How is Silenus represented?

Ans. He seems to be the personification of drunkenness; he is sometimes represented as seated intoxicated on a cask of wine, his head crowned with grape leaves, and his face stained with the lees of wine; sometimes as mounted on an ass, and following the car of Bacchus.

Ques. What were the first exploits of Bacchus?

Ans. He distinguished himself in the combats between the gods and giants, taking the form of a lion to strike terror into the latter.

Ques. What other actions are attributed to him?

Ans. He taught men how to plant the vine and till the ground. He is said to have subdued India, and many other countries of the East.

Ques. How was he worshipped?

Ans. The goat and the hog were offered to him in sacrifice; and the ivy, the fir, the bindweed, the fig and the vine were consecrated to him.

Ques. What feasts were held in his honor?

Ans. The feasts of Bacchus were various. The Bacchanalia or Orgia were the most celebrated. They were at first participated in by women only but afterwards men were admitted to join in these rites. The women were called Bacchantes, and ran about with their hair dishevelled, shouting and singing in a distracted manner. The Roman Senate at length abolished this festival.

Ques. Relate the story of Pentheus?

Ans. Pentheus was king of Thebes. He not only refused to acknowledge the divinity of Bacchus, but endeavored to prevent the celebration of his orgies. Having presumed to intrude on the revels of the Bacchantes, they were seized by a sort of madness, and rushing upon the unhappy man, tore him to pieces. The mother of Pentheus, and her sisters, were the leaders in this act, which was considered to have been performed under a divine impulse.

Ques. What was the punishment inflicted on Alcitho'e and her sisters?

Ans. These were Theban maidens who ridiculed the orgies of Bacchus. During the celebration of these rites, they remained at home, plying the distaff and the spindle, and singing over their tasks.

For this, Alcitho'e and her sisters were transformed by the power of Bacchus into bats; and the spindle and yarn with which they worked were changed to ivy.

Ques. Relate the transformation of mariners into dolphins?

Ans. A ship touched at Chios for a supply of fresh water. The sailors who went on shore, found near the spring a boy of uncommon grace and beauty. They bore him to the ship, still heavy with sleep and wine, and declared their intention of selling him at the next port. Acœ'tes, their captain, tried to dissuade them from the crime, the more so, as he perceived that there was something more than mortal about the captive youth. In the meantime Bacchus, for it was he, awaking from his slumber, begged the sailors to land him at Naxos. This the captain promised, but when they had set sail, the mariners took possession of the ship, and steered in another direction. The god now revealed himself. The sails and cordage suddenly appeared hung with grapes and ivy; spotted panthers lay at his feet, and when the terrified sailors tried to leap overboard, they were suddenly changed into dolphins. The captain was spared, and landed with Bacchus on the shores of Chios.

Ques. What is the origin of the history of Bacchus?

Ans. He was probably some prince who taught the people to till the ground, and cultivate the vine. They disgraced his memory in after times by the drunken revels they held in his honor.

CHAPTER VII

Celestial Goddesses

JUNO—HERA

Ques. Who was Juno?

Ans. She was the daughter of Saturn and Ops, and was both sister and wife of Jupiter.

Ques. How is she generally represented?

Ans. As seated in a golden chariot drawn by peacocks. She holds a sceptre in her hand, and is crowned with roses and lilies. Iris was the messenger of Juno, as Mercury was of Jupiter.

Ques. How is Iris represented?

Ans. With wings, because of her swiftness, and sometimes also as riding on a rainbow.

Ques. How did Iris differ from Mercury?

Ans. Mercury was often employed in messages of peace; but Iris was frequently sent to promote strife and dissension.

Ques. What children had Juno?

Ans. Vulcan, Mars and Hebe. Hebe was called the goddess of youth, on account of her extraordinary beauty, and Jupiter made her his cup-bearer. She offended him by an unlucky fall, and Ganymede was appointed in her place.

Ques. What were Juno's faults?

Ans. She was very jealous, and took the most cruel revenge on the mortal woman whom Jupiter loved. She transformed Callista and her son Arcas into bears, and was extremely displeased when Jupiter placed them among the constellations.

The goddess carried her complaint to Oceanus, bidding him to observe, when the shades of night should darken the world, how her rival was exalted. The god of Ocean was moved, and promised Juno that he would never receive either Callista or her offspring in his watery domain. Hence it is, that the Greater and the Lesser Bear continually circle around the pole, and never sink, like the other stars, beneath the waves of Ocean. In the fables of Bacchus and Hercules, Juno displays the same character, extending to these heroes the enmity she bore their mortal mothers.

Juno was chiefly honored at Argos, Samos and Plataea. The victims offered to her were kine, ewe lambs, and sows. The cow was consecrated to her, and at Argos the priestess of Juno always rode in a chariot drawn by oxen. The sacred plants of the goddess were, the willow, pomegranate, the dittany and the lily. The peacock was chosen as the bird of Juno, because it was supposed by its cry to indicate a change of weather.

CHAPTER VIII

MINERVA—PALLAS ATHENA

Ques. Who was Minerva?

Ans. She was the goddess of wisdom and of war. She had no mother, but sprang full armed from the head of Jupiter.

Ques. How is Minerva represented?

Ans. As clothed in complete armor. She has a golden helmet on her head, holds a lance in her right hand, and her left rests upon a shield to which is affixed the head of Medusa. The cock and the owl are also represented on the shield.

Ques. Why was Minerva said to have sprung full armed from the head of Jupiter?

Ans. The poets signify by this, that wisdom comes direct from the deity.

Ques. Why is Minerva sometimes crowned with olive?

Ans. Because the olive is the emblem of peace, and war should only be made that a secure peace may follow; also because she bestowed the olive on men.

Ques. On what occasion did Minerva give the olive to men?

Ans. When Cecrops built a new city, Neptune and Minerva contended about its name; and it was resolved that whichever of the two deities should confer the most useful gift on man, might give a name to the city. Neptune struck the ground with his trident, and a horse appeared; but Minerva caused an olive to spring out of the earth. The latter was judged the more useful gift; and Minerva named the city, calling it Athe'na or Athens, after her own name in Greek.

Ques. What was the Palladium?

Ans. When the Trojans were building the temple and castle of Minerva in Troy, a statue of the goddess fell from heaven into the castle, which was still unroofed. The oracle of Apollo declared that Troy would be safe so long as this statue, called Palladium, from Pallas, a name of Minerva, remained within the walls. When the Greeks besieged Troy, they found that all their efforts to take the city were of no avail; they determined, therefore, to steal the Palladium. Ulysses and Diome'des crept into the city through the common sewers, and brought away the image. Troy was soon afterwards taken and destroyed. Minerva was a virgin, and was the patroness of modest and virtuous women.

Ques. Did Minerva excel only in the art of war?

Ans. No; she invented the distaff and spindle, and excelled in every branch of female industry. The fate of Arach'ne shows how much she prized her reputation for skill in embroidery.

Ques. Who was Arach'ne?

Ans. She was a maiden of Lydia, who had the presumption to challenge Minerva to a trial of skill in weaving. The goddess wrought into her work the most beautiful designs, but it would seem that Arach'ne's performance surpassed hers: for Minerva, seeing it, was fired with envy, and struck the unhappy maiden on the face with her shuttle. Arach'ne could not endure this insult, and hung herself from a beam. Minerva immediately changed her into a spider, and permitted her to live only that she might weave unceasingly.

Ques. Why was the owl chosen as the bird of Minerva?

Ans. Because this bird sees in the dark; and wisdom distinguishes what is hidden from common eyes.

Ques. What is the story of Medu'sa's head?

Ans. Medusa was one of three sisters, the daughters of Phorcus. These maidens were called Gorgons, and were all immortal, except Medu'sa. The latter was at one period distinguished for her personal beauty, and particularly for her flowing hair; but having offended Minerva, that goddess

changed her locks into serpents, and rendered her appearance so frightful that all who beheld her were changed to stone. The hero Perseus undertook an expedition against the Gorgons, and as he saw the whole country around covered with figures of men and animals changed into stone by the sight of the monster, he was obliged to use great precaution to avoid the same misfortune. He looked, therefore, not at Medu'sa, but at her reflection in his polished shield, and when he perceived that she was asleep, Minerva guiding his sword, he struck off her head. Mercury had lent Perseus his wings, and as he flew over the Lybian desert bearing Medu'sa's head, the blood fell upon the burning sands, and produced the serpents which have ever since infested that region. From the blood of Medu'sa, also, when her head was cut off, sprang the famous winged horse called Peg'asus. This wonderful steed flew to Mount Helicon, the residence of the Muses, where, by striking the earth with his foot, he produced the fountain Hippocre'ne. All who drank of its waters were inspired by the Muses with a poetic spirit. Perseus went through many other adventures in which Medu'sa's head did him good service, by changing his enemies into stone. He afterwards gave the head to Minerva, who fixed it on her shield.

CHAPTER IX

VENUS—APHRODITE

Ques. Who was Venus?

Ans. She was the goddess of love and beauty. She sprang from the froth of the sea; for this reason the Greeks called her Aphrodi'te, from Aphros, meaning foam. As soon as she was born, she was placed like a pearl in a shell instead of a cradle, and the god Zephyrus (the west wind) wafted her to the shores of Cyprus.

Ques. By whom was she educated?

Ans. She was educated and adorned by the Horæ or Hours, who carried her to heaven as soon she became of age. All the gods were astonished at the beauty of Venus, and many demanded her in marriage; but Jupiter betrothed her to Vulcan, an ugly and deformed divinity.

Ques. How is Venus represented?

Ans. Sometimes as a young virgin rising from the sea, or riding on the waves in a shell, while Cupids, Nereids and Dolphins are sporting around her—again, she is pictured as traversing the heavens in an ivory chariot drawn by doves. She wears a wonderful girdle called the Cestus, her doves are harnessed with golden chains, and Cupids flutter around her on silken wings. Venus is always crowned with roses.

Ques. What was there remarkable in the Cestus of Venus?

Ans. It had the property of conferring grace, beauty, and irresistible attractions on the wearer.

Ques. Where had Venus temples?

Ans. In many places. The most celebrated were at Paphos, Cytherea, Idalia and Cnidos.

Ques. Who were the companions of Venus?

Ans. The Graces were her attendants, and she was generally accompanied by her son Cupid, who was the god of love.

Ques. How is Cupid represented?

Ans. As a beautiful boy with wings, carrying a bow and arrows; he has sometimes a band over his eyes to show that love is blind.

Ques. What do you say of the festivals of Venus?

Ans. They were various, and accompanied by much that was disgraceful and immoral. The swan, the dove, and the sparrow were sacred to this goddess; and among plants, the rose, the myrtle and the apple. Incense, fruits and flowers were the ordinary sacrifices laid on her altars but birds were sometimes offered.

Ques. What remarkable temple was raised to Venus in Rome?

Ans. There was a temple dedicated to Venus Calva, or the Bald; because when the Gauls besieged Rome, the inhabitants made ropes for their military engines with the long hair of the Roman women.

Ques. On what occasion was the prize of beauty adjudged to Venus?

Ans. All the gods and goddesses had been invited to the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, Discordia, or Discord being the only one excluded. This goddess was determined to revenge the slight; she entered secretly, when all were assembled, and threw among them a golden apple on which was written: "For the fairest." A violent quarrel immediately arose between the goddesses, for each believed herself to be the most beautiful. Juno, Minerva, and Venus disputed so eagerly, that Jupiter himself was not able to bring them to an agreement. He resolved, therefore, to refer the matter to the decision of Paris, who was then feeding his sheep on Mount Ida. This prince was the son of Priam, king of Troy. An oracle had foretold before his birth that he was destined to cause the destruction

of his native city. He was, therefore, exposed on Mount Ida, where he was found and cared for by some shepherds. After he had grown up, he acquired a great reputation for the prudence with which he settled the most difficult disputes; hence the difference between the goddesses was referred to his decision. When they appeared before him, they began to court his favor with promises. Juno offered him great power; Minerva, wisdom; but Venus promised to give him for a wife the most beautiful woman in the world. Paris then pronounced Venus the fairest. He was soon after acknowledged by his father, King Priam; and Venus fulfilled her engagement by aiding him to carry off Helen, the beautiful wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta. This gave rise to the total destruction of Troy; and the prediction of the oracle with regard to Paris was accomplished.

Ques. What was the story of Hippomenes and Atalanta?

Ans. Atalanta was the daughter of King Coeneus, and was equally renowned for her beauty and her swiftness in running. As an oracle had declared that marriage would be fatal to her, she freed herself from the importunity of her suitors by a singular expedient. She caused it to be proclaimed that any one who sought her hand should contend with her in running, with the understanding that she would marry him who should excel her in the race, but that those who were beaten should suffer death. Hard as were these conditions, many suitors presented themselves, but they were all unsuccessful, and were put to death without mercy. Hippomenes determined to undertake the race, but first, he had recourse to Venus. This goddess gave him three golden apples gathered in the garden of the Hesperides, and directed him as to their use. When Hippomenes saw that Atalanta was going to outstrip him in the race, he threw down a golden apple; the princess paused to admire and take up the glittering fruit, while Hippomenes passed on. A second and a third time did he try the same expedient, and with such success that he reached the goal and won his bride. Hippomenes was ungrateful to Venus, who revenged herself by changing him into a lion, and the beautiful Atalanta into a lioness.

Ques. Who was Adonis?

Ans. He was a beautiful youth, the son of Cinyras, king of Cyprus, and was beloved by Venus. He was killed by a wild boar, while hunting with that goddess. Venus grieved much for her favorite. To commemorate his cruel fate she caused the flower anemone to spring from his blood.

According to the poets, the rose was formerly white. When Venus was hastening to the assistance of Adonis, her foot was wounded by a thorn, and some drops of blood fell upon that flower, which then assumed its present crimson hue.

Ques. Who were the Graces?

Ans. They were inferior goddesses, who presided over the banquet, the dance and all social enjoyments and elegant arts.

Ques. How many were there?

Ans. They were three in number. Their names were Euphrosyne, Aglaia and Thalia. They are represented as beautiful young women, standing in graceful attitudes with their hands joined.

CHAPTER X

LATONA—LETO

Ques. Who was Latona?

Ans. She was the daughter of Phœbe and Cœus the Titan. When she was driven from heaven by the jealousy of Juno, she found an asylum in the island of Delos, where she gave birth to Apollo and Diana. Terra (the earth) had promised Juno to give no shelter to her rival, but the island of Delos formerly floated in the sea, and was at that time hidden under the waters. Neptune, pitying the forlorn state of Latona, caused it to emerge from the sea, when it became fixed and immovable for her use.

Ques. Relate the transformation of Lycian peasants into frogs.

Ans. Latona, while wandering with her babes in the country of Lycia, in Asia, arrived, exhausted by heat and fatigue, on the borders of a clear pool. She was about to quench her thirst in the cool waters, when some clowns rudely hindered her. She begged them to have compassion, and not deny her so small a refreshment; but they mocked her prayers, and when she tried to approach they waded into the pool, and, stirring up the mud, defiled the waters so that it became unfit to drink. The goddess was so much incensed, that she changed the cruel rustics into frogs, and condemned them to dwell forever in the muddy pool.

The punishment of Niobe will be related in another place. The sufferings of the giant Tityus in hell, were also the penalty of an insult offered to this goddess.

The Greeks personified Night, under the name of Latona; hence she was said to have been the first wife of Jupiter, the mother of Apollo and Diana, (the sun and moon) and the nurse of the earth and stars. The Egyptians had the same allegory, with a little variation, as, according to them, she was grandmother and nurse of Horus and Bu'bastis, their Apollo and Diana.

This goddess is generally represented on ancient monuments, as a large and beautiful woman, wearing a veil. In paintings, the veil is always black; in cutting gems, artists sometimes availed themselves of a dark colored vein in the stone, to produce the same effect, and represent the shades of night. The veil is sometimes studded with stars.

CHAPTER XI

AURORA—EOS

Ques. Who was Aurora?

Ans. She was the goddess of the morning and sister of the sun and moon. She is represented as seated in a golden chariot drawn by milk-white horses; her countenance is brilliant, and her fingers are red like roses.

Ques. What did this represent?

Ans. The beauty of the morning heavens.

Ques. Relate the story of Ceph'alus and Procris.

Ans. Ceph'alus, a beautiful youth, was beloved by Aurora, who carried him with her to heaven; but he regarded the goddess with indifference, and insisted on returning to his young wife Procris. Aurora allowed him to depart, but prevailed on him to visit his house in disguise, that he might judge of the constancy of his bride. Ceph'alus found his wife lamenting his absence and refusing all consolation, but when she discovered her husband in the supposed stranger, she was so indignant at his suspicion that she fled from him and joined the attendants of Diana. She was afterwards reconciled to Ceph'alus, and gave him two presents which she had received from Diana. These were, a dog that was always sure of its prey, and an arrow which never missed its aim, and returned immediately to the hand of the owner. Ceph'alus was extremely fond of hunting, and when fatigued, he often rested in the shade and invited the presence of "Aura," or the refreshing breeze. This word was mistaken for the name of a nymph by some persons who carried the tale to Procris. Being jealous in her turn, she determined to watch, and discover her rival. When Ceph'alus returned from hunting, Procris concealed herself in the grove; she started upon hearing the name Aura, and caused a rustling among the leaves. Ceph'alus immediately threw his unerring dart, which returned to his hand stained with the blood of his beloved wife. He hastened to the spot, but it was too late, and Procris expired in his arms, acknowledging she had fallen a victim to her own groundless jealousy.

Ques. To whom was Aurora married?

Ans. She chose for her husband Titho'nus, the son of Laom'edon, king of Troy. This prince was endowed with wonderful beauty; but when Aurora begged of Jove that he might be exempted from death, she forgot to ask at the same time for the bloom of immortal youth. When Titho'nus became old and decrepit, Aurora still watched over him with the tenderest care, "giving him ambrosial food and fair garments." When Titho'nus could no longer move his aged limbs, and his feeble voice was scarcely heard, the goddess was moved with compassion, and changed him into a grasshopper.

Ques. Who was Memnon?

Ans. He was king of the Ethiopians, and son of Titho'nus and Aurora. When Troy was besieged, Memnon came with an army to aid the kindred of his father. In the first engagements he slew Antil'ochus, the son of Nestor, and threw the whole army of the Greeks into disorder. Achil'les, however, appeared on the field, and changed the fortune of the day. The Trojans were routed in their turn, and Memnon fell by the hand of the Grecian hero. Aurora watched the combat from the heavens, and when she saw Memnon fall she directed the winds to convey his body to the banks of the river Æse'pus in Paphlagonia. Here they raised his tomb in a sacred grove, and his obsequies were celebrated with solemn pomp. The sparks, as they rose from the funeral pyre, were changed into birds, which divided into two flocks, and fought together until they fell into the flames and were consumed. According to the poets, Aurora was never consoled for the loss of her son; she mourns unceasingly, and the drops which sparkle in the morning on the grass and flowers are the tears which the goddess continues to shed during the long hours of night. Ancient history mentions many persons of the name of Memnon,

particularly a general who distinguished himself in Persia against Alexander the Great. The Memnon of fable was in all probability an Egyptian, and not an Ethiopian king. His statue is still an object of curiosity to travellers.

Ques. Where is this statue, and for what is it remarkable?

Ans. It is one of two colossal figures which are directly opposite the great temple of Luxor. They are called by the Arabs, Shama and Dama. The statue of Memnon is the more northerly of the two, and was formerly celebrated for its vocal powers.

It is commonly asserted by ancient writers that when the first rays of the rising sun fell upon this statue, it acknowledged the presence of Aurora, and uttered a sound like the sudden breaking of a harp-string. By some, it was compared to a blow struck on hollow brass.

Ques. Was there any foundation for such a belief?

Ans. It appeared quite certain that the sounds of which we have spoken, were really heard from this statue at sunrise; the only question is as to the means by which they were produced. The Colossus, although in a sitting posture, measures fifty-two feet in height, and the throne on which it rests is thirty feet long and eighteen broad. These dimensions were sufficient to admit of any internal machinery that might be required to produce the mysterious sounds. Such was the supposition of the Persian king Cambyses, who had the statue cleft asunder from the head to the middle of the body, but without discovering anything. Humboldt conjectured that the sound might be attributed to the nature of the stone, or to the action of the sun's rays upon the air confined in the cavities of the statue. A much more reasonable solution of the mystery has been furnished by Mr. Wilkinson, an intelligent English traveller. He discovered in the lap of the statue a stone, which, on being struck, emits a metallic sound. There is a hollow space hewn in the block behind this stone, sufficiently large to admit of a person lying within it, entirely concealed from observation. Mr. Wilkinson tried the experiment, and was convinced that he had discovered the secret of this famous statue.

The face of the Memnon, like that of the Sphinx, has been mutilated by the Arabs; the positions of the figures which are yet uninjured show that the whole must have presented a beautiful and imposing appearance. The base of the throne is covered with ancient inscriptions in Greek and Latin, commemorating the visits of different illustrious persons, and testifying that they had heard the mysterious voice of Memnon.

CHAPTER XII

Terrestrial Gods

SATURN

Ques. Who was Saturn?

Ans. He was the son of Cœlum and Terra. He was married to Ops, or Rhea, and was the father of Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto. As we have already learned, Saturn devoured the rest of his male children.

Ques. How is he represented?

Ans. Saturn is represented as an old man armed with a scythe, which signifies that time mows down everything in its course; and he holds in his hands an infant which he is about to devour, because time destroys all that it brings forth.

Ques. How did Saturn lose his kingdom?

Ans. He was deposed by Jupiter, and was obliged to take refuge in Italy, where he taught the people the arts of civilized life. Janus, king of Italy, made Saturn partner of his kingdom, and that part of the country was called Latium, from a Latin word which meant to hide; it was sometimes also called Saturnia. Saturn's government was so wise and beneficial that his reign was called the Golden Age. The poets tell us that all men then lived on a perfect equality, property was held in common, and the earth brought forth its fruits without labor.

Ques. What sacrifices were offered to Saturn?

Ans. He was worshipped with human sacrifices, which seems strange when we consider that he was so mild a king. The planet Saturn was supposed by the ancients to exercise a malignant influence.

Ques. What were the Saturnalia?

Ans. They were solemnities instituted by Tullus Hostilius, king of Rome. In early times the festival lasted one day, but after Julius Cæsar, it was prolonged to three, four, or five days.

Ques. How were these days observed?

Ans. They were a season of general rejoicing; the Senate did not sit, schools gave holidays, and friends sent presents to one another. It was unlawful to proclaim war or execute criminals during this festival. Servants might, at this time, say what they pleased to their masters, who could not take offence; also, in memory of the freedom and equality enjoyed in Saturn's reign, they sat at table while their masters served, and reproved the latter freely if they were guilty of any awkwardness. Lastly, servants and common people were allowed to wear purple cloaks, a distinction reserved at other times to the patricians. The Saturnalia is probably represented in some degree by the modern Carnival. Saturn is thought by some persons to have been the same as Noah.

JANUS

Ques. Who was Janus?

Ans. He was an ancient Italian deity, of whose origin very contradictory accounts are given. He was supposed to have reigned in Italy in the time of Saturn, and to have associated that god with him in the kingdom. He was generally represented with two faces, and was called hence, Janus Bifrons. He had many temples in Rome. The gates of the chief temple, that of Janus Quirinus, were always open in time of war, and closed when the Romans were at peace. It is a remarkable circumstance

that the gates of Janus were closed but three times in seven hundred years. They were shut for the first time in the reign of Numa; again, after the first Punic war; and Augustus closed the temple the third time when he had given peace to the world. This occurred just before the coming of our Lord. The first month of the year is named from Janus.

CHAPTER XIII

VULCAN—HAPHÆSTUS

Ques. Who was Vulcan?

Ans. He was the son of Jupiter and Juno, but was cast down from heaven on account of his deformed appearance. He landed in Lemnos, but broke his leg in the fall, and remained lame ever afterwards.

Ques. How was Vulcan represented?

Ans. As a smith standing by an anvil with tools in his hand.

Ques. What was his occupation?

Ans. He had a blacksmith shop in Lemnos, where he manufactured Jupiter's thunderbolts, and the arms of the other gods. Vulcan was the god of fire, and the patron of blacksmiths and armorers.

Ques. What were the most celebrated works of Vulcan?

Ans. The armor of Achil'les and of Æne'as, the beautiful necklace of Hermi'one, the crown of Ariadne, and the brazen palace of the sun. The shield of Achil'les was enamelled with metals of various colors, and embossed with beautiful historical designs.

Ques. To whom was Vulcan married?

Ans. Vulcan was married to Venus, but that goddess behaved treacherously towards him and attached herself to Mars.

Ques. Who were the servants of Vulcan?

Ans. The attendants of Vulcan were called Cyclops, because they had each one eye in the middle of the forehead; they were the offspring of Neptune and Amphitri'te.

Ques. How was Vulcan worshipped?

Ans. The Romans celebrated feasts in his honor called Vulcania. At these they sacrificed animals by throwing them into the fire to be burned to death. The Athenians also kept feasts of Vulcan, and there was in Sicily, upon Mount Etna, a famous temple dedicated to him.

Ques. What was peculiar about this temple?

Ans. The approach to it was guarded by dogs, whose scent was so keen that they could discover whether the persons coming to the temple were virtuous or wicked. To the servants of Vulcan might be added Cacus, who stole the oxen of Hercules; and the robber Cæ'culus, from whom the noble Roman family of the Cæcili' derived their name. He was the founder of the city of Præneste. One fable is, that certain shepherds found Cæ'culus, when an infant, lying unhurt in a glowing fire, from which circumstance he was supposed to be the son of Vulcan. The shepherd, Polyphemus, resembled the Cyclops, and was, like them, a son of Neptune. The monster devoured several of the companions of Ulysses, but the hero, having made him drunk with wine, put out his single eye with a firebrand and escaped. He embarked in haste, pursued by the monster; his companions shouted defiance as they weighed anchor, and the blind Cyclops, directed by the sound of their voices, hurled a rock into the sea, by which their vessel was almost swamped. Warned by this danger, they rowed silently until they reached the open sea. Some writers have imagined that the Cyclops were a race of miners, who, descending into the deep recesses of the earth, and coming forth again, had a lamp attached to their foreheads, to give them light. This, at a distance, would appear like a large, flaming eye, and might give rise to the fable of one-eyed monsters. This explanation is, however, far fetched and improbable.

Ques. Can you name any works of Vulcan, beside those already mentioned?

Ans. Yes, he made for Alcinoûs, king of the Phæacians, gold and silver dogs which guarded his house. To Minos, king of Crete, he gave the brazen man Talus, who passed around the island three

times every day, to guard it from invasion. For himself, Vulcan formed golden handmaidens, whom he endowed with reason and speech.

CHAPTER XIV

ÆOLUS

Ques. Who was Æolus?

Ans. He was the god of the winds; he could imprison them in a dark cave, or, by setting them free, create tempests.

Ques. What was the origin of this fable?

Ans. It is believed that Æolus was a skillful astronomer who dwelt in a volcanic island. By noticing the clouds of smoke, and how they rose, he was enabled to foretell storms a long time before they happened; hence the ignorant believed that he could bring high winds and tempests whenever he pleased.

MOMUS

Ques. Who was Momus?

Ans. He was the son of Night and Sleep; the name Momus signifies a jester. His occupation was to criticise the other gods, and censure their actions.

Ques. Give an example?

Ans. Neptune, Vulcan, and Minerva contended for the prize of skill; Neptune made a bull, Minerva a house, and Vulcan a man. Momus was called upon to decide their merits, but he blamed them all. He said that Neptune was imprudent in not placing the bull's horns in his forehead, before his eyes, that he might give a stronger and surer blow. He found fault with Minerva's house, because it was immovable and could not be carried away if it were placed among bad neighbors. He said that Vulcan was the worst of all, because he did not put a window in the man's breast so that his thoughts might be seen. No god could escape the censure of Momus. When he could find nothing to criticise in the person of Venus, he complained of the noise made by her golden sandals. Momus was at length driven from Olympus.

CHAPTER XV

Terrestrial Goddesses

VESTA—HESTIA

Ques. Who was Vesta?

Ans. She was the daughter of Saturn and Ops or Rhea, and was, therefore, the sister of Jupiter. She was considered the guardian of homes and firesides, and was a household divinity. Statues of Vesta were placed by the Romans at the entrance of their houses; hence the word vestibule, which we still use.

Ques. How is Vesta usually represented?

Ans. As seated on the ground, and leaning upon a drum, while various domestic animals are grouped about her.

Ques. What was the character of this goddess?

Ans. She was esteemed very holy, and was the patroness of household virtues. When Jupiter asked her to choose whatever gift she would, Vesta desired that she might remain always a virgin, and receive the first oblations in all sacrifices. Fire was the emblem of this goddess, and in her temple, at Rome, a sacred fire was suspended in the air, and watched by the Vestal Virgins. If this fire chanced to be extinguished, all public and private business was suspended until the accident had been expiated.

Ques. What laws existed with regard to the Vestal Virgins?

Ans. The penalties for neglect of their duties were severe. If the sacred fire was extinguished through their negligence, they were sometimes cruelly punished, and if any Virgin infringed the rule which forbade her to marry, she was buried alive; being shut up in a vault underground, with a lamp, and a little bread, wine, water and oil. The sacred fire of Vesta was watched by these priestesses for nearly eleven centuries. We are told that during this period, twenty Vestals were condemned to death. Of these, seven were permitted to take their own lives, thirteen suffered the terrible punishment we have described. The last execution of this kind took place in the reign of the emperor Domitian.

Ques. What were the privileges of the Vestal Virgins?

Ans. In recompense for these severe laws, the Vestals were treated with extraordinary respect. They had the most honorable seats at games and festivals, and even the consuls and magistrates gave them precedence; their testimony was taken in trials without any form of oath, and if they happened to meet a criminal going to execution, he was immediately pardoned. Public documents of great importance were generally entrusted to their care.

A striking instance of the respect felt for these Virgins, is related by a Roman historian. Appius Claudius Audax, a consul who had rendered himself obnoxious to the people, was attacked in the midst of a triumphal procession by the plebeian tribunes, who endeavored to pull him from his chariot. His daughter, who was a Vestal Virgin, ascended the triumphal car, and took her place by her father's side. The tumult immediately subsided, and the procession proceeded quietly to the capital.

Ques. How many Vestal Virgins were there?

Ans. The number has been variously stated. Some authors mention six, others seven, as the number actually in office. They were chosen between the ages of six and ten; for ten years they were employed in learning their duty; they remained in office for ten, and ten other years were employed in instructing the novices. If there were seven Vestals always in office, the entire number must have

been twenty-one. The thirty years being ended, the Vestals returned to their families. The law then permitted them to marry, but it was considered discreditable to do so.

CHAPTER XVI

CYBELE

Ques. Who was Cyb'ele?

Ans. This goddess, sometimes called by the Greeks, Rhea, and by the Latins, Ops, is considered to be a personification of the earth. She is goddess, not of cities only, but of all things which the earth contains. She was the daughter of Coelum, and the wife of Saturn.

Ques. How was Cyb'ele represented?

Ans. Generally as riding in a chariot, drawn by lions. She wears a turreted crown, and is clothed in a many-colored mantle, on which are represented the figures of various animals. In her right hand she holds a sceptre, and in her left, a key. This last emblem seems to signify that the earth locks up her treasures in the winter season. Cyb'ele is always represented with the dignified and matronly air which distinguishes Juno and Ceres.

Ques. How was she worshipped?

Ans. Sacrifices were first offered to this goddess in Phrygia and Lydia. Her temples were generally built on the summits of mountains; that on Mount Dindymus near Pessi'nus, in Galatia, was particularly celebrated. Her statue in this temple was simply a large aerolite which had fallen in the vicinity, and was regarded by the people as the heaven-sent image of their great goddess. At the close of the second Punic war, the Romans, directed, it is said, by the Sibylline books, sent an embassy to Attalus, king of Pergamus, requesting that he would permit the so-called image to be removed to Rome. The monarch consented, and the sacred stone was carried in triumph to the Italian capital. There it was placed in a stately temple built for the purpose, and a solemn festival, called Megalesia, was celebrated annually, in honor of Cyb'ele. During these solemnities, priests called Galli and Corybantes ran about like madmen, with cries and howlings, making, at the same time, a terrific noise with the clashing of cymbals, the sound of pipes and other instruments. In their frenzy, they cut their flesh with knives, and performed many other extravagances, but the people regarded them with reverence, as they were believed, while in this state, to possess the gift of prophecy.

The divinity worshipped by the Roman women under the name of Bona Dea, or Good Goddess, is believed to be the same as Cyb'ele.

Ancient writers relate an extraordinary incident connected with the arrival of the image of Cyb'ele in Rome. The ship which bore the sacred stone was stranded on a shoal in the Tiber. Claudia, a Vestal Virgin who was suspected of having violated her vow, attached her girdle to the prow, and drew the ship safely into port. Her innocence was established by this prodigy.

CHAPTER XVII

CERES—DEMETER

Ques. Who was Ceres?

Ans. She was the daughter of Saturn and Ops, and was worshipped as the goddess of fruits and corn. It is supposed that she first invented and taught the art of tilling the earth, and sowing wheat and other grains, so that men ate wholesome bread, where before they had lived on roots and acorns.

Ques. How is Ceres represented?

Ans. As a beautiful and majestic woman, with golden hair, and crowned with ears of wheat; in her right hand she holds poppies and ears of corn, and in her left, a flaming torch.

Ques. Explain these emblems.

Ans. The hair of Ceres is golden, to represent the color of ripe corn; she holds a lighted torch, because when her daughter Proserpine was stolen by Pluto, Ceres kindled a torch from the flames of Mount Etna, to light her on her search throughout the world. She holds a poppy, because when she was so grieved that she could neither rest nor sleep, Jupiter gave her a poppy to eat.

Ques. Relate the story of Proserpine (Persephone).

Ans. None of the goddesses were willing to marry Pluto, or share his gloomy kingdom. He determined, nevertheless, to obtain a wife, even if he had to do so by violence. Proserpine, the daughter of Jupiter and Ceres, was gathering daffodils with her companions in the plains of Enna, when Pluto suddenly appeared among them in a chariot drawn by black horses. As the maidens fled in terror, he seized Proserpine, and striking the waters of the fountain Cyane with his trident, he opened a passage, through which he descended with his prize. Ceres, ignorant of what had occurred, wandered through the world in search of her daughter. At length, arriving at the fountain of Cyane, she perceived the girdle of Proserpine still floating on its waters; and the nymph Arethusa informed her of what had taken place. Ceres repaired immediately to Olympus, where she made her complaint to Jupiter, and demanded that Pluto should restore her daughter. Jupiter promised to grant her request, in case Proserpine should not have tasted food in the infernal regions. Ceres descended thither, and Proserpine prepared joyfully to accompany her mother, when Ascalaphus reported that he had seen her eat some seeds of pomegranate. The hopes of Ceres were thus destroyed, but Proserpine was so indignant at the treachery of Ascalaphus, that she changed him immediately into an owl. Jupiter endeavored to appease the resentment of Ceres by permitting Proserpine to divide the year, spending six months with her mother on earth, the other six with Pluto in the infernal regions.

Ques. What were the most famous solemnities instituted in honor of Ceres?

Ans. The Eleusian or Eleusinian Mysteries. They were named from Eleusis, a town in Greece where they were celebrated.

Ques. What rites were practiced during these mysteries?

Ans. We cannot tell with any certainty. The penalty of death was decreed against any one who should betray the secret, or even witness the ceremonies without having been regularly initiated. Disclosures were made, however, which seem to prove that the person to be initiated was first introduced into a dark subterranean cave, where he was terrified with the most fearful sights and sounds. After this, if his courage did not fail, he was suddenly introduced into a lovely garden, and the ceremonies concluded with feasting and dancing.

Ques. Who were admitted to these rites?

Ans. Athenians only; but Hercules, to whom no one dared refuse anything, was initiated, and after him, other distinguished foreigners were admitted to what were called the Lesser Mysteries.

The Athenians were eager to be admitted to these rites, because they believed that the souls of those who had not been initiated were left to wallow in mud and filth in the lower regions.

Ques. What do the early Christian writers say of these mysteries?

Ans. They speak of them as being almost as immoral as the festivals held in honor of Bacchus.

Ques. Who is said to have instituted them?

Ans. Triptol'emus, the foster-child of Ceres.

Ques. Relate the story of Triptol'emus.

Ans. When Ceres was seeking Proser'pine by sea and land, she was kindly entertained by Celeus, king of Eleusis, in Attica. She rewarded his hospitality by taking care of his young son, whom she nourished during the day with celestial food; but in the night, she covered him with fire. Under this extraordinary treatment, the infant, in a few days, became a beautiful young man. His mother, Meganira, wondered at this, and resolved to discover the cause. She watched Ceres at night, and when she saw her covering Triptol'emus with living coals, she cried out in terror, and rushed into the room to save him. Ceres punished her curiosity with death, but she adopted Triptol'emus, and sent him through the world to teach mankind the use of corn. He executed the commands of Ceres, and wherever he went, instructed men in sowing, reaping, and other arts of husbandry. Triptol'emus is usually represented as a young man, seated in a splendid chariot drawn by flying serpents.

Ques. What sacrifices were offered to Ceres?

Ans. Young heifers, swine and ears of corn, wine, milk and honey were used in the libations.

Ques. What were the Ambarvalia?

Ans. They were feasts kept in the beginning of harvest, preparatory to reaping. The animal to be offered in sacrifice, was led around the fields, the husbandmen and country rustics following with shouts and songs. Virgil says of these festivities:

Let ev'ry swain adore her power divine,
And milk and honey mix with sparkling wine;
Let all the choir of clowns attend this show,
In long procession, shouting as they go;
Invoking her to bless their yearly stores,
Inviting plenty to their crowded floors.
Thus in the spring, and thus in summer's heat,
Before the sickles touch the rip'ning wheat,
On Ceres call; and let the lab'ring hind
With oaken wreaths his hollow temples bind;
On Ceres let him call, and Ceres praise,
With uncouth dances, and with country-lays.

Georg. I.

CHAPTER XVIII

THEMIS—ASTRÆA—NEMESIS

Ques. Who was Themis?

Ans. She instructed both gods and men, and was generally considered the goddess of law and justice. Her origin is uncertain; but she is said to have been a Titaness.

Ques. Who was Astræa?

Ans. She was also goddess of justice; according to some, she was the daughter of Jupiter and Themis. When the Titans took up arms against Jupiter, Astræa descended to earth, and mingled with the human race. This intercourse was uninterrupted during the Golden Age; in the Silver Age, Astræa dwelt in the mountains, and descended only amid the shades of evening, when she was unseen by men. When the Brazen Age commenced, she fled altogether from the human race, being the last among the Immortals to abandon the earth. Jupiter then changed her into the constellation Virgo, one of the signs of the zodiac. This constellation is represented by the figure of a woman holding scales in one hand, and a sword in the other. The scales have been variously explained, but they are generally supposed to be an emblem of justice. According to some, Erigone, a maiden who hung herself in despair, at the death of her father, was changed into the constellation Virgo.

Ques. Who was Nemesis?

Ans. She was the daughter of Night, and the goddess of just vengeance. It was her office to follow and punish guilty men. She had wings, but generally went on foot, which signifies that the punishment of crime, although sure, is generally slow. An ancient poet says:

“Vengeance divine to punish sin moves slow;
The slower is its pace, the surer is its blow.”

Ques. What do you say of the temple of Nemesis at Rhamnus?

Ans. This temple was but a short distance from the plain of Marathon. The Persians had brought with them a great block of Parian marble for the trophy which they intended to erect in honor of their expected victory. This marble fell into the hands of the Athenians, and a sculptor, said by some to have been Phidias, afterwards carved from it a beautiful statue of Nemesis, which was placed in the temple of Rhamnus. A fragment was found in the ruins of this edifice, which is supposed to be the head of this statue; and has been presented as such to the British Museum.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MUSES

Ques. Who were the Muses?

Ans. They were the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemo'syne, and were supposed to preside over the liberal arts and sciences.

Ques. How many Muses were there?

Ans. They were nine in number, and each presided over some particular department of literature, art or science. Their names were:

Calli'ope, who was the Muse of epic poetry, she holds in her hand a roll of parchment, or a trumpet.

Clio presided over history. She holds a half opened scroll.

Melpo'mene was the Muse of tragedy. She leans on a club, and holds a tragic mask.

Euter'pe was the patroness of music. She holds two flutes.

Er'ato inspired those who wrote of love. She plays on a nine-stringed lyre.

Terpsich'ore presided over choral dance and song. She appears dancing, and holds a seven-stringed lyre.

Ura'nia, the Muse of astronomy, holds a globe, and traces mathematical figures with a wand.

Thalia, the Muse of comedy, holds in one hand a comic mask, in the other a crooked staff.

Polyhym'nia presided over eloquence. She holds her fore-finger to her lips, or carries a scroll.

The Muses are sometimes represented as crowned with palms, and seated in the shade of an arbor, playing upon different instruments; or again, as dancing in a circle with joined hands, while Apollo is seated in their midst.

Ques. How have some writers accounted for the number of Muses?

Ans. They say that in ancient times there were but three Muses. The citizens of Sicyon employed three sculptors to execute statues of these goddesses, promising to choose from among the nine images, those which they should consider the most beautiful. When the statues were finished, they were found to be so skillfully wrought, that it was impossible to make a choice. They were all placed in the temple, and the poet Hesiod afterwards assigned them names and attributes.

Ques. What punishment did the Muses inflict on the nine daughters of Pierus, king of Æmathia?

Ans. These maidens challenged the Muses to a contest in music; they were defeated and transformed into magpies by the indignant goddesses. Tham'yris, a musician of Thrace, was struck blind for the same offence.

CHAPTER XX

Gods of the Woods, and Rural Deities

PAN

Ques. Who was Pan?

Ans. He was a woodland deity, and was honored by the Romans as the god of shepherds and the patron of fishing and fowling. The Latins sometimes called him Incubus or the “Nightmare,” and at Rome he was worshipped as Lupercus, or Lynceus. His origin is uncertain, but he is said by some authors to have been a son of Mercury and a nymph of Arcadia.

Ques. How is Pan represented?

Ans. As half man, and half goat, having a human head ornamented with horns, and a garland of pine: he holds in one hand a crooked staff, and in the other a pipe of uneven reeds. The music which he made on this rude instrument was so sweet as to cheer the gods.

Ques. What famous action is related of Pan?

Ans. When the Gauls, under their King Brennus, made an irruption into Greece, and were about to plunder the temple of Apollo at Delphi, Pan suddenly showed himself, and so terrified them that they fled in disorder. Hence it comes that any sudden and unreasonable terror which spreads through an assemblage of persons, particularly an army, is called a panic.

Ques. What was the origin of Pan’s reeds?

Ans. A beautiful nymph, named Syrinx, was so persecuted by this god, that she prayed the water-nymphs to help her, and change her into reeds, which they did. Pan saw the transformation, and was much grieved. He took some of the reeds away for a remembrance. On applying them to his lips, he found they produced the most melodious sounds, so that he formed them into a rustic pipe. Milk and honey were offered to Pan.

SATYRS AND FAUNS

Ques. Who were these?

Ans. They were hideous monsters who dwelt in forests, and were, like Pan, half man and half goat.

TERMINUS

Ques. Who was Terminus?

Ans. He was the god of boundaries. His statue was only a square stone, or a painted log of wood. It is probable that the Romans did not suppose Terminus to be a person, but only used the name as another term for justice, which forbids any one to trespass on another’s boundaries.

Landmarks and boundary stones were considered sacred by the Romans; they were crowned with garlands on festivals, offerings were laid upon them, and it was death for any one to remove one. When Constantine embraced Christianity, and placed the cross on his standard, he replaced these Terminal stones by the Christian emblem, and the custom of erecting wayside crosses, which became afterwards almost universal, is said to date from this epoch.

Terminus had a temple on the Tarpeian rock. It is said that when Tarquin the Proud wished to build a temple to Jupiter on the spot, the god of boundaries refused to give way.

VERTUMNUS

Ques. Who was this deity?

Ans. He is generally reckoned as one of the rural divinities, and was worshipped as such by the ancient Sabines. The name comes from the Latin word *verto*, (to turn or change,) and was bestowed upon him in allusion to his power of taking any form he pleased. Vertumnus presided over the seasons; he was the husband of Pomona. Statues of this god were erected in every town of Italy. His festival called Vertumnalia, was kept in October.

CHAPTER XXI

Goddesses of the Woods

DIANA

Ques. Who was Diana?

Ans. She was the daughter of Jupiter and Latona, and the twin-sister of Apollo. This goddess had three names. On earth she was called Diana, and was honored as the goddess of woods and hunting; in heaven she was called Luna, and was identified with the moon, as her brother Apollo was with the sun. In hell, she was called Hec'ate, and as spirits were supposed to be subject to her, she was invoked under the latter name in all magical incantations.

Ques. What were the habits of Diana?

Ans. She shunned the society of men, and frequented the woods, attended by a train of virgins who had resolved, like her, never to marry.

Ques. Who were the attendants of Diana?

Ans. Sometimes the Ocean'ides or daughters of Ocean'us; sometimes the woodland nymphs. Diana often led a chorus of the Muses and Graces, and joined them in singing the praises of her mother Latona.

Ques. How is Diana represented?

Ans. As a very stately and beautiful woman, dressed in the garb of a huntress; she holds a bow in her hand, and a quiver of arrows is hung across her shoulders. Her feet are covered with buskins, and a bright silver crescent glitters on her forehead. Sometimes she is represented as seated in a silver chariot drawn by hounds.

Ques. Who was Chi'one?

Ans. She was a nymph beloved by Apollo. She spoke scornfully of the beauty of Diana, and the goddess, in revenge, pierced her tongue with an arrow.

Ques. Relate the story of Ni'obe.

Ans. She was the daughter of Tan'talus, and the wife of Amphi'on, king of Thebes. She was enriched with all the gifts of nature and fortune, and being made insolent by prosperity, she insulted Latona, and refused to offer incense at her shrine. Ni'obe had seven beautiful sons, and as many lovely daughters, and had boasted of their number as rendering her superior to Latona. The indignant goddess called upon Apollo and Diana to revenge the insult offered to their mother, and humble the haughty Ni'obe. This they effected by slaying, in one day, all the children of the unhappy queen. Her sons expired by the arrows of Apollo, and her daughters by those of Diana. Amphi'on killed himself in despair, and the wretched Ni'obe, widowed and childless, wept without ceasing until the pitying gods changed her into stone. This story has furnished the subject of a very beautiful group of statuary, in which Ni'obe is represented as vainly endeavoring to shelter, beneath her mantle, the youngest and last of her children.

Ques. Where was the most celebrated temple of Diana?

Ans. At Ephesus in Asia Minor; it was so beautiful that it was counted among the seven wonders of the world. Two hundred and twenty years were spent in the building, although an incredible number of workmen were employed. The entire length of the temple was 425 feet, and the breadth 220; the whole was supported by 127 superb columns, each the gift of a king. The statue of the goddess was of ebony, and the most skillful painters and sculptors were employed in the decorations of the edifice.

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