लाल बहादुर शास्त्री राष्ट्रीय प्रशासन अकादमी
L B.S. National Academy of Administration
मसूरी
MUSSOORIE
पुस्तकालय
LIBRARY
—
अवाप्ति संख्या
Accession No. 111743 20200
वर्ग संख्या
Class No. 808.8
पुस्तक संख्या
Book No. Mac V.1

THE WORLD'S HERITAGE

VOLUME I

DANTE BEHOLDS BEATRICE ACROSS THE WATER OF LETHE

From the painting by Noel L. Nisbet

THE · WORLD'S HERITAGE

OF · EPICAL · HEROIC · AND ROMANTIC · LITERATURE

BY DONALD A. MACKENZIE

WITH · ILLUSTRATIONS · BY NOEL · L. NISBET : IN · TWO VOLUMES : VOLUME · ONE

THE GRESHAM PUBLISHING COMPANY LTD.
66 CHANDOS STREET COVENT GARDEN LONDON
MCMXVIII

Preface

This volume deals with the greatest epics in the world's literature, and the period of time covered embraces roughly 4000 years. A beginning is made with the epic of Gilgamesh, which takes us back to the "dawn" of literature, and even to the "dawn" of civilization, for the Babylonian Homer, Sin-liqi-unnini, utilized floating traditions regarding a tribal hero that were already of hoary antiquity in his own day. This poet is believed to have lived in the Hammurabi Age, during which Abraham set out on his wanderings in quest of "fresh woods and pastures new". His metrical narrative has epical unity, and something of "the grand manner" that, as Matthew Arnold insisted, distinguishes the epical from the ballad style of narrative. It bears "the magic stamp of a master", it is plain, natural, and spirited, and, withal, "sustainedly noble". As the wrath of Achilles is the central theme of the *Iliad*, so is the doom of Gilgamesh the central theme of the Babylonian epic. Both heroes were probably historical characters, but they had "won their way to the mythical", as Thucydides put it in another connection, before they were exalted as heroes of all ages

> By bards who died content on pleasant sward,
> Leaving great verse unto a little clan.

Like Achilles, Gilgamesh was associated with one of the great race movements in ancient times. In Sin-liqi-unnini's hands he became the symbol of his Age and of his people. From a shadowy figure resembling the legendary Nimrod, the "mighty hunter", the hero was also transformed into a real personality, and one who continues to make a universal appeal. He is a

picturesque Eastern potentate, sternly ambitious, and yet a lovable man, who is the faithful comrade of the heroic Ea-bani; the poet affords us glimpses not only of the hero's heart, but also of his mind, for the mighty Gilgamesh, finding himself in conflict with Fate, is greatly concerned regarding the mysteries of life and death, and he becomes indeed a truly heroic and poetic figure when he sets out in quest of the Plant of Life, as do the knights of mediæval romance in quest of the Holy Grail.

From Babylonia we pass to Greece, which was an inheritor of the lore and experiences of older civilizations, including Babylonia, to mix with the heroes of the *Ilìad* who strove for supremacy on "the windy plain of Troy", and whose fates were strangely influenced by the actions and doom of a single man, the offended Achilles; even the gods were disturbed on his account. From that son of Thetis we turn to the wanderer Odysseus, whose quest, like that of Gilgamesh's, involves a visit to the Otherworld and converse with souls of the dead. A new Age in the world's history is revealed in these Homeric poems, but the "passions there, wars, pursuits" are as recognizable to modern men as they would have been to the ancient Babylonians.

Virgil's *Æneid* is, mainly on account of its theme, placed after the Homeric epics, of which it is to a marked degree imitative. But although Æneas is a sea-rover like Odysseus, and similarly an explorer of the Otherworld, and although his combat with Turnus recalls the Homeric combat between Achilles and Hector, the section dealing with the love and doom of Dido not only raises the *Æneid* to a high level in epical literature, but constitutes a literary influence which still endures as an inspiration and model for poetry and romance.

From Greece and Rome we next turn to India, which has given the world two epical masterpieces, the *Mahábhárata* and the *Ramáyana*. The heroic narratives have long been deeply embedded in religious literature. They are part and parcel of modern Hindu life and religion; the vasty works, as they have come down to us, are, in a sense, histories of Hindu modes of thought and manners and customs. In the versions given in this volume, however, the epical narratives are separated, so

far as that is now possible, from the gradually accumulated speculations and dogmas of successive generations of thinkers and teachers. Although the influence in Western literature of these great works is yet scarcely traceable, they are of special interest to students of classic literature because they have characteristics that are shared by the small epic of Babylonia and the great Homeric masterpieces. Arjuna and Karna resemble Achilles and Hector, and Rama is a wanderer like Odysseus. The atmosphere is purely Indian, but the ancient heroes are not merely picturesque Oriental figures. The poets have depicted real human beings who might belong to any Age and any country. In epic literature there are no more impressive characters than those rival Indian princes, the ambitious, vengeful, and overbearing Duryodhana, and the high-souled, long-suffering, justice-loving Yudhish-thira. To modern Indians their legendary contest symbolizes the great World War of our own time—a cause based on Might being once again found in conflict with a cause based on Right.

An outstanding feature of the *Mahábhárata*, the Indian *Iliad*, is its sublime and stirring account of the return of dead warriors, who during the darkness of night rise in full splendour from the River Ganges, and are greeted by their friends and reconciled to their enemies. A full rendering of this part is given, and the accounts of Yudhish-thira's visits to Paradise and Hell are similarly treated.

One cannot help remarking, in passing, that in these wonderful literary relics of ancient Indian civilization there are passages of imaginative beauty, combined with subtlety of characterization, and refinement of thought and feeling, which should recommend them strongly to the general reader.

The Cuchullin epic follows next in order, and may be referred to as a relic of pre-Roman civilization in western Europe, which lingered and was developed in Ireland after it had been stamped out in England and the greater part of Scotland. The archæological period is the "Chalko-sideric", the interval between the Bronze and Iron Ages. Homer's Achæans were in this stage of civilization when they waged war against Troy: so were the Aryo-Indians when they invaded the Punjab.

The epics of Greece, India, and Ireland are consequently reminiscent of race movements that were facilitated after discovery was made how to utilize iron. It does not follow, of course, that the Celtic, Achæan, and Aryo-Indian conquests, reflected in the epics, were contemporaneous. A particular archæological "Age" may be of earlier or later date in one area than another.

As is shown in the notes dealing with the Irish epic, Cuchullin links with Achæan and Aryo-Indian heroes, and even with the Babylonian god Marad (Marduk), the memory of whose attributes and achievements survive in legends of Nimrod (Ni-Marad). The "hero's light" springs from Cuchullin's head during the fury of battle, as it does from the head of Achilles in the *Iliad*; both terrify their enemies by roaring their "battle-cry". The Aryo-Indian Krishna and Arjuna share these attributes. When the Babylonian god goes out to attack the dragon Tiamat, a light burns on his forehead, and he is accompanied by roaring spirits of tempest. Withal, Cuchullin's early name, Setanta, is non-Gaelic. In the various versions of the epical narratives that celebrate his deeds he is described sometimes as a fair-haired hero like Achilles, and sometimes as a small, dark man. The memory of some legendary hero of great antiquity was evidently attached to the memory of the great Ultonian warrior, who, like Achilles, Æneas, Krishna, and Arjuna, was the son of a deity.

From these Greek, Aryo-Indian, and Celtic epics, in which linger memories of the period of transition from the Age of the great civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia, and Crete to the Classical Age of Greece and Rome, we pass to the Mediæval Age in Europe, which is represented by Dante's *Divina Commedia*. In the symbolism, including the colour symbolism, and the Otherworld scenery of Dante's masterpiece, are survivals from remote antiquity, such as the Underground Hell, resembling the Babylonian "House of Death" and the Osirian Paradise and Hell, and the planetary Heavens, resembling the Paradises of the sky gods of Babylonia, Egypt, and India. Dante's mountain Purgatory is also reminiscent of the mountain Paradises of Greece, India, and northern Europe. The *Commedia*, however, is essentially mediæval in character and atmosphere.

In no other great poem, not even in *Paradise Lost*, is the temperament of the poet and the "colour" of his Age more apparent. Dante and mediævalism pulsate in every line of the *Commedia*, a work which bears no comparison with any that preceded it or any that followed it, except in details not of vital importance. Ruskin has contrasted the methods and characteristics of Dante with those of Milton, and his views are dealt with briefly in the Introductions to the *Commedia* and *Paradise Lost*. But, when all is said, no two poets are more distinctive. One is mainly a subjective artist, the other is mainly an objective artist. We can hardly imagine a Milton shedding tears of sympathy over the fate of his contemporaries in Hell, or of his visiting Paradise in quest of a perfect woman, whom he regarded as the predominating influence in his spiritual life and the constant inspiration of his poetry. The poets and their methods were sharply opposed.

Paradise Lost, with which the volume concludes, brings us to our own Age. This is the latest, and, in some respects, the greatest of all the epics of the world's literature, not only on account of its majestic artistry, its loftiness of treatment, and sustained imaginative splendour, but also because of the sublimity of its theme. It is concerned, not with the destiny of a race, but of all mankind, not with conflicts between rival families, tribes, or kingdoms, but with the eternal struggle between good and evil, which affects the entire universe. Among the great poets of his native land Milton,

> Chief of organic numbers,
> Old Scholar of the Spheres . . .

as he is hailed by Keats, occupies a unique place. On the world's Olympus of epical literature he sits with Dante and Virgil, with Homer and other shadowy figures, like the Indian Vyasa and Valmiki, the Babylonian Sin-liqi-unnini, and the Irish shade or shades who conferred immortality on Cuchullin. And among them he is one of the greatest—the Poseidon, if Homer is the Zeus.

The epics dealt with in this volume are introduced by essays which treat of various topics of interest, such as the civilizations

they reflect, the mythological elements embedded in them, and, as in the case of the classical epics especially, the appeal made by them, and the legends connected with them, to the great poets of our own country. Brief accounts are also given of the lives of those poets regarding whom definite knowledge is available.

There are two ways in which the epics can be dealt with in such a volume as this. One is by giving bald and brief summaries of their contents; another by rendering them, partly in condensed form, so as to convey to the reader some idea of their charm as narratives, and also something of their character and atmosphere, utilizing good metrical renderings of famous passages, and, as in the case of the *Paradiso*, utilizing poetic translations quite freely. The latter method has been adopted, so that the volume may be, not only a helpful work of reference for students, but also one which provides instructive and entertaining reading for those who have neither time nor opportunity nor the necessary equipment for perusing the originals. *Paradise Lost* has been likewise condensed, and partly rendered in prose. In engaging on this part of the work the writer hoped that he was doing something to extend the knowledge and appreciation of Milton's masterpiece among the masses of the people, and to induce the rising generation of readers to cultivate with profit an intimate acquaintance with this and the other works of a great and noble poet and scholar.

In the second volume the survey will extend to other heroic narratives, such as the Arthurian romances, Beowulf, the Luciad, the Cid, the Nibelungenlied, Deirdre, &c.

D. A. MACKENZIE.

CONTENTS

VOLUME I

Page

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH: The Oldest in the World—

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - - 1

GILGAMESH - - - - - - - - - - - - - 7

HOMERIC HISTORY AND LEGENDS—

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - - 17

THE ILIAD - - - - - - - - - - - - - 29

I. The Wrath of Achilles - - - - - - - 29

II. Gods and Heroes in Battle - - - - - - 35

III. Zeus aids the Trojans - - - - - - - 45

IV. The Appeal to Achilles - - - - - - - 47

V. Achilles and Hector - - - - - - - - 65

THE ODYSSEY - - - - - - - - - - - - 79

Introductory - - - - - - - - - - - 79

I. Penelope and the Wooers - - - - - - - 91

II. Odysseus and Nausicaa - - - - - - - 98

III. The Lotus-Eaters and the Cyclops - - - - 104

IV. Odysseus visits Hades and the Fabled Isles - - 109

V. Odysseus returns to Ithaca - - - - - 116

VIRGIL'S ÆNEID—

INTRODUCTORY: Virgil and his Age - - - - - - 125

ÆNEID - - - - - - - - - - - - - 133

I. Æneas reaches Carthage - - - - - - - 133

II. The Sack of Troy - - - - - - - - 138

III. The Love and Doom of Dido - - - - - 146

IV. Æneas visits Hades - - - - - - - - 155

V. Æneas and Turnus - - - - - - - - 160

THE MAHÁBHÁRATA— Page

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - 167

MAHÁBHÁRATA - - - - - - - - - - - 173
I. The Rival Princes - - - - - - - - 173
II. Burning of the "House of Lac" - - - - - 179
III. How Draupadi was Won - - - - - - - 181
IV. A Kingdom Won and Lost - - - - - - 188
V. The Pandavas in Exile - - - - - - - 197
VI. Duryodhana's Will for War - - - - - - 206
VII. The Battle of Kuru-kshetra - - - - - - 210
VIII. The Vision of the Dead - - - - - - - 215
IX. The Pandavas in Hades - - - - - - - 220

THE RAMÁYANA—

INTRODUCTORY: The Epic and its Message - - - - - 229

RAMÁYANA - - - - - - - - - - - - 237
I. Rama and Sita - - - - - - - - - 237
II. The Banishment of Rama - - - - - - - 243
III. A Faithful Brother - - - - - - - - 250
IV. The Rape of Sita - - - - - - - - 254
V. War in Lanka - - - - - - - - - 264
VI. Faithful Sita - - - - - - - - - 271

CUCHULLIN EPIC—

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - 275

CUCHULLIN - - - - - - - - - - - - 283
I. The Incarnation of a God - - - - - - - 284
II. How Cuchullin reddened his Hand - - - - - 289
III. The Wooing of Emer - - - - - - - - 293
IV. Cuchullin in Faerieland - - - - - - - 297
V. The Kine Raid of Cooley - - - - - - - 301
VI. The Death of Cuchullin - - - - - - - 314

DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY—

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - 325

DIVINA COMMEDIA - - - - - - - - - - - 337
I. Inferno - - - - - - - - - - - 337
II. Purgatorio - - - - - - - - - - - 354
III. Paradiso - - - - - - - - - - - 368

THE MILTONIC EPIC—

Page

INTRODUCTORY - - - - - - - - - - - 383

I. Milton and his Mission - - - - - - 384
II. History of the Epic - - - - - - - 391
III. The Art of Milton - - - - - - - 394
IV. Milton's Cosmology - - - - - - - 398

PARADISE LOST - - - - - - - - - - - 403

I. The Plots of the Rebel Angels - - - - - 403
II. Satan's Flight to Earth - - - - - - 413
III. Adam and Eve in Eden - - - - - - 419
IV. The War in Heaven - - - - - - - 428
V. The Angel's Warning - - - - - - 436
VI. The Fall - - - - - - - - - - 439
VII. The Loss of Eden - - - - - - - 446

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

DANTE BEHOLDS BEATRICE ACROSS THE WATER OF LETHE (in colour) *Frontispiece*

GILGAMESH AND EA-BANI FIGHT THE BULL OF ISHTAR - - - 10

THETIS BRINGS THE ARMOUR TO ACHILLES - - - - - 66

ODYSSEUS BENDS THE BOW - - - - - - - - - 120

THE DEATH OF DIDO - - - - - - - - - - 152

THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF DRAUPADI - - - - - - 180

THE PASSING OF RAMA - - - - - - - - - - 272

CUCHULLIN AND CATHBAD MEET THE BANSHEE AT THE FORD - 316

"SATAN BEHELD WITH GRIEF THE SCENE OF DELIGHT" - - - 422

THE WORLD'S HERITAGE

VOLUME I

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH: The Oldest in the World

Introductory

The Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh dates back beyond 2000 B.C., and the name of the poet who composed it was Sin-liqi-unnini.[1] He appears to have utilized legends that had origin at the dawn of western Asian civilization, when the River Euphrates flowed some twenty miles farther eastward than it does to-day, and the city of Erech (modern Warka), with which Gilgamesh was associated, stood on its western bank. The only version of the epic which survives to us, however, is an Assyrian copy. It was discovered by excavators at Nineveh (modern Mosul) in the library of the ruined palace of the great Assyrian king, Ashur-banipal (668–626 B.C.), the Sardanapalus of Greek legend. This monarch was a patron of literature, and, as can be gathered from his inscriptions, took pride in the fact that he had acquired "the exquisite skill of the tablet writer, which", he has recorded, "none of the kings, my predecessors, ever learned". His predecessors—including Sennacherib, Sargon, the Shalmanesers, the Tiglath-pilesers, &c.—were great warriors and conquerors, and had been wont to boast, in their inscriptions, of the cities they had taken and devastated, and of the thousands of enemies they had slaughtered

[1] Sin is the moon-god. His name also lingers in "Sinai".

or enslaved. Ashur-banipal, the last great monarch of his line, had great armies at his command, but he appears to have left the conduct of war to his generals. In his youth he came under the influence of Babylonian scholarship, and, being cultured and leisurely, he preferred the life of a student to that of a warrior. The records of his wars were therefore "official" in the strictest sense. We meet with the real man in his library inscriptions. "I have written it that I may read it and learn it", he recorded on one tablet while his generals were waging great battles, "and have laid it up in my palace." His "books" were tablets of baked clay, but they were not for his own exclusive use. "These", he declared in one of his characteristic inscriptions, "are for the reading and learning of all who see them." Ashur-banipal may therefore be said to have founded a public library.

On the shelves of this royal library were arranged, after being duly numbered and catalogued, many thousands of clay "books", which had been collected, copied, or translated by Ashur-banipal's army of scribes. The literary remains of the Babylonian temples had been freely drawn upon, and it is probable that the Gilgamesh epic was taken from the library of the temple of Merodach, in the city of Babylon, the London of the ancient world. Assyria had its origin as a colony of Babylonia, the cradle of western Asian civilization.

The Gilgamesh epic was inscribed on twelve numbered tablets prepared for Ashur-banipal's library, in which it must have figured among the "ancient classics". Whether or not the narrative was originally divided by Sin-liqi-unnini into "twelve books" it is impossible to ascertain, but the internal evidence of the poem suggests that its epic form and character were of much greater antiquity than the copy which has happily been preserved. The composition is characterized by a dignified and noble simplicity. "Regarded purely as poetry", writes one critic, "it has a kind of primitive force, haunting voices that respond to the great problems of human life, suffering, death, and the future, dramatic vividness of representation and utterance, a painting of character and a depicting of nature which produce strong effects with few strokes." There can

be no doubt that its author was a great epic poet. He was the forerunner of the authors of the monumental epics of Greece and India, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the *Mahabhárata* and *Ramáyana*—one of those, in Shelley's words,

> whose names on earth are dark,
> But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
> So long as fire outlives the parent spark.

His shadowy form is "robed in dazzling immortality". In Egypt great monarchs enshrined their memories in "star-ypointing pyramids", but of this early Babylonian poet it can be said, as Milton said of Shakespeare:

> Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
> Hast built thyself a live-long monument . . .
> And so sepúlchred, in such pomp dost lie,
> That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

Gilgamesh, the Hercules of Babylonian legend, is a mighty hero; but although he strives to be "captain of his fate" and "master of his soul", he discovers that a Higher Power controls the destinies of all mankind. This revelation makes all his conquests and achievements seem trivial, but he does not despair. Indeed, in the spirit of a great hero, he resolves to struggle for the mastery of life. A sense of doom pervades the narrative, even when it recounts the exploits of the peerless conqueror, and it is intensified when Gilgamesh finds himself in conflict with the Higher Will. The narrative rises to its greatest heights in those sections which deal with his journey to the other world in his endeavour to escape death. "I fear death", exclaims the man who never feared an enemy. But he is forced to realize that death will come to all mortals "as long as rivers bear their waters to the ocean", and that no man can foresee when he will be cut off.

When, after making superhuman efforts to escape his doom, Gilgamesh finds that he must die like other men, he visits the tomb of his friend and fellow-warrior, Ea-bani, and summons his spirit from the land of shadows. On learning of the dismal fate that is in store for him, Gilgamesh is overcome with grief.

The epic of the dauntless hero thus closes in deep gloom, but it strikes a human note that gives it a universal appeal.

Although the Ashur-banipal version of the great epic is, as has been noted, the oldest one that has yet been discovered, evidence is not awanting that the Gilgamesh legend was known in Babylonia about one thousand years before the Homeric period. It possibly belongs, in the form given to it by Sin-liqi-unnini, although it may have been subsequently revised, to the same era as the legal code of Hammurabi, the Biblical Amraphel, who was a contemporary of Abraham. But Gilgamesh was then (about 2100 B.C.) already a legendary character, as is demonstrated by the fact that incidents incorporated in the epic were illustrated on cylinder seals, clay reliefs, &c., of a much earlier age, when southern Babylonia was called Sumer (Shoomer) or Sumeria (Shoomeria), the "Plain of Shinar" of Biblical reference.

Some writers incline to identify Gilgamesh with Nimrod, the "mighty hunter before the Lord"[1], although Nimrod's name is a Hebrew corruption of that of the hero-god Merodach (Marduk or Marad), who slew the dragon Tiamat, and was therefore the remote prototype of St. George. Gilgamesh was known to the Greeks, and Ælian[2] refers to a legend of his childhood. "The guards of the citadel of Babylon", he tells, "threw down to the ground a child who had been conceived and brought forth in secret, and who afterwards became known as Gilgamos. . . . A keen-eyed eagle saw the child falling, and before it touched the ground flew under it and received it on its back, and carried it away to a garden and laid it down gently." A similar legend was told regarding Akhamanish, the semi-mythical ancestor of King Cyrus, "the Achæmenian", who was reputed to have been fed and protected during childhood by an eagle. Some of the Gilgamesh legends were attached to the memory of Alexander the Great, and survive in the cycle of so-called "Alexander romances".

The Gilgamesh epic does not deal with the childhood of its hero; it opens with an account of the conquest of Erech, but

[1] Gen., x. 8–10.

[2] *De Nat. Animal.*, xii, 21 ed., Didot, p. 210.

unfortunately the details are uncertain, as the first tablet is badly broken. Indeed, several of the tablets exist only in fragmentary form, but, happily, enough remains of the original text to indicate the greatness of the poem, and permit of a consecutive narrative being reconstructed. In the ninth tablet is incorporated the story of the Flood, which is simply referred to in the summary that follows, as it has no direct connection with the epic narrative.

Gilgamesh

The shadow of war had fallen upon the besieged city of Erech in Sumeria. All living creatures within it were stricken with terror and dismay. She-asses stamped on their young, cows thrust away their calves; men wailed like beasts of the field, and maidens mourned like to doves. The gods of the strong-walled city were stricken also; they had become like flies that buzz in the streets, and like serpents that hide in secret places. For the space of three years the enemy lay round the city walls. The gates were shut, the bolts were fixed, and the great goddess Ishtar lifted not her hand to protect her own.

When three years had gone past the city fell, and Gilgamesh, the conqueror, began to rule as king. He oppressed the people; he made every citizen his slave. Young men were forced to become his soldiers, nor did he spare the maidens, for they also were compelled to work for him. "Alas," cried the elders of the people, "Gilgamesh has not left a son for a father, a maiden for a hero, or a wife for a husband!"

To the goddess Aruru the people prayed in their distress, crying aloud to be relieved from the tyranny of the despot. By day and by night they prayed, and their wailing reached to highest heaven. The gods were moved by their cries, and they too appealed to the creatrix, Aruru, saying: "Create a man who will be strong as Gilgamesh—he is without a rival—so that the people may have relief from his oppressions."

The goddess heard these words, and she conceived in her mind a man with divine attributes. Then she dipped her hands in water, and broke off a portion of clay. With this she shaped a man, placed him on the earth, and imparted life to his body. Thus came to be the hero who was named Ea-bani.

Now Ea-bani had great strength. His body was covered with hair, and his locks were as long and luxuriant as those of a woman. No human being dared to approach him. He lived apart from the people, like a stranger in a strange land. His friends and companions were the beasts of hill and plain. He ate herbs with the gazelles, he drank water with wild animals in the moonlight, and he took pleasure in the company of the reptiles and fishes in the rivers.

Hunters who were wont to pursue the chase among the mountains caught glimpses time and again of this great and powerful man, and they brought tidings regarding him to Gilgamesh. That mighty king became troubled at heart when he heard what the hunters said. He grew jealous of this divinely created rival, and he sent Tsaidu, his chief hunter, to the mountains to seize Ea-bani and take him to Erech.

Tsaidu obeyed the king's command. He went to the lonely place where Ea-bani had his dwelling. For three days this hunter followed him and watched him; he dug pits and he laid snares. Then he returned to Erech and told the king that Ea-bani possessed the strength of a mountain lion. "I trembled when I saw him," he said. "I dared not go near him or even show myself. I lay hid, fearing he would seize me. He filled up the pits that I dug; he tore in pieces the nets that I spread; he even rescued the beasts I snared, and allowed them to escape. Alas! I was unable to capture game because Ea-bani is the protector of all wild beasts."

When Gilgamesh received the tidings he realized that Ea-bani could not be taken by force, so he planned to have him caught in the snare of love. Accordingly he chose a beautiful young woman named Ookat, and bade her accompany Tsaidu, the hunter, to the land of mountains. Thither she went, according to the king's command.

She did not fear Ea-bani. For two days she waited for him at a drinking-place of wild animals, and when at length he appeared she smiled upon him. Ea-bani regarded her with amaze and delight, and became the slave of love.

For six days Ea-bani wandered to and fro in the company of Ookat. Then he remembered his companions the wild

animals. But the spell that bound them to him had been broken by his love for Ookat, and the gazelles and other beasts of the mountain fled from before him; whereupon his heart was stricken with horror and dismay. He returned to Ookat, sat at her feet, looked in her face with love, and told her what had taken place.

Then Ookat spoke to him regarding Gilgamesh, the mighty hero, and smilingly said: "Come with me to Erech, Ea-bani, and Gilgamesh, the great and powerful king, will be your friend."

In his heart Ea-bani, having lost his companions, longed indeed for a man friend, and he answered, saying: "Come, Ookat, lead me to Erech and to the palace of Gilgamesh, the strong and mighty warrior who ruleth over men."

Together they departed that day from the land of mountains. As they walked together, hand in hand, Ookat praised Gilgamesh, and related his mighty deeds in battle. Ea-bani listened intently, pondering over her words. Then he said that he desired greatly to meet Gilgamesh in single combat, so that his strength and skill might be put to the test.

Ookat tried to dissuade her lover from challenging the king, but Ea-bani would not listen to her pleadings, nor did he change his mind until he dreamed a dream in which a spirit warned him not to combat against Gilgamesh, because he was the chosen one of the sun-god, Shamash, and had been endowed with great wisdom by the three great gods Anu, Bel, and Ea.

It chanced that, before Ea-bani reached Erech, Gilgamesh dreamed a dream also. He saw the stars of heaven falling upon him, and when he awoke his heart was troubled. To his mother he related this dream, and she interpreted its meaning, saying: "Lo, Ea-bani cometh hither! Receive him as your friend, lest a great disaster befall thee."

Thus it came about that Gilgamesh and Ea-bani met as friends, and without desire to challenge each other. The monarch raised the strong man of the mountains to the rank of prince, and invited him to dwell in the royal palace. In obedience to his command the people of Erech did homage to Ea-bani.

In the days that followed, a warm friendship grew up between these mighty men. Together they waged war against Khoombaba, King of Elam, a man who filled the hearts of his enemies with fear. He had the strength of a giant, and when he roared with anger his voice sounded like a tempest.

Now, the castle in which Khoombaba dwelt was situated in the midst of a cedar wood, and no man who had entered that wood as an enemy of Khoombaba was ever again seen alive. Gilgamesh and Ea-bani entered the cedar wood without fear. They marvelled to see its mighty trees, which were of great girth and height; they took pleasure in the shade of spreading branches; they marvelled to see the road laid out for the king. . . . They went onward till they reached the castle. Suddenly Khoombaba came out against them at the head of his warriors, but Gilgamesh and Ea-bani overpowered the host, slew Khoombaba, and cut off his head. In this manner were Erech and other cities of Sumeria freed from the threatened oppression of the despot of Elam.

The two heroes returned home, and were welcomed and honoured by the people. Gilgamesh put off his armour; he laid aside his weapons; he put on his royal robe and placed his glittering crown upon his head.

It chanced that in this, his hour of triumph, the goddess Ishtar looked upon Gilgamesh with eyes of love. She appeared before him and spoke, saying: "Come, O Gilgamesh, be my husband and I shall be thy wife. I shall give thee a chariot of lapis lazuli with wheels of gold and horns set with glittering gems. All kings and princes will then do homage unto thee, and bring thee gifts as tribute."

Gilgamesh dreaded the fate which would be his if he became Ishtar's spouse, and he answered her, saying: "To what husband hast thou ever remained faithful? Each year Tammuz, the lover of thy youth, is caused by thee to shed tears of sorrow. Thou didst love the beautiful Allala bird, and then broke his wings; he moans in the forest, saying: 'Oh, my wings!' Thou didst love the lion and didst snare him afterwards. Thou didst love the steed and made him gallop far, so that he became exhausted; and thou didst oppress his mother, Silili. Lo! thou

GILGAMESH AND EA-BANI FIGHT THE BULL OF ISHTAR

didst once love a shepherd who sacrificed kids unto thee, and afterwards thou didst transform him into a jackal; then his own herd-boy drove him away and his own dogs tore him to pieces. Thou didst love the gardener of Anu, named Ishullanu—who gave thee rich offerings—and then smote him so that he could not move, and then thou didst leave him. Alas! if thou wert to love me, my fate would be like the fates of others on whom thou hast laid affliction."

The goddess heard, and departed in anger. She called upon her father, Anu, to send a mighty bull against Gilgamesh, so that he might be slain. Anu did according to her desire, but Gilgamesh, assisted by Ea-bani, slew the monster, and thus was the goddess mocked and defied.

Ishtar hastened at once to Erech. She cursed Gilgamesh because he had slain the bull from heaven, saying: "He shall die." She smote him with disease. Ea-bani heard the goddess cursing his friend, and cried out: "As we have done to the bull, so shall we do unto thee." Then Ishtar cursed Ea-bani also, and he, too, was stricken with disease,[1] and died twelve days afterwards.

Gilgamesh wept for Ea-bani. He lay on the ground and cried out in a loud voice: "Oh, let me not die as Ea-bani has died! I am afraid to die. . . . I shall set out to the Other-world. I shall seek the aid of my ancestor, Pir-na-pishtim, so that I may escape the curse of Ishtar."

He prayed to the gods for guidance, and the moon-god appeared to him in a dream and revealed to him the way he should go so as to reach the island in which dwells Pir-na-pishtim, the immortal one.

Thus it came about that Gilgamesh departed from Erech and travelled westward, crossing high mountain ranges and wide deserts, and making his way through deep forests until he reached Sunset Mount on the world's edge. The gate of the mountain was shut; it was guarded by a scorpion-man and his wife, a scorpion-woman. So terrible are the faces of these monsters that men, on beholding them, have fallen down dead. Gilgamesh fainted when he looked upon them, but he did not

[1] Probably leprosy.

die, nor did either of them smite him. The scorpion-woman took pity on him. She pleaded with her husband to open the mountain gate and permit Gilgamesh to pass through, and this he consented to do. When Gilgamesh recovered from his swoon he rejoiced to find that he was allowed to enter the mountain, and he entered without fear.

A long, dark passage lay before him. Thick and dense was the darkness, and he groped stumbling on his way like a man who is blind. But at length he reached the end of the black passage, and walked into a beautiful garden on which the sun shone in dazzling splendour. The trees in the garden had blossoms and fruit, and were adorned also with gems of many colours. Gilgamesh did not tarry to pluck the fruit or possess himself of the jewels. He passed through the garden and hastened down to the shore of a great sea that lay beyond it. He knew that he would have to cross this sea to reach the island on which dwelt Pir-na-pishtim, his deathless ancestor, because it was the Sea of Death.

Now the Sea Land, in which Gilgamesh found himself, was ruled over by Queen Sabitu, whose palace stood on the shore. When she beheld the hero drawing nigh she entered her palace and shut the door. He called upon her for help, but she refused to listen to him, whereupon he threatened to break open the door.

"O Sabitu!" he cried, "tell me how I can cross the sea. If I cannot cross it I will throw myself on the ground in despair."

At length the queen took pity on him, and, opening the door, stood before him.

Gilgamesh said: "Now that I behold thee, may I not meet death, for I fear to die."

Said Sabitu:

Gilgamesh, whither hurriest thou?
The life that thou seekest thou wilt not find.
When the gods created man
They fixed death for mankind.
Life they took in their own hand.
Thou, O Gilgamesh, let thy belly be filled!
Day and night be merry,
Daily celebrate a feast,

Day and night dance and be merry!
Clean be thy clothes. . . .
Look joyfully on the child that grasps thy hand,
Be happy with the wife in thine arms.[1]

But Gilgamesh would not be turned away from his quest. Then Sabitu told him that no one had ever crossed the sea save Shamash alone.

"The way," she said, "is full of peril. O Gilgamesh, how canst thou strive when caught among the billows of death?"

Gilgamesh continued to plead with Sabitu, until at length, taking pity on him, she sent him to the skilled sailor, Arad-Ea, who had served his ancestor, Pir-na-pishtim. Arad-Ea refused at first to set out on the dread voyage across the Sea of Death; but after a time Gilgamesh prevailed upon this skilled sailor to grant his request.

The boat was launched, and together they sailed over the sea for the space of three days and three nights. Storms raged on the deep; the billows threatened to swamp the boat, but in the end they reached in safety the Island of the Blest on which dwelt Pir-na-pishtim. That deathless man stood on the shore; he watched the boat drawing near, and marvelled greatly to see it. With his wife he watched and waited until the boat came within hail. Then he called out and was answered, whereupon he knew that Gilgamesh had come to visit him.

Gilgamesh was wasted with disease. He related to his ancestor how he had been cursed by the goddess Ishtar, and then confessed that it was his desire to escape death, because he feared to die. "For that reason," he said, "I have come hither, I who need thine aid."

Said Pir-na-pishtim: "All men must die. As long as men build houses and seal contracts; as long as they dispute one with another; as long as seeds are sown and as long as rivers bear their waters to the sea, so long will the doom of men endure. The god of destiny measures out the days of man. Nor can any man tell when his hour will come. His day of death is fixed by the god who never reveals his secrets."

Gilgamesh heard these words, and then asked his ancestor

[1] Jastrow's translation. This philosophy is "Eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die".

why he himself had suffered no change and had defied death; whereupon Pir-na-pishtim related how he had escaped the fate of other men during the Flood, and had afterwards been transported by the gods to the island on which he dwelt.

Taking pity on Gilgamesh, Pir-na-pishtim offered to cure him of the disease from which he suffered. He said: "Thou shalt not lie down, but remain sitting like one in the midst of grief."

Gilgamesh remained sitting in this way until sleep enveloped him like a black storm-cloud.

Said Pir-na-pishtim to his wife: "Behold the man who desires to live! Sleep envelops him like a black storm-cloud. . . . His sufferings make me sad. Prepare for him the magic food."

The magic food was prepared, and it was given to Gilgamesh while yet he slept. He slept for six days and nights, and then he awoke and said: "A sudden sleep overcame me. Thou didst awaken me by touching me, O Pir-na-pishtim. . . . Lo! I am bewitched. What hast thou done to me?"

Pir-na-pishtim told him he had eaten of magic food, and then bade Arad-Ea to carry the sufferer to the Fount of Healing. Gilgamesh was carried to the fount; he was washed in its waters, and the blemished skin fell off his body. He rejoiced greatly when he found that he had been healed of his disease.

After this Pir-na-pishtim, who desired that Gilgamesh should become an immortal like himself, bade Arad-Ea set out with the hero to the island on which grew the Plant of Life. This magic plant renews the life of the one who partakes of it; it gives youth and strength even to the aged.

Gilgamesh bade farewell to Pir-na-pishtim. He reached the island in safety, and found and plucked the Plant of Life. Then his heart was filled with great joy, knowing that he could escape death and renew his youth at will.

He went on his way with Arad-Ea. In time he came to a well, and, being a-thirst, stooped down to draw water. As he was thus engaged, the Earth Lion, having taken the form of a serpent, crept forth suddenly from a hole, and, seizing the Plant of Life, carried it away.

Gilgamesh was stricken with terror and grief. He sat down and wept bitterly; tears streamed from his eyes. "Alas!" he exclaimed, addressing Arad-Ea; "why have I been restored to health? Why should I rejoice because I am still alive? The benefit which I should have obtained for myself has now fallen to the Earth Lion."

Lamenting his loss, and sad at heart, Gilgamesh resumed his journey, with the full knowledge that he could not now escape death, the lot of mortals. He recrossed the Sea of Death; he passed again through the dark passage below Sunset Mount; he recrossed the deserts and mountains that lay between him and home, and in due time he reached the city of Erech.

He found that the city had suffered greatly on account of his long absence. Prosperity had gone from it. The walls of Erech were crumbling; it lay open to the enemy.

To his councillors and nobles Gilgamesh related all that had taken place during his journey to the Otherworld, and he spake also regarding the religious ceremonies he had performed. But his heart was sad. He could not forget that he would soon die; he could not forget his lost friend, Ea-bani, of whom he said with sorrow:

> Thou canst no longer stretch thy bow upon the earth;
> And those who were slain with the bow are round about thee.
> Thou canst no longer bear the sceptre in thine hand;
> And the spirits of the dead have taken thee captive.
> Thou canst no longer wear shoes upon thy feet;
> Thou canst no longer raise thy war-cry on the earth.
> No more dost thou kiss thy wife whom thou didst love. . . .
> No more dost thou kiss thy daughter whom thou didst love. . . .
> The sorrow of the Underworld hath taken hold upon thee.[1]

He cried, but in vain, to the mother goddess to restore Ea-bani to him. Then he appealed to the gods to permit him to hold converse with the soul of his friend, and Ea heard him and caused the god of death to open the grave and allow Ea-bani to appear. The ghost of Ea-bani rose from the Underworld like a gust of wind.

Gilgamesh spoke to Ea-bani, who regarded him with a

[1] King's translation.

woeful countenance, saying: "Tell me, my friend, O tell me regarding the land in which thou dost dwell."

Ea-bani made answer mournfully and said: "Alas! I cannot tell thee, my friend; I cannot tell thee. If I were to tell thee all I know and all I have gone through, alas! thou wouldst sit thee down in sorrow and weep the whole day long."

The dread of death lay heavily upon Gilgamesh. Ea-bani was silent for a time. Then he began to tell Gilgamesh of the Underworld. "It is a land of sorrow," he said, "where ill-doers are punished, where the young are like the old, where the worm devours in darkness and dust covers all."

So he spake, and Gilgamesh listened, his sorrow deepening. Then Ea-bani told that he who is slain in battle, and is buried after the performance of funeral rites, has a happier fate than others.

"Such a one," said Ea-bani, "reposeth on a couch drinking pure water—one who has been slain in battle as thou hast seen and I have seen. His head is supported by his parents; beside him sits his wife. His ghost does not haunt the earth. But the ghost of that man whose corpse has been left unburied and uncared-for knows no rest, but prowls through the streets, eating scraps of food, the leavings of the feast that are thrown away, and drinking the dregs of vessels."

Thus ends the epic of Gilgamesh.

HOMERIC HISTORY AND LEGENDS

Introductory

The poet Homer, to whom the ancient Greeks attributed the authorship of the great epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, was said to have been blind. If that was so he must have been bereft of sight, like our own Milton, after he had reached full manhood, for his poetry bears evidence that he was a keen observer of nature and a lover of beauty of form and colour. Such passages as "The deep-flowing, silver-eddied river", "Fresh new grass and dewy lotus, and crocus, and hyacinth thick and soft", and "The wave swelleth huge, rolling onward, and the spray is scattered on high beneath the rush of the wandering wind"[1], could hardly have been composed by one who had been always blind.

According to tradition, Homer was associated with Chios, on the western coast of Asia Minor. The topography of the *Iliad* suggests that he was well acquainted with the plain of Troy and its surroundings. It is impossible to fix with certainty the period in which he lived. Herodotus, the Greek historian, the first of the ancient writers to make direct reference to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—although Xenophanes refers to Homer—says that "Homer and Hesiod . . . lived but four hundred years before my time", that is, prior to 850 B.C., and he adds: "As for the poets who are thought by some to be earlier than these, they are, in my judgment, decidedly later writers".[2] It will thus be seen that even as far back as the time of Herodotus, who was born about 484 B.C., the Homeric problem was

[1] Lang's and Leaf's translations.

[2] *Herodotus*, ii, 53.

a controversial one. Other ancient writers, who followed Herodotus, relegated the blind bard to the tenth and eleventh centuries B.C.

Modern critics and historians have failed to solve the problem, but few now believe, as did certain of the Victorians, that Homer was a wholly mythical personage, or that the epics were simply nature myths, "the siege of Troy" being, as Max Müller asserted, "a repetition of the daily siege of the east by the solar powers that are robbed of their brightest treasures in the west". The archæological discoveries of late years in the Troad, the Peloponnesus, and in Crete have afforded undisputable evidence that the *Iliad* has a basis of substantial historical truth.

In this connection it is of special interest to find that the period assigned to the Trojan war by Greek tradition, between 1194 and 1184 B.C., appears, in the light of modern discoveries, to be fairly accurate. The Homeric Age was one of great race movements. Achæan and other fighting pastoral tribes were overrunning Greece, where they subdued peoples referred to by the generic term "Pelasgian"; they also occupied the Cycladic isles and Crete and invaded Asia Minor. In an inscription, dated about 1196 B.C., Rameses III, the last great Pharaoh of Egypt, made reference to these ethnic disturbances. "The isles were restless," the Pharaoh recorded; "they were disturbed among themselves at one and the same time." Invaders threatened even the ancient land of the Pharaohs. "They came with fire prepared before them, forward towards Egypt. . . . They laid their hands upon the land. . . . Their hearts were confident, full of plans." Evidently the race movements, of which the siege of Troy was an episode, were directed according to a well-defined policy of expansion and conquest.

The idea that the invaders laid the foundations of civilization in south-eastern Europe can no longer be entertained. A brilliant culture had flourished in Crete for long centuries prior to the Homeric Age. Its beginnings were about as remote as the dawn of Dynastic civilization in Egypt and that of the Sumerian civilization in the Tigro-Euphratian valley. On the mainland of Greece, traders and colonists from Crete had

influenced and stimulated the growth of civilization in such cities as Mycenæ and Tiryns, which were flourishing centres of commercial and political activity at least three centuries before the heroes of Homer waged warfare on the windy plain of Troy. Cretan mariners carried on a brisk trade with Egypt; they had long had commercial connections with Troy, they even penetrated the Black Sea, and they ventured as far westward as the coast of Spain. When the Achæan conquest of Greece was in progress the ancient civilization, now generally referred to as "Ægean", was in a state of decadence. In time the supremacy of Crete came to an end and passed to Mycenæ, Tiryns, and Athens, which had developed as capitals of independent and prosperous peoples.

It was not due to a higher culture, but because they possessed superior armaments, that the Homeric warriors effected the conquest of prehistoric Greece and Crete. They came from an area where iron as well as bronze implements and weapons were being manufactured. Nor did they entirely displace or exterminate the aboriginal peoples. Like the Normans, who invaded England, they appear to have formed a military aristocracy and intermarried with the ancient ruling families, with purpose, no doubt, to secure the allegiance of the masses of the people.

Viewing the Homeric problem in this light, certain scholars have inclined to reconstruct the history of the period as follows.

Menelaus, having conquered Sparta, married Helen, the heiress to the throne. During his absence, perhaps as leader of the sea-raid on Egypt in 1196 B.C., Helen was carried off by Paris, son of King Priam of Troy, who was probably a claimant of the Spartan throne.

After Menelaus returned from Egypt, or, as Homer says, from Crete, which may have been the base for naval operations against Egypt, he assembled an army of allies and set sail with a fleet of sixty ships to recover Helen, so as to secure his sway over Sparta. The siege of Troy may thus have been a war of succession.

Another view, which has been urged by Dr. Leaf, is that the Trojan war was waged for the control of the Hellespont

(the Dardanelles), which was "an essential economic necessity to Greece". The stronghold of Troy was the "key" to the Dardanelles and was possessed by a rival power which controlled the trade with the Black Sea ports. Troy had for centuries been a "clearing-house" for East and West, tapping the land route through Asia Minor and the sea route to and from the Black Sea. Crete, as has been said, had had trading connections with Troy for many centuries before the Homeric Age, when its sixth city was besieged; this is proved by the finds of Cretan pottery, &c., in the ruins of the old cities. After the power of Crete had suffered decline the mainland sea-traders became numerous and successful. The Achæan conquerors of Greece, whose "hearts were confident, full of plans", when, with their allies, they attempted the invasion and conquest of Egypt, may well have waged war against Troy for commercial as well as political reasons. Priam was probably a rival of Menelaus, and a trial of strength between the two may have become inevitable.

The view is now prevalent that the *Iliad* was based, not only on mere traditions regarding this great struggle for power between the new Greece and its older rivals, but also on actual records which were in existence in Homer's lifetime. No direct proof of this has been forthcoming, but we know that alphabetic scripts were in use at a much earlier period. That a considerable mass of poetic literature, oral or written, had also kept green the memory of the ancient heroes is undoubted. The *Iliad* begins abruptly with the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles during the last year of the siege. Homer evidently composed his great epic for a people who were familiar with the floating traditions and current literature of the great war.

The allied army of invasion from Greece had effected a landing at the mouth of the Dardanelles and on the north-west corner of the Troad, between the Rivers Simois and Scamander. Less than four miles from the shore stood the strong-walled city of Troy on a boat-shaped hillock—the spur of a mountain ridge. South-eastward over undulating and wooded country rose the romantic range of Mount Ida, blue in the distance. The high

and broken coastland of the Ægean Sea was to the west, while north-eastward were rough and featureless hills intersected by pleasant valleys.

In Homer's day the glamour of myth and legend clung to this wonderful land like mists about its mountains, and the war waged for trade, or succession, or both, had become a poetic romance and the great storehouse of themes for bards great and small.

It was told that before Paris was born, his mother, Hecuba, had dreamed a dream of ill omen. His father, King Priam of Troy, was troubled regarding it, and when the little child came into the world he was exposed on a slope of Mount Ida to die. There a wild bear suckled him, until a herdsman found the young prince, took him home, and brought him up among his own children. Paris grew to be a brave youth, and fought with success against mountain robbers who came to raid the cattle-folds. In time he married Enone, a fairy lady, the daughter of a river god. Tennyson, in his "Enone", has drawn a beautiful picture of their home:

> There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
> Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
> The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
> Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
> And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
> The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
> Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
> The long brook falling through the clov'n ravine
> In cataract after cataract to the sea.

It chanced that the three goddesses, Hera, Athene, and Aphrodite, had a dispute at a marriage feast as to which of them should take possession of the golden apple that had been thrown down by a mischief-making deity, because it was inscribed: "For the fairest". They chose Paris as arbiter, and he was visited by Hermes, who placed the apple in his hand, informing him that the goddesses would appear before him; the god counselled Paris to give a true and just judgment. Tennyson's version of what is known as "The Judgment of Paris" is the most beautiful rendering of the legend in any

language. "Beautiful-brow'd Enone" relates the narrative, and depicts Paris:

> White-breasted like a star
> Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
> Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
> Cluster'd about his temples like a god's.

She tells of the coming of the goddesses:

> It was deep midnoon; one silvery cloud
> Had lost his way between the piney sides
> Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came. . . .

Each of the deities address Paris, offering a reward in exchange for the coveted apple. Hera makes promise of royal power and great riches; Athene offers wisdom:

> Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.

Then spoke

> Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
> Fresh as the foam. . . .
> She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
> The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
> Half-whispered in his ear, "I promise thee
> The fairest and most loving wife in Greece".
> She spoke and laughed.

Paris gave the golden apple to Aphrodite, goddess of love, and Hera and Athene departed in anger, and became from that day the enemies of the Trojans. Paris turned away from Enone, who laments:

> And I was left alone within the bower;
> And from that time to this I am alone,
> And I shall be alone until I die.

The most beautiful woman in Greece was Helen, whose praises have been sung by a hundred poets, but never with more poetic fire than by Marlowe in the magnificent lines:

> O thou art fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

She figures in Tennyson's "A Dream of Fair Women":

> At length I saw a lady within call,
> Stiller than chisell'd marble, standing there;
> A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
> And most divinely fair.
>
> Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
> Froze my swift speech: she turning on my face
> The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
> Spoke slowly in her place.
>
> "I had great beauty: ask thou not my name:
> No one can be more wise than destiny.
> Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
> I brought calamity."

Menelaus returned home from Crete to find that Helen had been carried off to Troy by Paris. Accompanied by Odysseus (Ulysses), he visited the city to demand her restoration, but met with a refusal. War was then declared.

The allies of Menelaus, having meanwhile been summoned together, were placed under supreme command of the monarch's elder brother, Agamemnon, King of Mycenæ. Some of the petty kings had come unwillingly. Odysseus, for instance, had pretended madness. When Odysseus was prevailed upon to answer the summons to war, he set out to find Achilles, because it had been prophesied that Troy could never be taken without his help. Achilles, wearing female attire, was residing at the Court of Lycomedes; he came readily when Odysseus found him. Other allies included Aias (Ajax) the Great, Aias (Ajax) the Lesser, Diomedes, Patroclus, Idomeneus, King of Crete and grandson of King Minos; Nestor, the aged King of Pylos; and Philoctetes, the skilful archer.

Two years were spent in assembling the army and fleet at the port of Aulis, opposite Eubœa. When at length the vessels were ready to sail, their departure was delayed on account of a dead calm, which had been caused by Artemis. This goddess withheld the wind for weeks, because Agamemnon, having gone a-hunting, slew a hind that was sacred to her. Calchas, a priest and diviner, having consulted an oracle, discovered that the goddess would not be appeased until Iphigenia, the eldest

daughter of Agamemnon, was offered up in sacrifice. In "A Dream of Fair Women" she tells her fate:

I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
  Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears:
My father held his hand upon his face;
  I, blinded with my tears,

Still strove to speak: my voice was thick with sighs
  As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes
  Waiting to see me die.

The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;
  The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore;
The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat,
  Touch'd; and I knew no more.

Achilles had fallen in love with her, and offered to fight the whole host to rescue her from her doom, but the stern father refused to relent. His wife, Clytemnestra, half-sister of Helen, returned to Mycenæ, vowing vengeance against Agamemnon and his house.

When the sacrifice of Iphigenia had been offered to Artemis, a fair wind sprang up, and the fleet set sail to Troy.

It had been decreed, another legend relates, that success would not attend the expedition unless the first man who landed on the shore of Troy would be slain. The hero Protesilaus decided to make the supreme sacrifice on behalf of his companions. As soon as the first vessel grounded, he leapt on the beach, to be immediately slain by Hector, eldest son of the King of Troy, the commander of the force which opposed the landing.

Laodameia, the wife of this fallen warrior, long lamented his fate, and prayed the gods to grant her an interview with his shade. Wordsworth, in his "Laodameia", gives a characteristic rendering of the legend:

With sacrifice, before the rising morn
Performed, my slaughtered lord have I required;
And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
Him of the infernal gods have I desired:
Celestial pity I again implore:—
Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore!

Her request is granted, and the shade appears.

> O terror! what hath she perceived?—O joy!
> What doth she look on?—whom doth she behold?
> Her hero slain upon the beach of Troy. . . .

He tells her of his fate.

> A generous cause a victim did demand;
> And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
> A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.

When the interview between the loving pair comes to an end, Laodameia falls dead. She was laid in his tomb at Eleus, in the Chersonesus (Gallipoli). There a temple had been erected to his memory. Nymphs planted elm trees at the grave. Wordsworth's poem concludes:

> Upon the side
> Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
> A knot of spiny trees for ages grew
> From out the tomb of him for whom she died;
> And ever, when such stature they had gained
> That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
> The trees' tall summits withered at the sight:
> A constant interchange of growth and blight.

The heroes who took a prominent part in the defence of Troy included Hector, Paris, and other sons of Priam; Æneas, whose mother was Aphrodite; Sarpedon, the Lycian, a son of Zeus; Glaucus; Rhesus, the Thracian; Memnon, Prince of Ethiopia, who had magic armour; and Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons, who arrived when the war was drawing to a close.

The *Iliad* narrative opens in the tenth year of the siege. Fierce battles had been fought on the windy plain of Troy, but the city still held out. Quarrels had arisen among the attackers. The first book gives an account of a dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon. Indeed the whole of the *Iliad* centres round Achilles, and the poet begins by invoking the goddess to sing "the wrath of Achilles, son of Peleus".

This Peleus was King of the Myrmidons, at Phthia in Thessaly. He had taken for wife Thetis, the Nereide (a sea-fairy), one of the fifty daughters of the sea-god Nereus and

his wife Doris. She had previously been wooed by Zeus and Poseidon, but they ceased to claim her when an oracle declared that her son would become greater than his father. All the gods and goddesses attended the wedding except Eris, goddess of Discord, and it was she who aroused contention between the goddesses by throwing amidst the guests the golden apple inscribed "For the fairest", which Paris afterwards awarded to Aphrodite, an act which brought about the siege of Troy.

When Achilles was born, his fairy mother desired to make him invulnerable against wounds. Accordingly she dipped him in the River Styx, holding him securely by a heel. As this heel was not touched by the water, it remained the only vulnerable part of his body. When Achilles was nine years old, his mother disguised him as a girl and sent him to the island of Scyros, where he was brought up by Lycomedes, King of the Dolopians. Calchas, the diviner, having foretold that Troy could not be taken without the help of Achilles, Odysseus set out, as has been noted, to find him, and, having done so, secured his aid.

The quarrel with which the *Iliad* begins was one of the results of a plundering expedition conducted by Achilles. Troy drew its supplies and reinforcements from the city-states in the southern Troad, and the hero was sent to sack the cities and carry off the herds of cattle among the hills. He had several thousand soldiers under his command, and the fleet consisted of about half a hundred ships. Several cities were besieged and sacked, and large herds of cattle seized. Æneas narrowly escaped capture by taking flight from one of the doomed cities. The prisoners included one or two noble ladies.

Troy suffered greatly on account of this foray. Its food-supply was reduced, and the power of its allies to render aid seriously impaired. On the other hand, abundant supplies were obtained for the Greeks in consequence of their having command of the sea.

Among the ladies taken captive by Achilles were Chryseis, daughter of the priest of the mouse-god of the Troad, whom the Greeks identified with Apollo and called Apollo Smintheus.

Another famous captive was Queen Briseis, widow of the King of Lyrnessus, who had fallen when his city was plundered. After the expedition returned to the Greek camp, Agamemnon claimed Chryseis, and Achilles, who had previously fallen in love with Chryseis, was given Briseis. The *Iliad* opens with the visit of the priest to the Greek camp. He claims his daughter, but Agamemnon refuses to give her up. The priest then calls on his god, Apollo Smintheus, to punish the invaders. The mouse-god was the source of all diseases, and sent a pestilence into the Greek camp. Being the source of diseases, he was the only god able to cure sufferers, to prevent a plague spreading, or to bring it to an end.

It should be noted that Homer never refers to the Greeks as "Hellenes". The allies are called Achæans, Argives, Danaans, Myrmidons, and Cretans; these were opposed to the Trojans and their allies, the Lycians, Thracians, Phrygians, &c.

Among the sea-raiders referred to in the Egyptian inscriptions are the Shardana and Danuana (perhaps the Homeric Danaoi), the Akhauasha (Achæans), the Tursha (Tursenoi or Tyrrhenians or Teucri), the Tchakaray or Zakaray (perhaps connected with Zakro in Crete), &c.

The Iliad

I. The Wrath of Achilles

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd, heavenly goddess sing!
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's[1] gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore:
Since great Achilles and Atrides[2] strove,
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove![3]
Declare, O muse! in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended power?
Latona's son[4] a dire contagion spread,
And heaped the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of men his reverend priest defied,
And for the King's offence the people died.

Pope's translation.

Now when Chryses, the priest, came to the swift ships of the Achæans to claim his daughter, making offer of priceless ransom, he said: "Ye sons of Atreus and all ye well-greaved Achæans, may the gods will that you sack the city of Priam and then return home in safety! My own prayer is that you will set free my beloved child and accept a ransom."

All the Achæans shouted assent, except Agamemnon, who spoke harshly: "Let me find you not again, old man, among the ships! I refuse to set your daughter free. Begone! do not provoke me to anger if you wish to depart without suffering harm."

The old priest quailed before the king. In silence he walked

[1] Hades, god of the Underworld. [2] Agamemnon.
[3] Zeus. [4] Apollo, son of Zeus and Latona (Leto).

along the shore of the loud-resounding sea. Then in a lonely place he called upon Apollo Smintheus, saying: "Let the Danaans pay for my tears by your arrows (of disease)."

The god heard his prayer and came down from Olympus. He was angry, and the arrows in the quiver rattled on his shoulders. He came down like night. Sitting apart from the ships, Apollo bent his silver bow, which clanged sharply as he shot an arrow. First he attacked the mules and dogs; then he smote men. Thereafter many funeral pyres had to be set ablaze on the beach. For nine days the god sent his arrows through the army. When the tenth day came Achilles called the soldiers together, the goddess Hera having conveyed to his mind this plan, because she took pity on the Danaans who were dying.

At the assembly Achilles addressed Agamemnon, counselling him to inquire of a soothsayer the reason for Apollo's fierce and vengeful wrath.

Then Calchas, the diviner, revealed to them that Apollo was punishing the host because Agamemnon had refused to set free the daughter of the priest, and that the god would not withhold his hand until she was released, unransomed and unpurchased, and given a safe-conduct home.

Agamemnon was made angry when he heard this declaration. He scowled on the soothsayer and said: "Prophet of evil! Never have you revealed a pleasant thing to me. You take delight in prophesying evil things. Never yet have you foretold of any joy that was in store for me."

So he stormed, but in the end he promised to give up the damsel on condition that another prize was awarded to him; whereupon Achilles promised that he would be paid back threefold and fourfold when Troy was taken and plundered.

Agamemnon answered, saying: "Ha! god-like Achilles, you are as crafty as you are valiant, but you are unable to deceive me, or yet to influence me. Is it your desire that I should have no prize while you yourself retain your own? Let the great-hearted Achæans compensate me; but if they will not, I shall take a prize, be it yours or that of Odysseus. He whom I shall visit will be made angry. But more of this anon."

The king gave orders to send home Chryseis in a ship, and to offer up sacrifices with purpose to appease Apollo.

Achilles frowned, eyeing the king sternly. "Ha!" he exclaimed; "you carry insolence like a cloak. You seek naught but personal gain. How can the Achæans continue to obey you willingly? As for me, I have no quarrel with the Trojans; they have never taken aught from me. I and the others have followed you here for your good pleasure, you shameless fellow. We came, dog-face, to avenge the wrongs suffered by Menelaus and yourself. This you ignore; it matters naught to you; and now you would take my hard-earned prize from me. The moment you do so, be it known to all, I shall return with my ships to Phthia. I shall no longer remain here to enrich you and dishonour myself."

"Flee, and flee now," answered Agamemnon, "if such is your desire! It is not I who plead with you to remain. There are others by my side ready to do me honour, and, above all, there is Zeus the all-wise. You are odious to me among the kings; strife is ever agreeable to you. Hasten homeward with your ships and men, and rule over your Myrmidons. I have no need for you, nor does your wrath trouble me now. But this will I threaten. As I have been bereft of Chryseis, I will take Briseis, the fair one, as my prize, so that you may realize I am greater than you, and so that no other king may presume, as you have done, to compare himself with me."

Achilles, stricken with grief, hesitated whether he would draw his sword and smite Agamemnon or suppress his passion. At this moment, however, Hera of the white arms came behind him; she seized Achilles by his golden hair. Turning round, he beheld her, but she was invisible to the others. The goddess forbade Achilles to draw his sword, and counselled him to revile the king instead. Achilles obeyed without hesitation, and, thrusting his sword back into the sheath, spoke wrathfully to Agamemnon, saying: "Thou drunkard, with the face of a hound and the heart of a deer, never have you had the courage to go into battle with your warriors, or to lie in ambush with Achæan chiefs. No. The call to war is to you like the voice of Destiny. Doubtless you find it safer and easier to seize the

possessions of any man who opposes your will. Folk-plundering king! you rule over men of no account, for otherwise you should have insulted them, as you have now done, for the last time."

Then Achilles took a vow, saying:

> This I swear, when bleeding Greece again
> Shall call Achilles, she shall call in vain.
> When, flushed with slaughter, Hector comes to spread
> The purpled shore with mountains of the dead,
> Then shalt thou mourn the affront thy madness gave,
> Forc'd to deplore, when impotent to save:
> Then rage in bitterness of soul, to know
> This act has made the bravest Greek thy foe. *Pope.*

Agamemnon had grown angrier as Achilles went on speaking. Next, however, arose Nestor, the aged King of Pylos, the calm, sweet-voiced orator whose words dropped like honey from his lips. He spoke long and eloquently. "You are both younger than I am," he said, addressing the furious rivals. "In other days I have mixed with even greater heroes than you are, and they did not disdain me; they listened to me and followed my advice." He counselled Achilles not to strive against the king, and he besought Agamemnon to abate his anger against Achilles, who was like a bulwark in war to the Achæans. But the heroes refused to be reconciled. Achilles, however, said, with purpose to reassure Nestor and the others, that he would not oppose the taking away of Briseis, but he declared firmly that if the king attempted to seize aught else, his royal blood would stain the spear.

The assembly then broke up. Achilles retired with his friend Patroclus and all his followers. When Agamemnon sent for Briseis, Achilles allowed her to be led away, although that fair woman sorrowed to leave him, and he lamented her loss.

Odysseus was given command of the ship which carried Chryseis back to her father, the priest of Apollo. That aged man welcomed his dear daughter with great joy. Sacrifices were also offered up to Apollo so that he might bring to an end the dread pestilence.

Meanwhile Achilles went to a lonely place on the sea-beach,

and, weeping, summoned his mother, Thetis of the silver feet, from the depths of ocean where she sat beside her aged sire. She rose from the waves in misty form, and addressing the weeping warrior said: "My son, why do you sorrow? Conceal naught from me, but tell me everything."

Then Achilles related to his mother all that had taken place, and pleaded with her to supplicate Zeus to give succour to the Trojans, so that the Achæans might realize how blind had been Agamemnon in dishonouring the son of Thetis. This the ocean nymph promised to do. "I shall hasten to the palace of Zeus," she said. "I shall plead with him and win his favour."

Thereafter Thetis pleaded with Zeus, who promised, with a nod, to do her will, although Hera should be made angry, for she loved the Achæans.

On the night that followed, Agamemnon dreamed a dream which Zeus had sent with intent to deceive him. Above the monarch's head stood one who declared himself a messenger from Zeus, and he urged the king to call the long-haired Achæans to arms, for now he would be able to capture Troy.

Agamemnon summoned the chiefs to assemble, and, having related his dream, said he would call the warriors together, but would first put them to the test by advising them to depart homeward in the ships. "While I do so," he added, "oppose me and urge them to remain."

The soldiers were accordingly gathered together, and Agamemnon spoke to them of their losses during nine weary years. Their ships, he reminded them, were rotting, and the ropes were loose; their wives and children were waiting for them, and still the work for which they had come remained unfinished. "Let us flee in our ships," he said, "to our dear native land, for it seems we shall never be able to take wide-wayed Troy."

The hearts of the soldiers were roused by these words as are the waves of the Icarian Sea by the wind; they were stirred as is a cornfield by a western gale when the ears bend down. Some rose up shouting and rushed towards the ships, and some called on one another to launch them. Their voices sounded like the rollers breaking on the long beach.

Many, however, kept their seats, but among them Thersites kept babbling. It was his wont to abuse the chiefs, if only to make his fellows laugh. He was the ugliest man that came to Troy, being bandy-legged and lame of one foot, while his crooked shoulders were arched over his chest, and his peaked head had but scanty hair. He was disliked by all, and especially by Achilles and Odysseus, whom he had oft-times reviled; yet with loud voice and uncontrolled speech he abused Agamemnon for dishonouring Achilles, and said: "There is no wrath in the heart of Achilles; he is shirking, otherwise your offence against him, son of Atreus, would have been your last."

Odysseus rose in wrath, and, going towards Thersites, threatened to drive him to the ships with shameful blows. Then that hero smote the babbler with his sceptre, and left a bloody weal on his back, whereat he wept. Everyone present praised the deed, although they pitied the victim, and the commoners said: "After this Thersites will never again slander the king."

Then Odysseus addressed the warriors, counselling them to remain until Troy was taken. Bravely he spoke, and the Achæans shouted approval.

Thereafter Nestor spake also, bidding all to remain steadfast until the Trojans were overcome. "If any man," he said very firmly, "desiring to return home, lays hand on a ship, he shall meet speedy death." Nestor then counselled Agamemnon to separate the troops according to their tribes and clans, so that it might be known which were brave and which were cowards in the fray, and whether, if they failed to take the city, it was due to the gods or to lack of valour on the part of the attackers.

King Agamemnon approved of Nestor's plan, and the troops were mustered as he had advised. Meanwhile Achilles nursed his wrath against Agamemnon: he was the bravest and best among the great warriors, yet he remained idle; his men amused themselves throwing quoits and javelins and practising with their bows, while their steeds stood by the chariots browsing on clover and marsh-fed parsley.

II. Gods and Heroes in Battle

Now when the host of Agamemnon advanced against Troy the Trojans came forth with clamour, shouting like birds, and, indeed, like cranes that fly towards the sea when winter is nigh; but the Achæans, breathing valour, moved on in silence, determined each to aid the other. Behind the armies rose clouds of dust like the mist shed over lofty mountains by the south wind.

In front of the Trojans came Paris as their chief hero, having on his shoulders a panther's skin and also his sword and bow. Brandishing two bronze-tipped spears, he challenged the bravest of the Argives to meet him in single combat.

Menelaus, beloved of Ares (Mars), marked him coming with long strides. He exulted as does a lion which happens on the carcass of a deer or goat, for he longed to be revenged on the guilty man. Forthwith he leapt from his chariot and advanced quickly.

Paris shrank back, and, like one who sees a serpent in a mountain thicket, his limbs trembled and his face grew white. He found refuge among the Trojans, but Hector, his brother, upbraided him, saying: "Surely you wish to discover what manner of warrior is he from whom you took Helen. Your harp and your curling locks and your comely figure will not avail you when you grovel in the dust. If the Trojans were not waverers they would have stoned you for the evil you have already done."

Paris answered, saying: "If the Trojans and Achæans will sit down, I shall fight Menelaus. Then let he who is victor take possession of Helen and all the treasure she possesses."

Hector rejoiced to hear the words. He bade the Trojans sit down, and Agamemnon, seeing his enemies refraining from

battle, cried out: "Shoot not, sons of the Achæans. Hector would speak."

Silence ensued, and Hector addressed the opposing hosts, repeating the proposal which Paris had made. Without hesitation Menelaus accepted the challenge, and all the Trojans and Achæans rejoiced, believing that the war was about to end.

The goddess Iris[1], taking human form, summoned Helen to watch the conflict, saying: "Paris and Menelaus will fight for your sake with long spears, and you shall be declared the dear wife of him who conquers."

A tear fell from Helen's eyes, as she veiled herself in white linen. She went to a tower to watch the conflict. At the Scæan gates sat old men who had ceased to fight, and they said: "No wonder the hosts suffer hardships on account of such a woman, for she is beautiful as a goddess; but it were better if she returned to her own home."

King Priam, taking pity on Helen, bade her come and sit beside him, and said: "I blame you not, for I blame the gods for this war."

Said Helen: "Would I had died when I left my home. Ah, shameless me!"

When Paris and Menelaus strode forth to combat between the hosts, Priam retired, saying: "I cannot watch my dear son fighting with Menelaus."

Hector and Odysseus measured the ground. Then lots were drawn to decide who should first throw the spear of bronze, and Paris won.

The rivals immediately donned their armour and took their places, brandishing their spears. Paris threw his spear first, and Menelaus turned it aside with his shield. Next, breathing a prayer to Zeus, Menelaus hurled his spear, which passed through the shield of Paris and pierced his corslet, but he swerved sideways, and thus escaped black death. An angry groan escaped the lips of Menelaus. Quickly he drew his silver-studded sword, and, rushing forward, smote the cone of his opponent's helmet; but the sword broke in pieces, which fell on the ground. Glancing skywards, Menelaus exclaimed:

[1] The rainbow goddess.

"Oh, Father Zeus, you do not favour me! In vain I hurled my spear, and now my sword has broken in my hand."

Thus he spoke ere he leapt on Paris. Him he seized by the horsehair-tufted helmet, and, turning round, began to drag him towards the Achæans. The helmet strap was choking Paris, and it seemed as if Menelaus would take him captive and win great renown; but the goddess Aphrodite intervened. She severed the strap, and Menelaus then held but an empty helmet in his hand. He threw the helmet disdainfully among the Achæans, and swung round to cast a spear. To his amaze, however, he found that Paris had vanished, for Aphrodite had wrapped him in a mist, carried him off, and placed him in a perfumed chamber within his palace in Troy. Then the goddess summoned Helen to the chamber. At first Helen refused to go, saying: "The Trojan women would mock me if I went. Besides, I have sorrows without measure in my soul." Her heart was moved towards Menelaus.

But Aphrodite threatened her with greater grief if she disobeyed, and Helen departed from the tower. She went to Paris, and she chided him and taunted him, saying: "You boasted once you were a greater hero than Menelaus. Go forth, then, and challenge him again. But I, your spouse, must, it seems, counsel you not to go, lest you may fall."

Paris answered her with words of love, and declared that Menelaus had been given aid by the goddess Athene. Moved by Aphrodite's wiles, the heart of Helen melted towards him.

Meanwhile Menelaus wandered among the soldiers like a wild beast, searching for Paris; but neither he nor any other could find him.

Then Agamemnon spoke aloud and said: "Victory is with Menelaus. Therefore let Helen be restored with her treasures, and let there be paid such an indemnity as will be remembered by future generations." All the Achæans shouted applause when these words were spoken.

In the abode of Zeus the gods sat on the golden floor drinking nectar from goblets of gold, and they looked towards Troy. The two goddesses, Hera and Athene, were helpers of Menelaus, yet they only watched; but the laughter-loving Aphrodite

protected Paris, and had averted his doom. Yet the victor was Menelaus, whom Ares loved. Said Zeus: "Shall war be resumed and the din of battle? 'Twere better if Troy were spared and if Menelaus returned home with Helen."

Hera opposed this counsel, whereat Zeus became angry, and he declared that of all cities sacred Troy was dearest to his heart; whereupon Hera said that the three cities beloved by her, Argus and Sparta and Mycenæ, might be laid waste in return for Troy. Zeus yielded to her, on condition that the Trojans would first do injury to the Achæans and break the truce.

Then Athene dropped to earth from Olympus like a falling star. She took the form of Ladocus, the warrior, sought and found Pandarus, and urged him to bend his bow against Menelaus. The words she spoke were pleasing to his foolish heart. He bent his bow, his bow-string sang, and the arrow winged its way through the hosts. It struck the hero's belt, went through his breastplate, entered his flesh, and blood flowed forth, staining his thighs. King Agamemnon shuddered, as did also Menelaus. Indeed, Agamemnon deemed that his brother had been mortally wounded, and he raged against the Trojans for so treacherously breaking the truce. When he found that the wound was slight, the angry king called upon the Achæans to attack the enemy. Like to billows raised by the west wind, the allies swept against the Trojans.

Then followed clash of spear and shield, and, amidst the din of battle, shouts of triumph mingled with heavy groans. The earth was soaked with blood. Fiercely was the battle waged, and many Achæans and Trojans lay prone that day side by side, their faces in the dust.

Among the Argives none was more valorous than Diomedes, son of Tydeus, to whom Athene had given strength and daring. The goddess urged him into the thick of the fray, where masses strove in conflict. Many heroes he slew; he overthrew battalions of the Trojans. Pandarus, who had wounded Menelaus, watched him raging across the plain, and, bending his bow, shot an arrow that pierced the hero's right shoulder. But Athene healed his wound, and she also gave him power to see gods as well as men in the midst of battle. Diomedes went again

into the fray and slew several heroes, and he overthrew Priam's two sons, Echemon and Chromius, who rode together in a chariot.

Brave Æneas beheld with grief the havoc wrought by Diomedes. With Pandarus he rode in a chariot against that fierce Argive. Pandarus cast a spear by which Diomedes was almost slain, but he himself was slain instead, when Diomedes hurled a dart in return.

Then Æneas leapt out of the chariot, and, like a lion, sprang at the Argive, confident of victory. But Diomedes grasped a boulder which in these days two men could scarcely lift, and threw it hard and well. It struck Æneas right on the hip-joint, which was sorely crushed, and he fell on his knees; darkness as of night covered his eyes. He would assuredly have perished, but Aphrodite came to his aid. She clasped him in her arms to carry him away, but Diomedes, beholding her, wounded her with his spear, whereat she screamed, let fall Æneas, and fled. Then Apollo carried him off in a dark cloud and set him down in a temple.

Thereafter Hera entered the fray in the form of the warrior Stentor, the loud-voiced Achæan, while Athene gave aid to Diomedes, who attacked the god Ares and wounded him, whereupon Ares, who had given aid to Hector, fled to Olympus, bellowing like ten thousand warriors. Then Zeus chided him and bade Pæon to give the god healing. After that Hera and Athene returned also, having stayed Ares from his deeds of slaughter.

The battle between mortals continued, and the Rivers Simois and Scamander ran red with blood. It seemed as if the Achæans would be triumphant, for the Trojans were being pressed back to the walls of Troy. Helenus, son of Priam, fearing disaster was at hand, counselled Hector to hasten to his mother, so that she and other women and the elders of the council might make appeal to Athene in her temple to have mercy on the women and little children of Troy.

As Hector hastened to the city, Diomedes met Glaucus, a Trojan ally, in the midst of the battle-ground. Both were eager to charge, but it chanced that the one recognized the other.

Their fathers had been friends of old, and they refused to fight. Indeed they left their chariots, clasped each other by the hand, and plighted faith. Then they exchanged their armour, although that of Glaucus was made of gold, while the armour of Diomedes was of bronze, and therefore of much less value.

In Troy Hector appealed to his mother, the aged queen, who hastened with many women to the temple and prayed to Athene for victory, so that Troy might be spared, but Athene refused her help.

Meanwhile Hector went to the palace of Paris, and found his brother cleaning his armour. Him he chided, saying: "Our people are perishing on your account, yet you skulk here. Up with you, lest the city be soon given to flames!"

Paris answered softly in his shame, promising to follow him to battle. Hector looked at him, but said naught else; and then Helen, who sat near, instructing her handmaidens to embroider garments, said: "Brother, would that I, who am the cause of this warfare, had died on the day of my birth. The gods are the authors of all the evil that has befallen." She asked Hector to sit with her and Paris, but he refused to do so, saying he must succour the Trojans. "Helen, arouse this fellow," he said, pointing to Paris, "so that he may follow me. Now I shall go to my dear wife and to my baby boy, for I know not if I shall ever return home again."

So Hector went to look for Andromache in his house, but did not find her there, for she, with her boy and her handmaiden, stood weeping on a tower, watching the battle. When that noble lady beheld her dear husband drawing nigh, she hastened to meet him with her handmaiden, who carried the child. In silence Hector gazed at his son. His wife took his hand in hers and wept. "Alas, my husband," she said, "your valour will be your undoing! Have pity on your child and on me! It were better for me to die than to be bereft of you. My father was slain by Achilles; my seven brothers fell also, and my mother is dead. Ah, Hector, you are father and mother, yes, and brother to me, and you are my goodly husband! Come, stay with us here, lest you perish in battle."

Hector answered softly, saying: "Dear wife, I take thought of these things, but I fear for the Trojans and their wives, and dare not shrink from battle. Besides, my soul forbids me to stay here, because I have ever been valiant in the fray, and have won great glory for my sire and myself. Alas! I know that some day Troy shall fall, but my greatest grief is to think of you being led away captive, to be a slave to some woman in Argos, and that then it will be said by one who sees you in tears: 'This is the wife of Hector, who was ever in the front of the Trojans when men fought at Troy'. Such words will give you fresh sorrow. May I lie in my grave rather than hear your cries when you are taken captive."

Having spoken thus, Hector stretched out his arms for the child. The boy screamed, however, and shrank back, pressing against the bosom of the nurse. He was afraid of his father in his bronze armour, and especially was he afraid of the horse-hair plume that nodded dreadfully on the crest of the helmet. The hero laughed at this, and his wife laughed also. Then Hector took the glittering helmet off his head and laid it on the ground. The child was then no longer afraid. Hector kissed his dear boy and fondled him in his arms. A prayer to Zeus rose to his lips, and thus he prayed:

> O you that have infus'd
> Soul to this infant; now set down this blessing on his star:
> Let his renown be clear as mine; equal his strength in war;
> And make his reign so strong in Troy, that years to come may yield
> His facts this fame;—when rich in spoils, he leaves the conquered field
> Sown with his slaughters:—These high deeds exceed his father's worth.
> And let this echo'd praise supply the comforts to come forth
> Of his kind mother, with my life! *Chapman.*

So, wishing that his son would yet bring joy to his mother's heart, and be as famous as himself, he laid him in the arms of his beloved wife, and she embraced the little one, smiling through her tears.

Hector was deeply moved. "Dear Andromache," he said, "do not be too sorrowful. No man can slay me before my time. Nor can any man, be he brave or be he a coward, escape his destiny. Now, dear one, go home and attend to your duties,

and set your maids to their tasks. War is man's business, and mine especially of all men who dwell in Troy."

He donned his helmet and turned away, while his beloved wife went towards her home; but often she looked back, shedding tears. She feared he would never return. When she was among her maids she caused them all to share her sorrow.

Paris had put on his armour and followed his noble brother with rapid strides. "I have delayed you," Paris said as he reached his side. Hector made answer, saying: "No man can deny your valour in battle, but you are selfish and thoughtless, my brother, and it grieves me to hear bitter words spoken against you by the Trojans, who suffer much for your sake. Let us make haste, so that we may recompense them when the Achæans are routed."

Both were eager to enter the fray. Their appearance was as welcome to the longing Trojans as is a favourable breeze to seamen who have become weary at the oars. They rushed against the Achæans, and Glaucus went with them. When the goddess Athene saw them slaughtering the Argives, she descended from Olympus to Troy, and Apollo met her beside the oak tree and said: "Let us move Hector to challenge one of the Danaans to single combat."

Athene spoke not, but Helenus, son of Priam, knowing the will of the gods, hastened to Hector, and urged him to challenge a hero of the Achæans to fight with him, while both armies rested and looked on.

Hector consented, and shouted his challenge. It was the desire of Menelaus to accept it, but Agamemnon made him draw back, saying: "Even Achilles dreads to meet Hector in battle, and Achilles is a braver and mightier man than you."

Then Nestor upbraided the Argives. He told of the great deeds of ancient heroes, and said: "Would to God I were young again! for Hector would not then wait long for one to accept his challenge."

Stung by his words, several heroes stepped forward to accept the proud challenge of Hector, and lots had to be cast. The lot fell to Aias (Ajax) the elder, who said: "My heart is made glad, because I am certain I shall overcome Hector."

Aias donned his armour of shining bronze. He went forth, this tall and mighty man, like to Ares himself, a smile lingering on his hard face. The Achæans rejoiced to see him, but the Trojans trembled.

Fiercely fought Hector and Aias. Hector cast his spear, and it pierced six folds of his opponent's shield, but was stayed by the seventh. Then Aias hurled his spear. It passed through the shield of Hector and pierced corslet and doublet, but the Trojan hero swerved and escaped black death. Both seized their spears again. Hector's was turned by the shield of his enemy, but that of Aias wounded Hector on the neck and drew the red blood. But Hector paused not. He picked up a black and jagged boulder and hurled it. Aias's shield was struck and resounded aloud. Next Aias flung a boulder which struck Hector and felled him, but Apollo lifted him up quickly. Then the fierce heroes fought with their swords, smiting furiously, until the Trojan and Achæan umpires rushed forward and separated them with their long staves. "Cease fighting," said the Achæan umpire; "you are both great warriors, as all men know. Darkness is coming on. It is well to obey the command of night."

To this the warriors agreed. The noble Hector praised brave Aias, saying: "Among the Achæans you are the foremost spearman." Having spoken thus, he gave Aias his silver-studded sword, and Aias took it, and gave Hector, in return, his belt adorned with purple. Thus, with exchange of gifts and salutations, they parted on the plain. The Trojans welcomed Hector, rejoicing that he was still alive, and the Achæans hailed Aias as the victor of the combat.

The Trojans thereafter held an assembly, at which Antenor spoke frankly, and urged that Helen should be given up to Menelaus with all her treasures. Paris refused to part with her, but offered instead to deliver over to the enemy all her wealth and his own added to it. Priam, having counselled the Trojans to keep watch all night, then said he would send a herald to the Achæan camp on the morrow to announce the offer made by Paris, and also to ask for a truce, so that the dead might be burned.

At dawn Idæus, acting as herald, visited the Achæan camp and delivered the message of Priam to Agamemnon and his great men, who were sitting in council. No sooner had he spoken, however, than Diomedes said: "Let us refuse this offer of Paris, even although he chose to give Helen also. It is plain to see that the Trojans are in sore straits."

The Achæans approved his speech, and Agamemnon, addressing the herald, said: "You have heard the voice of the Achæans. As for the dead, however, let them be burned."

Thus was a truce arranged. The dead were burned next day, and on both sides warriors mourned for their friends who had fallen.

The Achæans engaged themselves at dawn building a strong wall to protect their ships and camp, and in front of it they dug a deep trench. They toiled all day, and the work was finished when the sun went down.

III. Zeus aids the Trojans

Now, when the saffron-vested dawn shed its radiance over the earth, Zeus called the gods to assemble on the summit of high Olympus and addressed them, saying: "It is my command that no god or goddess will give aid to either the Trojans or the Achæans. The deity who disobeys me I shall cast into gloomy Tartarus, which is as far below Hades as the earth is from Heaven. The greatest of all the gods am I. None can dethrone me, and all must obey."

The gods and goddesses heard and kept silent, until Athene spake, saying: "We shall take no part in the battle, but we desire to give good advice to the Achæans." To this Zeus assented, saying: "I am not too serious."

Thereafter the father of the gods rode in his chariot to Ida of many springs, and in his sacred enclosure he sat, surrounded by a mist, looking towards the plain of Troy. As the sun rose, he lifted up the golden scales and placed in them the fates of the Trojans and the Achæans. The Achæans' fates dropped to earth, and the Trojans' fates rose towards heaven. Thereafter he sent his thunder among the Achæans, and they began to tremble.

The armies began to battle on the plain of Troy. Among the Achæan leaders, however, none showed daring or courage save old Nestor, but his chariot horse was slain by an arrow shot by Paris. He leapt to the ground, and Hector rode furiously towards him. Diomedes, therefore, hastened to his aid, and took the aged hero in his chariot. Diomedes then hurled his spear at Hector, whom, however, he missed, slaying the charioteer instead. Then, as Hector sought a new charioteer, Zeus thundered terribly; lightning darted in front of the steeds of Diomedes, and they trembled with fear. Diomedes had therefore to turn back, while the Trojans, led by Hector, followed

them, throwing javelins. All the Achæans were driven behind their strong wall, and horses and men were crowded beside the ships.

After a time, however, the Achæans rallied and made havoc among the Trojans with their arrows. Twice Hector narrowly escaped death, Apollo turning aside the arrows which had been aimed at him. The Achæans came forth from their stronghold, advancing across the plain, but they were driven back once more. Hector was in the front of the battle. Like a hound that bites a hunted boar or lion, so he cut at the hindmost of the Achæans as they fled. Many fell ere the stronghold was reached.

Hera beheld the flight of the Achæans, and with Athene prepared to go to their aid, but Zeus sent swift-footed Iris to bid them remain on Olympus, nor give succour to the Achæans.

Falling darkness at length put an end to the fight. The Trojans camped on the plain, and Hector bade them light many fires, lest the Achæans should endeavour to escape homeward in their ships during the night. "I thought I could have destroyed their ships," he said, "but the dusk of evening came on too quickly." He counselled them to keep watch till daylight, clad in their armour, so as to be ready to fight at dawn, and he vowed vengeance against Diomedes.

The Trojans roared applause. From the city, flesh and wine and bread were brought for the warriors, numerous fires were lit, and the sweet smell of cooking food rose in the air.

> As when in heaven the stars about the moon
> Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid
> And every height comes out, and jutting peak
> And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
> Break open to their highest, and all the stars
> Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart:
> So many a fire between the ships and stream
> Of Xanthus blazed before the town of Troy,
> A thousand on the plain; and close by each
> Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
> And, champing golden grain, the horses stood
> Hard by their chariots waiting for the dawn.
>
> *Tennyson's translation.*

IV. The Appeal to Achilles

So did the Trojans keep watch. The great repulse had spread a panic through the Achæan host, and the chiefs were afflicted with grief. As when two winds, the north wind and the west, that blow from Thrace, rise suddenly and rouse the sea, and darkened billows toss high, casting seaweed out of the depths, so were the hearts of the Achæans greatly troubled within their bosoms.

Agamemnon wept beside a spring of dark water which feeds a dusky stream rushing from a precipice. Like it he moaned also, as he said to the Argives: "Zeus made me vow not to return until Troy had been desolated, promising to aid me, and now it is his will that I should go away in dishonour after suffering great loss. Let us take flight in our speedy ships and return to our dear fatherland, for Troy will never be taken."

Diomedes opposed the king's proposal and chided him, saying: "Zeus gave you power, O Agamemnon, but not courage. Do not imagine that the Achæans are weakly and lacking in valour. If your heart prompts you to depart, then go; the way lies open to you and your followers from Mycenæ; but all the other Achæans will remain here until Troy falls."

The Achæans applauded his words, and then old Nestor spoke and said: "You are wonderfully good in battle, Diomedes, and in the assembly you are certainly better than any other man of your age, but you are young enough to be my son. I am aged, and when I speak even Agamemnon takes heed. My advice to the young men is to prepare a feast. The Achæan ships bring wine daily from Thrace, and the tents are full of it. Then, when we have feasted, let us talk

seriously one with another, for this night will settle the fate of our army."

After they had eaten and drunken, Nestor spoke again. He addressed Agamemnon. "Being king," he said to him, "it is your duty to speak and command, and also to listen to counsel. I cannot forget, honoured ruler, that you took Briseis from wrathful Achilles without consulting us, and even against my will. In this manner you dishonoured a brave man, depriving him of the prize to which he was entitled. In my opinion, we should now consider how we can appease Achilles and win back his friendship."

Said King Agamemnon: "My aged friend, you are justified in blaming me. I confess I have acted foolishly. Achilles is equal to many troops, and he is honoured by Zeus. Now, realizing I yielded to hot temper, I desire to make amends. I shall offer him as gifts seven tripods untouched by fire, ten talents of gold, twenty gleaming cauldrons, and twelve prize steeds that have won races, and I shall return Briseis. Further, I promise that, if Troy is taken, I shall have his ships filled with gold and bronze and other treasure. I offer him also one of my three daughters to be his wife, and to make him a prince and ruler over seven cities. Even Hades, god of death, can be appeased with offerings, although he is the most feared of all gods. Surely Achilles will yield to me now, for I am more royal than he, and an older man."

Nestor approved of these words, and advised that chosen men should be sent, without delay, as an embassy to the tent of Achilles, so that the king's offer might be made known to him, and he named Phœnix—who had been as a father to Achilles—Aias, and Odysseus. These were accordingly sent to plead with Achilles and lay the high king's offer before him. So these three men walked along the murmuring beach towards the tent of the son of Peleus. There they found Achilles taking pleasure with his sweet-toned harp, which was beautifully carved and adorned with a cross-bar of silver; he had taken it from one of the cities he had sacked. There he sat singing a song of ancient heroes, and beside him Patroclus reposed in silence.

When the embassy entered, Achilles sprang up with surprise, holding the harp in his hand. Patroclus rose also. "Welcome, my friends!" exclaimed Achilles; "it is good to see you, for you are still dear to me although I am enraged against the Achæans."

He bade them be seated, and ordered wine to be brought, and food also. Patroclus drew out a big dressing-block and placed flesh on it, and Achilles carved off portions, and put spits through them and salted them so that they might be roasted, while Patroclus attended to the fire.

A meal was soon placed on the table, and Achilles served his guests, while Patroclus threw into the fire the first pieces that were cut as an offering to the gods. They all ate and drank together, and, when they were satisfied, Odysseus filled up a cup of wine and toasted Achilles, wishing him "health". Then he revealed the purpose of his visit, saying: "We are in sore straits; indeed we have cause to be afraid. The Trojans are camped close to our ships, and Hector boasts that he will set them on fire on the morrow, and then scatter the Achæans in the confusion caused by the smoke. We have need of you, Achilles. Be up and doing, if it is your will to rescue us from disaster. It will be a sorrow to you in after years if you fail to aid us in the day of trial."

Then Odysseus reminded Achilles that on the day Peleus, his father, sent him to Agamemnon he urged the hero to restrain his pride and not be tempted to take ready offence and to quarrel, so that he might be honoured by old and young alike.

"Alas," Odysseus said, "you forget this! May your anger come to an end now, for Agamemnon makes offer of gifts to you in return for your friendship."

He repeated the words of Agamemnon, detailing the gifts, and added: "Should it happen that you cannot yet forgive the high king, oh, Achilles, have pity on all the other Achæans in their distress, and they will honour you as a god! Even now you could overcome Hector and slay him, although he boasts that his equal is not to be found among the Danaans who have come hither in ships."

Achilles listened patiently and then made answer. "Noble son of Laertes, Odysseus the schemer, I shall speak frankly and conceal naught, lest you should continue to sit here endeavouring to persuade me against my will. Hateful to me as the gates of Hades is the man who thinks one thing and says another! I will speak as I think, and say at once neither Agamemnon nor any other Danaan will persuade me. No gratitude is shown to him who fights without ceasing. . . . As a bird that brings food to her young fares badly herself, so have I spent sleepless nights and endured bloody days for others. Twelve cities did I sack. I brought the spoils hither and gave all to Agamemnon, who distributed a little, but kept the most for himself. Gifts were given to other leaders, but from me alone did he take away what became mine, and he took away the lady whom I loved. Well, let him keep her now! Why do the Argives wage this war? Is it not because Helen was taken away? Are the sons of Atreus the only men who love their wives? I loved Briseis with my whole heart, although I took her captive. And now he who has wronged me thinks he can tempt me with gifts—he who has deceived me and dishonoured me! No, no, Odysseus, let Agamemnon trust to you and to the others to protect the ships. Without my help Agamemnon has erected a wall and dug a ditch both wide and deep. Let him now hold back man-slaughtering Hector. So long as I fought, Hector never attempted to cross the plain. . . . Now, as I have no further desire to combat against the noble Hector, and as I have made offerings to the gods and made my ships ready, I shall cross the Hellespont early tomorrow morning and make for fertile Phthia. . . . Inform Agamemnon of all I say, and inform all the Achæans as well. . . . Agamemnon, the dog, shall not dare to look on my face! He shall never overreach me again, although he has done so once. Let him perish if it is the will of Zeus. His gifts are hateful to me, I place no value on them, nor would I even if they were tenfold, yea twentyfold, not even if they were as valuable as the revenues received at Egyptian Thebes where the greatest treasure-houses are—Thebes of the hundred gates, through each of which pass two hundred men with chariots.

I would not take gifts as numerous as the sands of the sea and the dust of earth. Agamemnon shall not reconcile me until this insult is avenged. . . . I would not wed his daughter, or take his cities and flocks and herds and horses. . . . To me has my mother Thetis revealed that if I tarry here I shall die, but win great glory, and that if I return home I shall live long but be unknown to fame. My advice to you all is to set sail like me, for you will never take Troy, which is protected by Zeus and its brave warriors. Now leave me, and return to the Achæan army and report what I have said; but let Phœnix remain here, for I would take him with me on the morrow when my ships sail."

Thus spoke Achilles, and his guests sat in silence, marvelling at his words, because he had made refusal with much vehemence.

At length the aged Phœnix, who shed tears, fearing for the ships of the Achæans, pleaded with stern Achilles. The old man recalled the days when he was like a nurse to him. He recalled that Achilles used to sit on his knees, spluttering the wine so that he left marks on his tunic, and he spoke of the care he had taken to train him as a warrior. "You have been like a son to me," said Phœnix. "Control your high spirit: do not harden your heart: forget your anger. Come, my dear son, and save the ships from destruction. Accept the gifts and the Achæans will honour you. If you do not accept the gifts, and enter the battle, you will not be held in as great honour although you ward off calamity."

Achilles refused to change his purpose. "Do not move me with your tears for the sake of Agamemnon," he said. "Remain here, and let us consider whether we shall return home on the morrow."

Aias also pleaded with him, but Achilles said: "I shall not trouble about Hector until he attempts to attack my ships. Then, mayhap, he may be held back, eager as he is for battle."

Odysseus and Aias returned to Agamemnon and the chiefs who sat in council, and told that Achilles had spurned the gifts and refused to give his aid.

Said Diomedes: "Achilles has ever been haughty; now he

has been made haughtier by Agamemnon's offer. Let him remain in his tent; he will fight in his own good time. When dawn breaks, O Agamemnon, arm yourself for the fray, and lead your warriors to battle, fighting amongst the foremost."

The brave words of Diomedes were applauded, and then all retired to rest.

That night Agamemnon could not sleep, for his mind was troubled, and there was fear in his heart. Often he gazed towards the plain of Troy, wondering at the numerous fires, and the sound of flutes and pipes and the voices of men; when he turned his eyes towards the Achæan ships he was angry against Zeus, and tore his hair and groaned.

At length he left his couch, and, going forth, awakened the chief warriors, and held converse with them, voicing his fears. All spoke bravely, and Diomedes and Odysseus resolved to spy on the Trojan camp. Fully armed, they stole forth together from the Achæan stronghold.

Now it chanced that the Trojan named Dolon, an ugly man but swift-footed, had come to spy on the Achæan camp, having made Hector promise to give him, when victory was won, the horses and chariot of Achilles. Odysseus perceived Dolon drawing near, and whispered to Diomedes to let him pass. Dolon ran on, unaware of their presence, and they followed him as do sharp-toothed hounds pursuing a hare or a fawn. When suddenly they seized him, he turned green with terror. Questioning him sternly, Odysseus made Dolon reveal all he knew regarding Hector's troops, where they lay, and what was their strength. Then Diomedes took off his head.

Dolon had told that a force of Thracians had newly arrived in the darkness, and lay apart from the main army. Their king was Rhesus, and he had two white horses that could run fast as the wind, a chariot adorned with gold and silver, and golden armour fit for a god.

Now it had been foretold that if these horses once drank from the River Xanthus, and cropped the grass on the plain of Troy, the city of Priam would be saved.

The Thracians, being wearied, slept heavily. Odysseus and Diomedes crept stealthily to the camp; they slew many

sleeping warriors, and, yoking the snow-white steeds in the royal chariot, drove back to the Achæan camp, where they were welcomed with joy, and lauded for their valour. Loudly they laughed as they related their adventure. Then they bathed in the sea, and cleansed themselves in well-polished baths.

In the dusk of dawn the ragged, red-faced goddess Eris (Discordia), with disordered hair, was sent by Zeus among the beached ships. She screamed loudly and long, and the Achæans, hearing her, began to feel once again that warfare was better than home-returning.

Agamemnon made ready for battle. He was clad in his bronze armour adorned with silver and gold; he put on his plumed and double-crested helmet, and carried two great bronze-headed spears.

The goddess screamed as dawn brightened; the charioteers made loud clamour, and drops of blood fell with the dew, and all knew well that many men were about to die.

As clouds gather round a bright but evil star, so did the Trojans throng round Hector, and came on to battle. And as the reapers ply their sickles in rich fields of barley and wheat, and frequent handfuls fall, so did Trojans and Achæans make attack, slaughtering steadily, none thinking of retreat. Like to wolves they leapt at each other. The screaming goddess rejoiced in her evil heart. She alone of all the Celestials was in battle; the others reposed idly on Olympus, blaming Zeus because that he favoured the Trojans. But the Cloud-gatherer cared not; he looked towards the plain of Troy, exulting in his own glory and in the slaying of men.

Morning brightened, and then Agamemnon began to do mighty deeds. Like a lion that, coming from its den, leaps on a fawn, so rushed he against the foe. Onward he pressed, slaying strong warriors, while footmen slew footmen, horsemen slew horsemen, and horses and chariot thundered on the plain. The Achæans followed King Agamemnon. As when a fire sweeps through thick forest, fanned by the swirling blast, so swept the noble son of Atreus through the Trojan host. Those who fell were, in death, dearer to the vultures than to their wives.

Right on towards the Scæan gates rode King Agamemnon, his hands red with blood. Zeus was troubled as he sat him down on Ida's ridge with the thunderbolt in his hand, and he sent Iris to warn Hector not to oppose Agamemnon until that mighty Achæan was wounded, for then would the Trojans be able to press back the Achæans towards the ships.

At length the son of Atreus, after performing mighty deeds, received a spear-wound in the middle of his arm; he shuddered, but was not stayed, and slew the Trojan spearman. Still he fought on with sword and spear, and even hurled boulders, while the blood flowed from his wound; but at length he suffered great pangs, and grew weak, and had to seek refuge, although unwillingly, among the ships.

Thereafter Hector rallied the Trojans, and rushed into the front of the battle like a sudden wind-blast that smites the purple sea. Zeus gave him glory, and he struck down mighty men. Then would there have been ruin indeed for the Achæans had not Odysseus and Diomedes rallied their men. Diomedes attacked Hector. He hurled his spear. It missed the great Trojan's flesh, but it smote his helmet so that he fell on his knees, stunned; darkness came before his eyes as he crouched with a hand on the ground. Yet right quickly he recovered, and, leaping into his chariot, escaped black death. Springing forward to aid him, Paris shot an arrow and wounded Diomedes in the foot; then he laughed and mocked at the Achæans. Diomedes reviled him. "You that run after women," he cried, "if you fought me hand to hand, your arrows would be good for naught. I care less for the wound given by you than I would for one from a woman or child."

Diomedes was forced to retire, and Odysseus stemmed back the Trojans for a time until he too was stricken. Then the enemy surged about him like jackals about a wounded stag. Aias came to his aid, and for a time rallied the Achæans. On the other wing fought Machaon, doing valorous deeds, until Paris wounded him also with an arrow. Machaon would have perished at the hands of the Trojans, had not Nestor rescued him, carrying away that son of Asklepious in his chariot. Next Paris wounded the glorious Eurypylus, and he likewise had to

withdraw, while the Trojans were yet held back by Aias. So fought the Achæans like blazing fire.

Now when Achilles was standing beside his ship, watching the flight of the Achæans, Nestor went past him with the wounded Machaon in the chariot. Achilles called Patroclus, who came and asked: "What need have you of me?"

Said Achilles: "Soon, methinks, the Achæans will stand round my knees, pleading for my help, for they cannot much longer endure their distress. Hasten to Nestor, and ask who it is he has carried from the field. The man looked like Machaon, but the horses passed me so speedily that I had but a glance at him."

Patroclus went to Nestor's tent, and he told that Achilles had sent him.

Said Nestor: "Why indeed does Achilles show grief for the sons of the Achæans who have been stricken by arrows? He knows not that the bravest lie wounded in the ships. Wounded are Diomedes, Odysseus, and Agamemnon, and now Machaon also; but what cares Achilles, who is without pity for the Danaans? Does he mean to hold back, doing naught, until the ships are set on fire and we are all slain? Would that I were young again! . . . In my youth I ever fought beside my friends, but Achilles would fain win glory all by himself. Some day he will repent, when he finds that his friends have perished. . . . Speak to him and advise him, Patroclus. Good is the advice of a friend. And if, within his mind, he fears some prophecy, let him at least send you forth in command of the Myrmidons. . . . With great ease could you now drive back from the ships these Trojans, who have grown wearied with fighting."

So did Nestor arouse the war spirit within the breast of Patroclus, who afterwards visited the wounded heroes and heard them lament. "The Achæan defence is broken," stricken Eurypylus sighed; "soon will we all perish among the ships."

Patroclus took the arrow from the thigh of Eurypylus, washed the wound, and laid on it a bitter herb; then was the wound dried and the blood ceased to flow.

While Patroclus was thus engaged, the Argives and Trojans

fought in masses, and the battle clamour began to resound round the camp-protecting wall. Hector was a whirlwind in the conflict; like to a boar or lion at bay when the dogs strive and huntsmen hurl javelins, so was he powerful, courageous, and active. He smote here and he smote there, and wheresoever he made attack the ranks of men gave way. He urged his warriors to cross the trench, until the horses, pausing, neighed loudly on the very brink of it. Thereafter, on the advice of Polydamas, he made the charioteers dismount and fight on foot. Into five sections he divided his troops, so as to discover where the defenders were weakest. Eager were his brave young men to break through and set fire to the ships.

It happened that, as they paused beside the ditch, an eagle appeared overhead with a red serpent writhing in its talons. The reptile, rearing its head, stung its captor on the breast, and the eagle, suffering agony, dropped the serpent, so that it fell on the left wing of the Trojan army; then the bird flew away. The Trojans trembled when they beheld the snake in their midst, regarding it as an omen of disaster. Polydamas, addressing Hector, declared that if they broke through the gates the Achæans would turn upon them like the serpent, and cause them to retreat hurriedly.

Hector answered him with scorn. "Would you have me obey a passing bird?" he said. "I give no heed at any time to such happenings. The best omen is a good fight for one's native land. Of what are you afraid? . . . Hear me! if you do not fight on, or if you advise others to refrain from battle, I shall assuredly take your life with my spear." Angrily he spoke these words.

Among the Trojans, Sarpedon the Lycian fought like a mountain lion. With Glaucus he led on a fierce attack on the wall until a breach was made in it. His men dashed forward, while Aias and Teucer defended lustily with their warriors about them. Fierce was the fighting, but the Trojans could not press through the breach, nor could the Achæans drive them back.

Meanwhile Hector had burst open a gate by hurling against it a boulder that not two of the men living now could lift easily from the ground. The mighty Trojan sprang forward, calling

on his men to follow or climb over the wall. None could hold back Hector; the Danaans fled before him, retreating towards the ships.

By this time Zeus had turned away, believing no other deity would give aid either to the Trojans or the Achæans. But Poseidon, the earth-shaker, was keeping watch on the peak of woody Samothrace. He took pity on the Achæans, and was wroth with Zeus. Hastening to his ocean palace, he leapt into his car and drove across the waters, his sea-monsters sporting as they went. He left his car in a cave on the Trojan shore, and out of the sea he came in the form of Calchas the diviner. He went among the Achæans, urging them to battle, and he touched them with his wand, thus giving them fresh courage, and also renewing their strength.

Meanwhile the Trojans surged onwards. Hector was like a boulder broken from a rock by a wintry torrent, rolling down a hill-side with many a bound, while woods echo with its clamour, until it reaches a level plain where it can roll no farther. So did Hector, for a time, threaten to reach the sea, past ships and tents, slaughtering as he went, but he was stayed by the firm phalanxes of the Achæans, led by the two Aiases. Then, with many a sword-thrust and spear-thrust, Hector and his men were pressed back. Still Hector fought like a lion, slaying men of might.

In time Menelaus, having wounded Helenus and killed Pisander, forced back the left wing of the attackers. Hector yielded no further ground, however, although many an arrow and stone fell among his host. The dust of battle rose in clouds as when gusts of rapid wind sweep over dust-strewn roads; the clamour of battle reached to the higher air and to the gleaming splendour of Zeus.

About this time the wounded King Agamemnon, in converse with Nestor, Odysseus, Diomedes, and others, counselled that the ships nearest the sea should be launched, and anchored with stones, until darkness came on, when mayhap they might contrive to launch the other ships also. "For there is no disgrace," he said, "in escaping from disaster. It is better for a man to flee from danger than to tarry until it overtakes him."

"Be silent," cried Odysseus, "lest, O King, other Achæans should hear you speak in such a strain! I despise the words you have spoken. If we attempt to escape when the Trojans are pressing against us, it will be impossible to ward off disaster. Besides, how shall we ever be able to renew the struggle if we draw back now?"

Diomedes spoke likewise, and said: "Up and into the fray each one of us, although we are wounded! There is need for us, if only we urge on others, and especially those who, because of their anger, still stand aside and do not fight."

All who heard him rose up and obeyed him. They hastened to battle, and Agamemnon led them on.

Poseidon, in the form of an old man, seized the hand of Agamemnon as he went forward, and said: "No doubt Achilles is pleased to behold the Achæans in sore straits; there is no feeling in his heart, no not a particle. May he perish betimes, god-cursed! The gods are with the Achæans, and you shall yet behold the Trojans in flight."

Hera, who sorrowed to behold Zeus favouring the Trojans, conspired with Aphrodite to beguile the thunderer. Aphrodite gave her magic charms to allure the king of gods. Then Hera called on Sleep, brother of Death, to close the eyes of Zeus when that she had embraced him, and Sleep worked her will in good time. Zeus lay on a mountain crest of Gargarus and closed his eyes in sweet repose, while Sleep hastened to Poseidon, saying: "Now give aid to the Danaans, for I have charmed Zeus to slumber."

Thereafter Poseidon, the blue-haired god, led the Danaans into the fray. Nor was ever the roar of the sea when stirred by the north wind, nor the fierce crackling of fire consuming a forest, louder than the clamour of Trojans and Achæans when they rushed upon each other.

Hector hurled his spear at Aias, but it rebounded from his armour; and Aias, lifting a huge boulder, cast it and struck Hector on the breast. The mighty Trojan twirled like a top and fell in the dust, the spear dropping from his hand. Many Achæans rushed forward, hurling javelins, eager to seize him and draw him away; but the bravest Trojans gathered round the

fallen hero, and he was carried to his chariot, which bore him, moaning heavily, towards Troy. At the ford of Xanthus the chariot was drawn up. Then water was poured over Hector, and he breathed freely again; but, having vomited blood, he fainted, darkness covering his eyes, and lay upon the plain.

When the Argives saw Hector being borne away, they pressed all the more against the Trojans. Aias the Lesser led them on, fighting valiantly. He was the first to capture the blood-stained spoils of Trojans after Poseidon had turned the tide of battle. Of all the Achæan warriors he slew most men, for he was fleet-footed, and speedily he followed those who turned to flee from him, striking them down.

The Trojans were driven across the wall and the trench, and many fell by the hands of the Achæans; the others formed up beside their chariots.

Then suddenly Zeus awoke on the hill crest of Gargarus; starting up, he stood and stared at the plain of Troy, where he beheld the Trojans driven back, the Achæans attacking, with Poseidon leading them on, and Hector lying unconscious on the ground nigh to the ford. Wroth was he when he realized that Hera had beguiled him. He threatened to punish her, and made her tremble; she denied that Poseidon was obeying her command, and protested that he was leading the Achæans of his own accord.

Said Zeus: "If you, O Hera, would only be of the same mind as me, then Poseidon, no matter what he might wish, would obey your will and mine."

Then the god revealed to Hera that Hector would triumph until Achilles returned to the fray, and that afterwards he would be slain.

Hera returned to Olympus, and, being still angry, prompted the gods to rebel against Zeus. Ares armed himself for battle, but Athene restrained him, saying: "You are mad. It is your curse to have no brains." She feared he would bring disaster to all the gods by rousing unconquerable Zeus to great fury.

Zeus thereafter sent Iris, the swift-footed goddess, to Poseidon, bidding him to leave the battle-field, and Poseidon had to

obey. He left the Achæan host and returned to the ocean angry at heart.

Zeus sent Apollo to Hector to give him strength and urge him to spread terror again among the Achæans, so that they might take flight among their ships. Apollo gave Hector healing, and the mighty Trojan went into the fray. He rallied his men, and the Danaans, beholding him, became once more afraid; their hearts sank within them.

Once again Hector led his men to attack, moving forward in close formation. In front of mighty Hector went Apollo, concealed in a cloud, carrying a dazzling ægis which Hephæstus gave to Zeus to make men afraid. When the god looked towards the Danaans and waved the ægis, their courage deserted them. Then, as when wild beasts in the darkness of night terrify cattle or sheep with sudden attack, no keeper being nigh, so were the enfeebled Achæans put to flight, for Apollo made them tremble. The Trojans drove them back until they retreated behind the wall. Hector pursued them with sword and spear.

Now Patroclus was still with Eurypylus, whose wound he had dressed, but he left him when he saw the Trojans again surging over the wall and through the breaches in it; he hastened to Achilles, hoping to stir him to take arms. While he ran, the Achæans resisted to their utmost the fierce Trojans. Hector, fighting like a lion, inspired his followers with brave words and deeds, and the spirit of every man was roused. Meanwhile Aias, son of Telamon, put courage into the hearts of the Argives.

Still the Trojans pressed on. Hector sprang on the Danaans and smote them. He was like a devouring lion rushing on cattle. The Danaans lost heart and retreated. The Trojans were soon once again among the ships, and the fighting waxed furiously. Hector laid hand on the fair ship of Protesilaus, and cried to the Trojans: "Bring fire, for Zeus has willed we should take the ships that came hither to Troy against the wish of the gods."

Aias, however, stood on a rowing-bench, keeping guard. With his long spear he drove back each Trojan who came nigh,

carrying burning fire at the command of Hector; twelve men did he wound in close fight before the ships.

Achilles wondered greatly when Patroclus came weeping to him. "Verily," said he, "you shed tears like a girl who tugs her mother's dress and wants to be carried." Then he asked with curling lips: "Have you something to tell me about the Myrmidons, or about yourself? Or is there sad news from Phthia: I hear that Menœtius, son of Hector, still lives and Peleus also. Or," he sneered, "do you sorrow for the Argives who suffer beside the ships on account of their injustice? Speak out; hide nothing, so that all may be known."

Patroclus moaned. "Be not indignant, Achilles," said he, "disaster has befallen the best of the Achæans. Diomedes, Odysseus, Agamemnon, and Eurypylus lie wounded in their tents. Never may I be as wroth as you are, nor so difficult to appease. Generations unborn will never bless you if you do not avert calamity now. Alas, you are merciless! If, as it chances, you fear some oracle revealed by Thetis, your mother, permit me now to go forth with the Myrmidons and aid the Achæans, and also lend me your armour, so that the Trojans, thinking I am you, may hold back until the wearied Achæans have time to breathe. We, who are fresh, can easily repulse worn-out men."

Thus bluntly he pleaded with Achilles. Nor did he dream that he was hastening himself to his doom.

Achilles was deeply depressed. "Alas, noble Patroclus!" he sighed; "what have you said? My mother has not revealed aught to me. The bitter grief that possesses my heart began when I was deprived of my prize by a man of greater authority than myself. I won Briseis with my spear, having sacked a strong city, and Agamemnon took her back from me as if I were but a dishonoured alien. But let that pass! One cannot nurse a wrong for ever. Yet will I keep my word, and refuse to fight until my own ships are attacked. But do you, Patroclus, put on my armour and lead forth the Myrmidons to battle, for now a black cloud of Trojans surround the ships. All the men in Troy have come out because they do not behold my helmet gleaming steadfastly at hand. Ah, how quickly would they

have fled ere this had but Agamemnon been just to me! Now they are in the very midst of the camp. . . . Make haste, Patroclus, attack them courageously. Permit them not to burn the ships; but when you have driven them away from them, return here. Let the others do battle against the Trojans on the plain."

By this time Aias no longer stood firm, because of the javelins and arrows of the Trojans and his own weariness, and then Hector attacked him and cut his spear in twain, so that he had to fall back. At the same time fire was flung on the vessel, which burned fiercely.

Achilles saw the flames, and began to fear for his own fifty ships. Bidding Patroclus to make haste, he helped the Myrmidons to put on their armour, and them he urged to be courageous, saying: "There awaits you such a war-task as you have been wont to take delight in. Let every man go into battle against the Trojans with a valiant heart."

Patroclus led forth the Myrmidons, and Achilles went to his tent and prayed to Zeus so that he might give victory to Patroclus and permit him to return safely. One part of his prayer did Zeus grant; the other he refused. He granted victory, but refused to shield Patroclus so that he might come back alive from battle.

As when from Olympus a black cloud drives over a clear sky, what time Zeus sends a tempest, even so broke out the war-clamour when the Myrmidons scattered the Trojans in flight, driving them out of the camp and over the trench again. Hector's fleet-footed steeds bore him away, but the poles of many other chariots were snapped in the trench, and the steeds broke free and fled, leaving behind warriors in their chariots. Patroclus attacked fiercely where the throng was densest, dispersing the Trojans amidst clouds of dust. He was eager to reach Hector. A portion of the enemy's host he cut off from retreat; he rushed on them, and he avenged many a dead friend.

When Sarpedon saw his companions fleeing before Patroclus, he cried: "Oh, shame, ye Lycians! why do you flee? I will oppose this man."

He drove against Patroclus, but after brief combat he was struck down like a tree, and lay groaning in the dust.

Now Sarpedon had ever been a bulwark of Troy, although a stranger who brought thither many warriors, himself the noblest, to aid the Trojans.

Hector had fled. He had even urged the Trojans to flee also, for he knew that the scales of Zeus had reversed.

The Achæans swept across the plain and would have entered Troy, only Apollo had come down to defend it and stood on the wall, wrathful against Patroclus, and giving aid to the Trojans. In the form of a young man the god appeared before Hector and chided him for taking flight. "It is unlike you not to fight," he said. His words gave Hector courage, and also made him wish to meet Patroclus. The god then returned to the battlements.

Hector rode against Patroclus, who leapt from his chariot and flung a boulder, which missed the Trojan but smote his charioteer, who fell. Then Hector leapt from his chariot also. Like to lions in combat, so did Hector and Patroclus strive one against the other. They hewed with their swords for a space. Then Hector seized the head of the Myrmidon and held it firmly, and at the same time Patroclus caught him by the foot, while Trojans and Danaans fought fiercely round about them. As they struggled, Apollo, concealed in a cloud, came behind Patroclus and smote him on the back, and thus stunned him. Then the god struck off his helmet, which rolled away under the horses; the spear of Patroclus was also broken, and his shield thrown down. Apollo next unloosed his corslet. Rushing at Patroclus from behind, a Trojan thrust a spear into the hero's back, right between the shoulders, and, plucking it out, made escape. Patroclus shrank back, and Hector, perceiving this, smote him with his spear.

Thus was Patroclus slain. Ere he died, however, he answered Hector's taunts, saying: "Your days are already numbered. Your death stands near you. It is your doom to fall by the hands of Achilles."

"Who knows," Hector answered, "but that Achilles may be the first to fall, and to my spear?"

Thereafter fierce contests were waged for possession of the body of Patroclus. Menelaus fought to guard it until Hector and his Trojans came against him, when he retired; but he called for Aias, who hastened to his aid, and together they pressed forward. By this time Hector had seized the armour of Achilles, and was dragging Patroclus away, so that he might cut off the head and cast the body to the dogs of Troy. Aias, having rallied the Achæans and pressed towards Hector, compelled him, however, to fall back. Like a lion guarding his young, Aias then stood over the body of Patroclus, protecting it with his spear.

Hector took off his own armour and put on that of Achilles, and when Zeus beheld this, looking from his seat on Ida, he said: "Ha, foolish man! little do you dream of the doom that awaits you . . . For a brief space I will give you further strength, but you shall never return home so that Andromache may welcome you in the armour of Achilles."

There was heavy fighting for the body of Patroclus that day. Among the Achæans men said: "May the earth gape and swallow us before we allow the Trojans to carry Patroclus away," while among the Trojans it was said: "Although we are all doomed to die fighting for this body, let no man hold back."

At length, after many had fallen on either side, the body of Patroclus was carried off by Meriones, who went speedily towards the Achæan camp. The Trojans shouted angrily, and followed like hounds that chase a wounded boar; but strong warriors protected Meriones, who was thus enabled to accomplish his purpose.

V. Achilles and Hector

Now, while yet the Achæans fought like blazing fire round the body of Patroclus, Menelaus sent the swift-footed Antilochus, son of Nestor, to Achilles with tidings of his friend's death. This messenger found Achilles among the ships, pondering over all that had taken place, and troubled at heart.

He feared that Patroclus had fallen. "Obstinate man!" he groaned. "I commanded him to return hither when he had driven the Trojans from the ships, and not to fight bravely with Hector."

Shedding tears, Nestor's son drew near and said: "Alas, noble son of Peleus, my tidings are sorrowful! Patroclus has fallen. Fiercely fight they for his body, which now lies naked on the plain, because Hector has clad himself in your armour."

A black cloud of grief enveloped Achilles. He threw ashes on his head, which smeared his comely face and fell upon his tunic. In the dust he cast himself; lying there he tore his hair. The handmaidens who had been taken captive wailed and came forth; they gathered around Achilles, beating their breasts. Nestor's son wept, holding the hands of Achilles, fearing that he would kill himself with his sword. Terrible were his groans as he lay there, and Thetis, sitting in the depths of ocean, heard him and shrieked loud, whereupon the sea-nymphs flocked around her. "I will go to my son," she cried. "I must know what deep sorrow afflicts him although he refrains from battle."

Thetis hastened to Achilles, and when she asked him the cause of his sorrow, he said: "Patroclus is dead; he whom I loved above all others. Hector has slain him and robbed him of my armour. . . . Now I have no desire to live among men unless I slay Hector."

Said Thetis: "Short-lived you will be, O my son, for soon after Hector falls you must die also."

"May I die then," he answered, "since I have not succoured my comrade. He had need of my help in this place so far from home. . . . I that am mighty in war have been foolish in council. Perish the anger and pride that separates friends! I was enraged against Agamemnon, but let that pass. . . . I shall go forth now against Hector, who slew the comrade I loved dearly. After that I shall accept death when Zeus wills it. . . . Let me win great glory! Let the Trojans know to their cost that I have returned to battle! Mother mine, restrain me not from war. Not with your love can you do so."

Thereafter Thetis went to the house of Hephæstus (Vulcan) on Olympus to obtain new armour for her son. The god welcomed her and rose from his anvil. He was of huge bulk, but, although he limped, his thin legs were nimble. Thrusting aside his bellows from the fire, he cast his tools into a chest of silver. Then he wiped with a sponge his face and hands, and also his sinewy neck and hairy chest, put on his tunic, grasped his staff, and walked out of doors to talk with Thetis. Golden handmaids, resembling living maidens, moved about the god, giving him aid. He limped towards Thetis, sat on a gleaming seat, took her hand in his, and asked that fair sea-nymph why she came. "Let your will be known," he said, "for if I can do what you wish me to do, I shall assuredly do it."

Thetis told him of the plight of Achilles, and of how it came about that his armour had been taken by Hector. "I come," she said, "to entreat you to give my short-lived son a shield and helmet, and comely greaves with clasps, and a corslet."

Said the lame god: "Be not troubled! Would I could protect him from his doom when the dread hour comes! For him shall I make armour such as will hereafter astonish all men who may behold it."

So saying, he turned away and went to his bellows. He turned them to the fire, bidding them work. Into the fire he flung bronze and tin, gold and silver. Then he went to his anvil, seizing in his right hand the hammer, and in his left

THETIS BRINGS THE ARMOUR TO ACHILLES

the tongs. He fashioned a wonderful shield of great strength with five folds, and each space he adorned with the heavenly bodies and scenes from human life in war and peace.

When he had finished the armour the lame god gave it to Thetis, and she carried it speedily to Achilles. She reached him when Morning, robed in saffron, was rising from Ocean's streams to shed light for gods and men. Achilles was still making moan over the body of Patroclus, and his companions moaned with him. His divine mother took his hand, comforted him, and laid down the armour before him. He gazed with wonder and joy, and said he would immediately arm himself for battle; but Thetis urged him to go first to the Achæan assembly and make his peace with Agamemnon. Thereafter he could wage war full of might. She breathed into him great and daring valour. She also put on the body of Patroclus ambrosia and red nectar to prevent decay.

Thereafter Achilles went along the sea-beach calling loudly. He aroused the Achæan heroes, and they gathered in assembly; even wounded men came because Achilles had returned. Agamemnon came last of all, still suffering from his wound.

Achilles addressed the high king, saying: "Son of Atreus. Better it would have been for both of us to be friends, as we now are, than enemies, as we have been, when we vexed ourselves and quarrelled for the sake of a girl! Better it would have been if she had been slain by arrows when I took her captive, for then fewer Achæans would have died at the hands of their enemies because of my fierce anger. The quarrel betwixt you and me was good for Hector and the Trojans, but I fear the Achæans will not readily forget it. But let that pass, despite our suffering! Necessity curbs the spirit within us. Mine own wrath is now ended; it would be unseemly to be always and obstinately angry. . . . But come, let the Achæans be called to battle speedily so that I may put the Trojans to test, going against them, if they still wish to rest themselves beside the ships. Methinks, by Zeus! that not a few will ere long be glad to rest their knees when they have taken flight from battle and my spear."

The Achæans rejoiced to hear Achilles renouncing his wrath.

Agamemnon made answer, addressing the noble son of Peleus, and he blamed the gods, and especially Erinnys, for putting madness in his soul on the day he bereft Achilles of his prize. "What could I do?" he said. "The deity accomplishes all things—pernicious Ate, eldest daughter of Zeus, who injures all. . . . When I saw Hector slaying Achæans among our ships I could not forget the wrong I had foolishly done; grievously have I suffered because Zeus bereft me of wisdom, but I am ready to appease you, Achilles, with the gifts I promised yesterday."

Said Achilles: "Whether you give gifts or not is a matter for yourself. First let us make ready for battle. There is no time for ceremonies. A hard task awaits to be done. Once again must Achilles smite the Trojans! Let none forget that."

Odysseus spoke, insisting that the gifts should be given before the fighting commenced, and to this Agamemnon agreed. Thereafter the gifts were carried to the ships of Achilles, and Briseis was released, she who was fair as golden Aphrodite. She made loud lament when she saw the body of Patroclus, and said: "I have seen my husband slain, and my three brothers. You comforted me, O Patroclus, when I was taken captive, promising that you would make me the wife of Achilles when you took me to Phthia. I sorrow for you because you were kind to me indeed."

The handmaidens wept with her, standing round the dead.

Achilles continued to mourn the loss of his friend. "No greater sorrow could come upon me," he said, "even although I heard of my own father's death, or of the death of my son. Methought that I alone should die in this strange land, and that he would return home and care for my son, and give him all my possessions. My father may be dead, or mayhap he has grown frail, and awaits in sorrow to hear that I am no more."

He put on his shining armour, and his eyes burned fiercely, for there was grief in his heart. Automedon, the charioteer, entered the chariot. Achilles followed him; in his glittering armour he seemed to be the golden god Hyperion. He spoke to the horses, Xanthus and Balius, saying: "Now bring back

your charioteer to the Danaan army, nor leave him dead as you left Patroclus."

The horse Xanthus answered: "This time we shall bring you back, impetuous Achilles, but the day of your doom draws nigh."

Said Achilles, who was at once amazed and indignant: "O Xanthus, why do you foretell my death? It is not seemly so to do. Well I know I must die here, far from home; nevertheless I shall not cease fighting until the Trojans are satiated with war."

Zeus called the gods to assemble in council when Achilles returned to battle, and gave them permission to succour those they favoured, whether Trojans or Achæans. "If Achilles fights alone against the Trojans," he said, "they cannot hold him back. Formerly, when they saw him, they trembled; but now, when he is enraged with grief for his comrade, I fear lest he should capture Troy, although such be contrary to fate."

Thereafter gods and men went into battle. Achilles had but one great desire, and that was to meet Hector in the midst of the fray. The clash of conflict resounded far and near, while Zeus thundered and Poseidon shook the earth, so that Hades, lord of death, quaked and shrieked aloud lest the earth should crack and disclose to mortals and immortals his dread abode, vast and squalid, and an abomination to the gods.

The plain was thronged with horses and men in gleaming bronze; it resounded loudly as they rushed into battle. There were two heroes, by far the most valiant, who advanced against each other. These were noble Achilles and Æneas, son of Anchises. Æneas came threateningly with tossing plume, his shield uplifted, shaking his spear. The son of Peleus hastened towards him like a fierce lion that a whole village assemble to attack, and he struck down young men as he went.

Each defied the other with hot words and proud. Æneas cast his spear, but it fell from the god-made shield. Then Achilles hurled his spear: it went through the shield of Æneas, who stooped and let it fly over his shoulders, thus escaping death. Achilles next drew his sword, while Æneas lifted a boulder, such as two men now living could hardly raise from

the ground; but Poseidon prevented him throwing it, saying: "The gods will not protect you if you cast a stone at Achilles." Having spoken thus, Poseidon shed darkness on the eyes of Achilles, and, carrying off Æneas, set him down in the rear of battle. The darkness immediately afterwards passed from the eyes of Achilles. He looked in vain for his rival, and said: "The gods have shielded him, but never again will he venture to measure his might with mine." He pressed forward, striking down great warriors. And when he had slain Polydorus, son of Priam, he saw Hector coming nigh, and he cried out: "Behold the man who is the cause of my sorrow, the slayer of my comrade. . . . Come hither, so that you may reach the portals of death without further delay."

Hector answered him, saying: "Son of Peleus, you cannot terrify me with words as if I were a child. I too can threat and boast. Well I know you are mighty, and a greater man than I am. But it lies with the gods whether or not I, although weaker, shall take your life with my spear, which has proved ere now to be sharp and keen."

As he spoke he hurled his spear; but Athene turned it aside, and Achilles shouted his war-cry; eager to slay his enemy he rushed on. At that moment, however, Apollo snatched Hector away, hiding him in a mist. Thrice did Achilles cast his spear into the mist, and the fourth time he called: "Dog! once again you have escaped death although it came near you. Apollo shields you well, but I shall slay you yet."

Having spoken thus, he went against others. And as the blazing fire sweeps through deep and dry valleys, between the mountains, and the thick forest is consumed, while the whirling breeze spreads the flames on every side, so did Achilles rage hither and thither with his spear; the dark earth was reddened with blood. And as when the broad-browed bulls trample white barley on the threshing-floor, and it falls out quickly under their feet, so were men in armour trod on by the horses of Achilles; the chariot was spattered with blood from their hoofs. The son of Peleus was borne to victory with blood-red hands.

Through the Trojan army swept that irresistible hero; his

enemies fled before him. One part of Hector's host fled towards the city; the other part pressed against the deep-flowing, silver-eddied River Xanthus. Many fell in, with a great noise; hither and thither swam warriors whirled about in the eddies. As when locusts take wing before raging fire, raised suddenly, and, flying towards a river, crowd themselves there, so did the fiery Achilles cause the Xanthus to be crowded with horses and men.

Drawing his spear, Achilles leapt into the river and smote on all sides. Loud groans arose, and the Xanthus soon ran red with blood. As other fish try to escape the devouring dolphin hiding in harbour nooks, so did many Trojans seek refuge under the banks of the raging river. Achilles took alive twelve young men to be sacrificed as atonement for Patroclus. They were led from the water like dazed fawns, bound, and sent to the Achæan camp. Then Achilles leapt into the river again to continue the slaughter.

Thereafter he drove the others into Troy, while gods fought gods on the plain. Agenor alone stood up against him; but when Achilles was about to slay that daring Trojan, Apollo intervened, caught up Agenor, assumed his form, and led Achilles away, so that the remnant of the Trojans might seek refuge in their fortress, for they had no heart to remain outside. Many gathered to cool themselves, leaning against the battlements as the Achæans approached the wall. Hector alone remained outside to oppose Achilles, who, when he discovered that Apollo was beguiling him in the form of Agenor, came hastily towards the city.

Then did aged Priam behold Achilles for the first time; he was speeding across the plain, shining like the star that rises in harvest-time, the brightest amid the stars of heaven, which men call "Orion's dog".[1] Brilliant, indeed, but of evil omen is that star, for it is the bringer of fever to miserable men. So shone the armour of Achilles as he drew nigh. Priam groaned and smote himself; he cried out, supplicating his dear son, saying: "Hector, my beloved one, do not await this man, who is mightier than you. Would that the gods loved you as I do,

[1] Sirius, the Dog Star.

for then would his body be devoured by vultures and dogs, this dread slayer of my valiant sons. . . . Come hither, O Hector, and shield the men and women of Troy! Do not wait to increase the glory of the son of Peleus. Have pity on me, lest I die on the threshold of old age, lest my daughters be taken captive and my young children dashed upon the earth."

Hecuba, mother of Hector, also called to him, saying: "Pity me too, my child. If this merciless man should slay you, neither I nor your wife will lie on a soft couch when we mourn for you, but far away from here will we mourn, while dogs devour your body close by the ships of the enemy."

Thus, weeping, did his father and mother supplicate Hector, but they could not persuade him. Alone he waited Achilles, who came against him like a giant. Like to a serpent that, full of wrath and glaring, fiercely awaits in its den a man who comes to smite it, so waited Hector, full of courage, refusing to withdraw. In his own heart he said: "Ah, me! if I should enter the city, Polydamas would be the first man to reproach me. He urged me to retreat to Troy when Achilles came forth. But I paid no heed to him. Would that I had done as he counselled me to do! Now, by my own obstinacy, I have injured our people, and I dread lest men and women may say: 'Hector, trusting in his own might, has brought disaster'. It is better for me now to face Achilles and slay him, or be slain by him, than to enter Troy. . . . Should I offer Achilles to give up Helen and divide with the Achæans all the treasures of our city? But first I must make the elders swear an oath to conceal nothing. . . . Yet why should I think of these things? Mayhap Achilles would not listen or take pity, although I approached him unarmed. There is no time to discuss matters with him. I must fight now. Soon will it be known to whom Zeus will give renown."

Thus Hector pondered. Then he began to tremble as, like a falcon swooping down on a dove, Achilles darted quickly towards him. The Trojan's heart failed: he turned and fled in terror under the wall of Troy. He fled and Achilles pursued him.

Zeus, father of gods and men, spake, saying: "Ah! I see

a man, well beloved, pursued round the walls of Troy. My heart grieves for Hector. Noble Achilles pursues him. Come, ye gods, and consider if he is to be spared or struck down."

Said blue-eyed Athene: "O Father, hurler of thunder and gatherer of dark clouds, what have you said? Would you free from sad death a man whose fate has been fixed long ago? Do as you will, but we, the other gods, will not approve."

"Beloved child," Zeus answered, "I have not spoken seriously. Do as you desire, nor change your mind."

Athene descended quickly from Olympus, and firm was her will. Achilles still pursued Hector. And as when a dog pursues a fawn or deer on the hills and through valleys and woodlands, and if it hides yet tracks it, nor pauses until it is found, so Achilles was not misled by Hector, nor did he falter in chase of him. When Hector fled below the walls, and rushed against the Dardanian gates, in hope that missiles would be cast at his pursuer, Achilles made him turn towards the plain, for he kept between the Trojan and the city. Yet if Hector was unable to escape, Achilles was unable to catch him. The Trojan might have eluded death, had not Apollo, who had already come to his aid and renewed his vigour, failed to return again. Achilles nodded to his people to signify that they must not hurl javelins; he dreaded lest any man should share in his renown. Three times Hector had fled round the walls, and when he came to the springs for the fourth time Athene whispered to him: "Now stand, and I, approaching with you, will prevail upon Achilles to fight you face to face." The goddess deluded him, and Hector paused and called to Achilles: "My heart urges me to stand against you. Now I shall slay or be slain. First let us vow before the gods that if I slay you I shall give back your body to the Achæans, and that if you slay me you shall give mine to my own people."

Sternly Achilles made answer: "Talk not of vows, you madman! No compacts are made between lions and men, nor between wolves and sheep; each meditates evil against the other. Likewise it is impossible for you and me to make friendly vows. . . . Put forth your utmost valour now. You have need of it. You cannot escape me. You must pay back

for all the sorrows of my comrades whom you have slain with your spear."

Having spoken thus, Achilles hurled his spear. Hector swerved, and it passed him. Athene, however, caught the spear and returned it to Achilles. Then Hector cast his own spear, but it rebounded from the god-made shield of his enemy. He could not recover it, and spake in his heart, saying "I will not die as a coward. First I shall do a mighty deed." He drew his sword, and like an eagle that swoops at a lamb, so sprang he at Achilles.

As he did so, the son of Peleus raised his spear once again, and its point sparkled like the star of evening. He drave it into Hector's neck, and that hero fell in the dust.

Said Achilles: "Hector, you thought once when you stripped the armour off Patroclus that you would be safe. Fool! I am his avenger, I who idled among the ships. Dogs and birds will devour you, but he shall have funeral rites."

Faintly Hector pleaded that his body should be given to the Trojans, so that he might receive his meed of fire.

Said Achilles: "You dog, do not plead with me! Would that I myself could devour you, for you have caused me bitter grief. Dogs and birds will, however, feast on your flesh."

Hector answered: "Now I know you as the man you are—you with the heart of iron! Beware, for I may move the gods to be wroth with you on the day that is at hand, when Paris and Apollo will slay you, mighty as you are, at the Scæan gates."

As he spoke, death overshadowed him, and his soul took flight from his body and went down to Hades wailing its destiny, deserting vigour and youth. Then, although Hector lay dead, Achilles said: "Die! I am ready for death when the gods may please to order it."

The Achæans ran forward and gazed with admiration on great Hector, and one said: "It is easier to approach him now than when he fought among the ships."

Said Achilles: "Beside the ships Patroclus lies unwept and unburied. I shall never forget him so long as I remain among the living. . . . Come, let us return. We have won great

glory. We have slain the mighty Hector, whom the Trojans worshipped like a god."

Hector had been stripped of armour. Achilles cut through the sinews of his feet and fastened them with leather thongs to his chariot. Then he rode towards the ships, dragging the Trojan hero over the ground, so that his head was defiled with dust.

Horrified, and full of sorrow, Priam beheld this fearsome spectacle. Piteously he groaned. He desired to rush forth from the city, and the Trojans had to hold him back. In the mud he then threw himself, lamenting aloud. "For Hector I sorrow," he said, "more than for my other sons who have fallen."

Hector's mother, lamenting also, cried out: "O my son! why do I live now that you are dead?"

Hector's wife Andromache knew naught as yet of what had happened. No one had told her that her husband remained outside the wall. In a secluded room she engaged herself weaving a purple web with a border of flowers, and she had just called to a handmaiden to place on the fire a large tripod, so that Hector might have a warm bath, when she heard shrieks and moans coming from the tower. Her limbs trembled, the shuttle fell from her hands, and she called to two of her fair handmaidens, saying: "Follow me, so that I may know what has happened. I have heard the voice of my husband's aged mother, and my heart leaps to my mouth, while my limbs are benumbed. . . . I fear for Hector, who with fatal valour will never remain among the throng of warriors."

When she reached the tower, and saw her husband being dragged behind the car of Achilles, darkness veiled her eyes, and she swooned.

The Myrmidons lamented for Patroclus beside the ships, and Achilles, with his hands on the bosom of his dead comrade, said: "Hail, O Patroclus! My promise have I fulfilled, for I have dragged hither the body of Hector to be devoured by dogs, and hither, too, have I brought twelve Trojan youths, who will be sacrificed before your pyre because of my anger at your death."

The Achæan chiefs led Achilles away from the scene of sorrow, and took him to the tent of Agamemnon, so that he might wash and eat; but the hero said: "No, by Zeus, water will not come nigh my face until I have laid Patroclus on the pyre and raised his burial mound, and until I have shorn my hair."

He consented, however, to eat. Thereafter, when the others lay down in their tents to rest, Achilles cast himself on the shore of the sounding sea with the Myrmidons about him, and there continued his lamentation for his friend. Long he mourned, but at length sleep seized him, for weary indeed was he after battle with Hector. A vision came to him in his sleep. Above his head stood the ghost of Patroclus, who spoke, saying: "Ah! do you sleep, and have you forgotten me, O Achilles? You did not neglect me when I was alive, as you do now when I am dead. Bury me, so that I may pass quickly through the gates of Hades. Yonder do phantoms and the ghosts of the dead drive me away; they will not permit me to mingle with them beyond the River of Death, and I wander all alone round the broad-gated abode of Hades. Give me your hand, I beseech you, for I shall never again come back from Hades when you have given me my meed of fire. . . . We shall never any more take counsel together, sitting apart from our dear comrades. I have been cut off by the cruel fate which was fixed for me at birth. And as for you, O god-like Achilles, it is your doom to fall as I fell, beside the walls of Troy! . . . One thing more will I say. Promise me, if it is agreeable to you, to have your bones and my bones laid together. We were nurtured together in your sire's house. . . . Let the same golden urn, therefore, hold the bones of us both."

Achilles made answer, and said: "O my brother, why have you come here to prevail upon me to do what I intend to do? I shall readily fulfil all these things for you. I shall carry out your wishes. Come nearer me now; let us embrace one another once again, although for but a little time; let us glut our sorrow."

So saying, he stretched forth his arms; but the ghost, chattering feebly, passed into the earth like smoke. Achilles awoke, wondering greatly; he smote his hands and said: "Ah! there

is, indeed, in Hades a spirit and ghost of the dead, although it is without substance. To-night the distressed spirit of my dear comrade came to me moaning and lamenting, and instructed me what to do, and he was strangely like himself."

Thereafter, a great pyre having been built, the body of Patroclus was laid upon it. Achilles poured out wine from a golden bowl, invoking the spirit of the dead. Like a father lamenting for his son, so did Achilles lament for his comrade.

When the fire had gone down, the bones of Patroclus were placed in a golden urn, and a burial-mound was raised, but it was not built high, because Achilles desired to have his own bones laid beside his comrade's when his time came; then the mound might be enlarged.

The son of Peleus afterwards held funeral games, and awarded rich prizes, distributing the gifts he had received from Agamemnon.

When the games were over, and all had feasted and gone to sleep, Achilles lay awake weeping for Patroclus. Next morning Priam came to him, protected by the gods, to plead for the body of his dear son Hector. The old man knelt before Achilles, and clasped his knees and kissed his hands, saying: "Think of your own father, who is aged like me. . . . I have come for the body of my son Hector. Sorrowfully I plead with the slayer of my children."

Achilles was deeply moved. He took pity on the white-haired old man, and made him sit on his own seat. "I will give you Hector's body," he said, "so trouble yourself no more on that account, venerable king."

Thus it came about that Priam carried back to Troy the body of Hector, after it had been cleansed and wrapped in a shroud by the Myrmidons.

The Trojans lamented round the body of the fallen hero. Andromache made sad moan and said: "O my husband, you have died while yet a young man and left me a widow, and your son is yet a child—a child of ill-fated parents, you and me—and mayhap he may never live to be a man, for the city will assuredly be destroyed, now that you who kept it safe have fallen. Many will be taken captive—I among others—

and be enslaved in a strange land. My child will go with me to serve a cruel master, or else he will be hurled from the battlements, because he is Hector's son, by some man whose father or son has been slain by you, O my husband. . . . You have left naught but sorrow for us, and my own sorrow is greatest of all. Not in your bed did you die, nor did you speak to me one last word that I might remember for evermore, amidst my tears which must fall night and day."

Hector's mother lamented, saying: "Of all my children, dear to my heart, you, O Hector, were dearest. . . ."

Then came Helen, wife of Paris, and she made lament, saying: "You were dearest to me of all my husband's brothers. Would I had died ere Paris had brought me hither! Twenty years have gone since I left my native land; yet never in that time have I heard an ill word spoken against you. . . . My heart is sore lamenting for you. There is not now left in Troy one who is kind and friendly to me as you were, for all abhor me." Thus she moaned, shedding tears.

Next Priam spoke these words: "O Trojans, bring wood into the city, nor dread a close ambush of the Achæans. Achilles has promised me that no attack will be made upon us for twelve days."

For nine days the Trojans gathered wood. They built a pyre, and on it was laid the body of Hector. Then the pyre was made to burn.

Next morning wine was poured on the smouldering wood, and then the white bones of Hector were gathered and laid in a golden urn. The urn was wrapped in purple and placed in a hollow grave over which large stones were laid. Speedily they heaped up the burial-mound, while sentinels kept watch lest the Achæans should make attack. And when the workers had finished they assembled in Troy and held a feast in the palace of Priam.

Thus was held the funeral of horse-taming Hector.

Here ends the *Iliad.*

The Odyssey

Introductory

The *Odyssey* relates the wanderings and adventures of Odysseus (Ulysses[1]), who, having incurred the displeasure of Poseidon, was unable to reach home for ten long years after Troy had fallen and been sacked. He was King of Ithaca, modern Thiaki, a rugged Ionian island on the western coast of Greece, and from youth had been renowned for his strength and courage, and for his skill as a mariner. His wife, Penelope, is perhaps the finest type of womanhood in Homeric literature, although she has appealed less strongly to the imagination of the poets than the beautiful but inconstant Helen, with

> the face that launch'd a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium;

than the "beautiful-brow'd Enone", deserted by Paris, whose sorrows have been voiced in so many songs throughout the ages; or Nausicaa, the Phæacian princess who fell in love with Odysseus; or even than Andromache, the wife of Hector, who, in her captivity, married Helenus, although he had fought with his brother, Deiphobus, for Helen after Paris died. Penelope was a faithful and constant wife and an ideal mother. For twenty years she awaited the return of her husband, who had left her to battle on the windy plain of Troy when their son Telemachus was but a babe in arms. During the last few years of waiting, many wooers clamoured for her hand in marriage. It was believed that Odysseus was dead, yet she continued to hope against hope for the day of his home-coming. It is plain

[1] Ulysses is the Latin form of the hero's name. The Greek *d* often became *l* in Latin.

to see that Homer admired her fine character, which he delineated with the hand of a master.

Penelope was the daughter of Icarius, brother of Tyndareus, the stepfather of the famous Helen. When she was yet a maid, many noble wooers visited her father's Court in the hope of winning her. Icarius found himself unable to make choice, according to Achæan custom, of a worthy son-in-law, and decided, at length, that she should become the bride of the young nobleman who ran fastest in a foot-race. Odysseus proved to be the successful competitor. When, however, he claimed Penelope as his bride, her father, who loved her dearly and was unwilling to part with her, gave her the choice of remaining at home or departing to Ithaca with Odysseus. The poets of ancient Greece took delight in relating how the modest and beautiful maiden made known her will. When her father addressed her, saying: "Penelope, whether would you rather remain with me or go to Ithaca with this man who loves you," no answer came from her lips. She simply drew her veil across her face to hide her blushes. On the spot where she thus made known her love for Odysseus her father subsequently caused to be erected a temple to Modesty.

As there are references in the *Odyssey* to the concluding part of the Trojan war, it may be well to summarize the events which connect the two great Homeric epics. The *Iliad* closes with the burial of Hector, and it would seem as if the fall of Troy were imminent. But Achilles was doomed to die, as had been foretold by Thetis and Hector, before the Achæans could bring the long war to an end.

Among those who hastened to reinforce the Trojan allies was Penthesilea, the Amazon. Achilles slew her in combat, but lamented over her. The deformed Thersites mocked him on that account, whereupon the enraged hero put an end to the satirist's days. In other combats the son of Peleus slew several prominent Trojans, including King Priam's two sons, Troilus and Polydorus, and his nephew, Memnon, the Egyptian prince. Then Achilles was slain by Paris, who made a treacherous attack on the hero and wounded him with an arrow on the heel, the only vulnerable part of his body. Achilles was at

the time paying a visit to the temple of Apollo. He had fallen in love with Polyxena, one of Priam's daughters, who had visited him in the company of her father when that broken-hearted king pleaded to have Hector's body restored to him. Before Achilles went towards the temple he promised to arrange a peace if Priam would consent to his marriage with Polyxena.

A desperate struggle ensued for possession of the body of Achilles, which was ultimately captured by the Achæans. The son of Peleus was thereafter cremated, and his bones were placed with those of Patroclus in the same golden urn. Polyxena, daughter of Priam, who loved Achilles, committed suicide at his burial-mound.

After the funeral rites had been performed, a contest took place between Odysseus and Aias the Greater for the armour of Achilles; these two heroes had rescued the hero's body from the Trojans. Aias was defeated, and was so much overcome with grief and shame that he slew himself.

According to Greek legend three conditions had to be fulfilled before Troy would fall. These were discovered by Calchas, the diviner, who told that the Achæans would have to obtain the aid of Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, and of Philoctetes, the archer, to whom Hercules had gifted his bow and poisoned arrows, and that the sacred image of Pallas would have to be carried away from Troy.

The young warriors were sent for without delay. Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, was renamed Neoptolemus, which signifies "new in war". He had been called Pyrrhus either because he was fair-haired or because his father had originally borne the name of Pyrrha. The young hero proved a worthy successor of his sire, and figured prominently as a pitiless avenger when Troy was being sacked.

Philoctetes had been stung by a serpent, and abode in a cave on the Island of Lemnos. He had been left there when the Achæans were on their way to Troy. Odysseus and Diomedes, who had already taken Pyrrhus from Scyros, reconciled the embittered Philoctetes, and prevailed upon him to accompany them to the Achæan camp at Troy. Soon after his arrival

Machaon, who had skill in surgery, cured the festered wound of the famous archer.

Philoctetes afterwards went out against Paris and wounded him with a poisoned arrow. Then Paris found that he must die unless Enone, whom he had deserted, would give him healing. A haunting version of the Greek legend, which relates the visit of Paris to Enone, is William Morris's "Death of Paris", one of the finest poems in his *The Earthly Paradise.* Paris is carried to Enone so that she may save his life. When they meet,

> He opened hollow eyes and looked on her
> And stretched a trembling hand out. . . .
> He spake not, shame and other love there lay
> Too heavy on him. . . .

Enone offers to heal Paris if he will promise to love her again.

> "Hearkenest thou, Paris? O look kind on me!
> I hope no more indeed, but couldst thou turn
> Kind eyes on me, then much for me and thee
> Might love do yet." . . .

Paris, fearing to die, protests: "I love thee still, surely I love thee". She doubts his word, however, and says that if she will heal him he will at once return to Helen. It would be better if he died.

> "Hearken!" she said,
> "Death is a-near thee; is then death so ill
> With me beside thee? . . .
> Shall I heal thee for this
> That thou mayst die more mad for her last kiss?"

She refuses to heal him for Helen's sake, and cries:

> "Turn back again and think no more of me!
> I am thy Death! woe for thy happy days!
> For I must slay thee; ah, my misery!
> Nay, speak not; think not of me! think of her." . . .

Enone went away, leaving Paris to die. Her heart is broken because he has ceased to love her, and because she loves him still.

> Then, as a man who in a failing fight
> For a last onset gathers suddenly

All soul and strength, he faced the summer light,
And from his lips broke forth a mighty cry
Of "Helen, Helen, Helen!"—yet the sky
Changed not above his cast-back golden head,
And merry was the world though he was dead.

Tennyson, in his poem "The Death of Enone", imagines the heart-broken woman sorrowing for Paris after his body has been carried away. In a dream she hears him calling to her:

"Come to me,
Enone! I can wrong thee now no more,
Enone, my Enone". . . .

She wakes and sets out for Troy, and on reaching the plain sees a burning funeral pyre surrounded by Trojans,

The ring of faces reddened by the flames
Enfolding that dark body which had lain
Of old in her embrace, paused—and then ask'd
Falteringly, "Who lies on yonder pyre?"
But every man was mute for reverence.
Then moving quickly forward till the heat
Smote on her brow, she lifted up a voice
Of shrill command, "Who burns upon the pyre?"
Whereon their oldest and their boldest said,
"He whom thou wouldst not heal!" and all at once
The morning light of happy marriage broke
Thro' all the clouded years of widowhood,
And muffling up her comely head, and crying
"Husband!" she leapt upon the funeral pile,
And mixed herself with *him* and past in fire.

Enone has haunted the imaginations of many poets. In his *Dr. Faustus* Marlowe makes that doomed man find satisfaction in remembering, when he is about to die,

Have I not made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Enone's death?

The death of Paris hastened the fall of Troy. But the third condition, revealed by Calchas, remained to be fulfilled. The sacred image of Pallas—the Trojan Palladium—had to be carried away from the city.

Now Pallas was the daughter of Triton, and she had been accidentally killed by Athene, with whom she wrestled one day

in friendly rivalry. Athene subsequently caused the beautiful image to be made; but Zeus, who was really to blame for Pallas's death, having shaken the ægis in front of her as she wrestled, cast down the Palladium from heaven in a fit of temper. It fell on the site of Troy when the city was being rebuilt by Ilus, son of Tros, King of Phrygia, and great-grandson of Dardanus, a king in Arcady, who eventually settled in Mysia, on the north-western coast of Asia Minor, of which the Troad was a part. Ilus called the city "Ilion", or "Ilium", after himself, and "Troy" after his father Tros. Priam was a grandson of Ilius. Tradition also credited Dardanus and Laomedon, the father of Ilus, with a share in the work of restoring Troy. Laomedon had in his service the gods Poseidon and Apollo, who, having incurred the displeasure of Zeus, were compelled to work for a mortal. Laomedon had promised to pay them wages, but failed to do so when their term of service came to an end. He therefore angered the deities. Horace (Book III, Ode 3) makes Juno (Hera) refer to the curse which fell upon Troy in consequence of Laomedon having broken his vow:

> Troy doomed to perish in its pride
> By chaste Minerva[1] and by me,
> Her people, and their guileful guide,
> Since false Laomedon denied
> The gods their promised fee.

When Ilus found the Palladium in the place where it had fallen, he had a sanctuary erected for it, an oracle having revealed that so long as it remained in Troy the city could never be taken by an enemy.

Odysseus and Diomedes, both favourites of Athene, having disguised themselves as beggars, entered Troy for the purpose of carrying away the Palladium. No one recognized them except Helen, who not only refrained from betraying them, but even assisted them to rob Troy of its protecting image. Paris being dead, she had been released from the love spell cast upon her by the goddess Aphrodite (Venus), and longed to be pardoned by, and reunited to Menelaus. Deiphobus, son

[1] Athene.

of Priam, had taken her by force after having fought with Helenus, his brother, who fled to Mount Ida and was afterwards made a prisoner by the Achæans.

Troy was ultimately taken by stratagem. How the Achæans pretended to raise the siege by re-embarking, and made use of a wooden horse, in which warriors were concealed, is related in the *Æneid* more fully than in the *Odyssey*, and will be found in our version of that epic.

Odysseus and Menelaus entered the house of Deiphobus, whom they mutilated and slew, and Helen was taken back to Sparta by her husband. As will be found, the royal couple were visited by Telemachus, son of Odysseus.

Hector's son was thrown down from the battlements and killed, and his wife, Andromache, was given to Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, as was also Helenus, who ultimately married Hector's widow.

Agamemnon carried off Cassandra, daughter of Priam. On his return to Mycenæ, his wife, Clytemnestra, avenged the death of her daughter Iphigenia, who had been sacrificed to Artemis. Like Hamlet's mother, she plotted with her lover to get rid of her husband. This paramour was Ægisthus, who was a kinsman of Agamemnon. When Agamemnon returned to Mycenæ and entered his palace, his wife threw a net over his head and he was attacked and slain by Ægisthus. Her son, Orestes, avenged his father's death a few years later by slaying his mother, while his friend Pylades stabbed Ægisthus.

Diomedes had to suffer punishment because he had wounded Aphrodite in battle. On returning to Argos he found that his wife had deserted him. After she attempted to take his life, he fled from home and ultimately reached Italy, where he married Euippe, daughter of King Daunus, whom he assisted in fighting against the Messapians. The Diomedian Islands, off Cape Garganum, were named after him. He was buried on one of them.

Philoctetes, the skilled archer, also settled in Italy. The Lesser Aias (Ajax) was shipwrecked and drowned, having offended Athene by taking Cassandra from her sanctuary. Idomeneus, King of Crete, and grandson of the famous King

Minos, was another doomed man. He had promised Poseidon, in the midst of a storm which threatened him with disaster, to sacrifice to him the first person he would meet on landing. The victim proved to be his own son, who ran down the beach to welcome his sire. After the boy was sacrificed a pestilence swept over the island, and the Cretans attributed it to the anger of the deities, because of the sacrifice of the prince by his father. They rose in revolt against Idomeneus, who fled to Calabria in Italy, and afterwards to Colophon in Ionia, Asia Minor. Ultimately, however, he returned to Knossos, the Cretan capital, where he was buried, and he and his nephew, Meriones, were subsequently worshipped by the Cretans as demi-gods.

Odysseus, King of Ithaca, was, as has been noted, doomed to pass ten years of wandering before he could return home. After leaving Troy he was driven northward by a storm. He landed at the Thracian town of Ismarus, which he plundered, but being subsequently attacked by the Cicones, he had to put to sea again. Driven northward by a strong wind, his ships reached Malea, the most southern point of Laconia in Greece. It was found impossible, however, to double this point and make for Ithaca. For ten days the vessels ran before the gale until the fabled country of the Lotus Eaters was reached. Here a landing was effected; but finding that several of his companions, who had partaken of the fragrant lotus, became idlers and dreamers of alluring dreams, he drove them to the ships and set sail again. Tennyson's beautiful poem, "The Lotus-Eaters", deals with the incident in the *Odyssey*. The mood of the wearied and disillusioned sea-rovers, who partook of the charmed lotus, is finely interpreted:

> How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
> With half-shut eyes ever to seem
> Falling asleep in a half-dream! . . .
> To hear each other's whispered speech;
> Eating the Lotus day by day, . . .
> To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
> To the influence of mild-minded melancholy. . . .
>
> Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
> And dear the last embraces of our wives
> And their warm tears: but all hath suffer'd change;

For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'T is hard to settle order once again. . . .

The Lotus blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotus blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotus-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotus-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind. . . .
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

From the fabled Lotus-land Odysseus passed to other fabled places in the Mediterranean, which in pre-Hellenic and early Hellenic times was, to most peoples, a sea of mystery, with rocky islands inhabited by giants and hags, and straits haunted by mermaids and monsters who preyed upon mankind. The wanderer put ashore on the island of the Cyclops, where he blinded the one-eyed giant Polyphemus, a son of the sea-god Poseidon. The sea-god was wroth, and decreed that, as punishment for his deed, Odysseus should suffer many misfortunes and be a wanderer from home. As the wrath of Achilles is the leading *motif* in the *Iliad*, so is the wrath of Poseidon in the *Odyssey*; it is "the thread" that imparts to the epic its Homeric unity.

From the isle of the Cyclops, Odysseus, with his fleet of twelve ships, voyages to the isle of Æolus, god of winds. This deity was believed to keep the winds inside a mountain,

liberating them at will. To Odysseus he gave all the winds in a bag, except the one which would waft him home; but his sailors opened the bag and the winds escaped. The ships were then driven back to the isle of Æolus. The god, however, refused to repeat his favour, despite the impassioned appeal of Odysseus.

From the isle of Æolus the wanderers passed to Telepylus, a city inhabited by cannibals, who attacked the ships and destroyed them all except one, and in this vessel Odysseus escaped. He voyaged westward and reached Ææa, the island of Circe, the enchantress, daughter of Helios and Perse, the sea-nymph. Circe transformed the sailors into swine, but owing to the intervention of Hermes they were restored to human shape. Odysseus and his men remained for a year on this island as the guests of Circe, who feasted them lavishly. Afterwards the hero visited Hades to obtain the advice of Tiresias, the blind soothsayer, as to what course he should next take, and he was assured that he would ultimately reach Ithaca, despite the decree of Poseidon, if his men refrained from slaying the sacred cattle of Helios. He returned to the island of the enchantress Circe, and afterwards sailed towards the island of the Sirens, who endeavoured in vain to lure him to destruction with their sweet singing. He had perforce to follow a course between Scylla and Charybdis. These fierce monsters haunted a rock and whirlpool in the Strait of Messina. Scylla was on the Italian shore. She was sometimes described as a many-footed monster with six heads and six long necks—a form probably suggested by the octopus—and she was supposed to bark like a dog. A Cretan seal engraving shows a dog-headed monster attacking a boatman, and this may be an early form of the sea-fury. Another of her forms is that of a mermaid—half a woman and half a fish or serpent; as a mermaid she was supposed to be surrounded by dogs. "Dog-fish", the name given to several species of small shark, is no doubt reminiscent of the Scylla legend. One of the species is called *Scyllium catulus*.

Charybdis, a daughter of Poseidon and Gæa, the earth-goddess, was a voracious monster who dwelt on the shore of Sicily beneath a rock on which grew a huge fig tree. She was

supposed to be the cause of the tides, because thrice daily she swallowed the waters and disgorged them again. Scylla and she were greatly feared by mariners. A proverb still refers to those who find themselves in difficult situations—"falling into Charybdis while avoiding Scylla"—which has almost the same significance as "out of the frying-pan into the fire".[1]

When the ship of Odysseus passed through the strait, Scylla sprang from her hiding-place and carried away six sailors.

The wanderer, continuing his voyage, wished to pass the Island of Trinacria, usually identified with Sicily, but his men were eager to land. Odysseus made them promise not to lay hands on the sacred cattle of the sun that grazed there, but they ignored his warning and slew several. As a consequence they incurred divine wrath; soon afterwards the ship was wrecked, and all on board perished except Odysseus, who clung to wreckage and reached the island of Calypso. There he had to remain for over seven years.

Meanwhile, trouble had arisen in Ithaca. Youthful princes who desired to rule over the island kingdom had taken up residence in the king's house as the wooers of the long-suffering and faithful Penelope. Her son, Telemachus, was too young to assert his authority. The wooers became daily more insistent and haughty; they feasted and made merry in the hall, believing that Odysseus would never return.

In the tenth year of the wanderings of Odysseus the goddess Athene intervened, and prevailed upon Zeus to have the king of Ithaca liberated from Calypso's island. Disguised as Mentor, Odysseus's friend, she then visited Telemachus and urged him to dismiss the wooers and go in search of his father.

At this point the *Odyssey* opens; its twenty-four books cover a period of forty-two days. Odysseus relates the story of his wanderings to King Alcinous in Scheria, just before he returns to Ithaca.

Scheria has often been identified with Corcyra. It has been urged of late, however, that it was really Crete—not the Crete

[1] "Incides in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim" (one falls into Scylla in seeking to avoid Charybdis), Phillippe Gaultier: *Alexandreis*, Book V, line 301. "Thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother", *Merchant of Venice*, Act III, scene v.

of the Homeric Age, which sent its soldiers to the plain of Troy under command of Idomeneus, but the independent kingdom that flourished prior to the period of Achæan ascendancy. The author of the *Odyssey*, who utilized the floating legends of seafaring peoples regarding the fabled islands of Æolus, the Cyclops, and Calypso, had probably also drawn upon the ancient song-cycles surviving from pre-Homeric times, when the Cretans were the sea-kings of the Mediterranean. It may be that the poet had even access to written poems or romances in which memories of the ancient kingdom survived. Evidence has been forthcoming that the reed pen was utilized in Crete some five hundred years before the Homeric Age, for writing linear signs; these signs "could be used so flexibly", says Professor Burrows, "that we find inside two cups of the period (Middle Minoan III)[1] an inscription written in ink, in a cursive hand". Palm leaves, papyrus, or even parchment may have been written upon with this reed pen.[2] In Homer's day the Crete of King Minos had already "won its way to the mythical". Many centuries had elapsed since the island sea-kings had been subdued and scattered. Linguistic changes had also taken place. As in Norman times, in England, King Arthur and his knights had become almost wholly mythical, so, evidently, in Homer's Age, Minos and Alcinous had become shadowy figures in the poetic romances of mingled peoples in the Ægean area. It is only now, when archæologists, having made great discoveries in Homeric lands, are able to reconstruct in outline the long and brilliant period of pre-Hellenic civilization, that we are able to sift out the historical elements that glimmer, although faintly, in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Yet it is primarily as literature that these great masterpieces hold for us, as they did for the ancient Greeks, an abiding and stimulating interest. Although the many Homeric problems may remain unsolved, generations of mankind will continue to take scholarly pleasure, when, in Lang's resounding lines,

> They hear like ocean on a western beach
> The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

[1] *c.* 1850–1600 B.C. [2] *The Discoveries in Crete*, pp. 64, 65.

I. Penelope and the Wooers

Tell me, O Muse, of the Shifty, the man who wandered afar,
After the Holy Burg, Troy-town, he had wasted with war;
He saw the towns of men folk, and the mind of men did he learn;
As he warded his life in the world, and his fellow-farers' return,
Many a grief of heart on the deep-sea flood he bore,
Nor yet might he save his fellows, for all that he longed for it sore.
They died of their own souls' folly, for witless as they were
They ate up the beasts of the Sun, the Rider of the Air,
And he took away from them all their dear returning day;
O Goddess, O daughter of Zeus, from whencesoever ye may,
Gather the tale, and tell it, yea even to us at the last.

Morris's translation.

Now all the others who had fought under Agamemnon at Troy and escaped the perils of war and the sea had returned home, save Odysseus alone. A prisoner in the hollow cave of that divine nymph, the goddess Calypso, he pined for his wife, Penelope, and for the homeward voyage, the while Calypso desired greatly to have him for her spouse. But when, after years had gone past, and the time came, according to the decree of the gods, for Odysseus to return to Ithaca, he was not even then set free from trouble. All the gods took pity on him, except Poseidon; that deity of ocean continued to persecute the god-like Odysseus until at length he reached his own land, the rocky island of Ithaca.

It chanced that when Poseidon had gone to Ethiopia to receive a great sacrifice of bulls and rams, and take pleasure in the feast, the other gods assembled in the palace of Olympian Zeus. The father of gods and men spoke of Ægisthus, who had been slain by Orestes, son of Agamemnon. "Alas!" he said; "how prone are men to blame the gods, saying that we are the cause of their misfortunes, while they themselves, by their own actions, suffer more griefs than have been ordained

for them. Ægisthus, in defiance of the decrees of fate, did wed the wife of Agamemnon, and did slay that warrior on his return, although he was forewarned by us neither to kill Agamemnon nor to woo his wife, because that Orestes would avenge the death of his sire when he grew to man's estate. Yet Ægisthus ignored the warning spoken for us by Hermes (Mercury), and now he has perished for his deeds."

Up rose the goddess, grey-eyed Athene (Minerva), and she, addressing Zeus, spoke on behalf of Odysseus, saying: "My heart bleeds for that unfortunate man, who pines to behold once again the hearth-smoke ascending from his native land. . . . Did he not, O Zeus, offer sacrifices unto you at Troy, hard by the ships of the Argives? Why, then, are you so angry with him?"

Said Zeus: "My child, what word escapes your lips? How could I forget divine Odysseus, that man of wisdom who has offered up sacrifices? 'Tis earth-shaking Poseidon who is wroth with him because that he blinded the Cyclops; 'tis he who prevents his home-returning. But come, let us consider how we shall secure the return of Odysseus. Poseidon will cease to be angry when he finds that he is opposed by the will of all the other gods."

Grey-eyed Athene then pleaded that Hermes should be sent to Calypso, so that, in the name of the gods, he might bid her liberate long-suffering Odysseus and permit him to return home. "Meanwhile," she said, "I shall go to Ithaca and stir up the heart of Telemachus to take counsel with the elders and censure the wooers who feast continually on the sheep and kine. Him will I send to Sparta and to sandy Pylos to seek tidings of the home-coming of his dear sire."

The goddess assumed the form of Mentor, King of the Taphians,[1] a friend honoured by Odysseus, when she appeared before Telemachus. Sad at heart, the young man was sitting among the wooers, thinking of his sire. He welcomed and did honour to his visitor, and told that the wooers, believing Odysseus would never return, devoured his substance. "Soon," he said, "they will fall upon me and slay me."

[1] Mentor's kingdom consisted of a group of small Ionian islands called the Taphiæ.

"Alas!" the goddess sighed; "without doubt you have need here of the absent Odysseus; he would speedily lay hands on these shameless fellows were he here now; methinks that swift indeed would be their fate and bitter their wooing."

Athene then counselled the youth to call the elders to assemble and to censure and dismiss the wooers, and afterwards to voyage to Sparta and Pylos, so that he might obtain tidings of his sire.

Not until Athene had passed over the sea, like to an eagle in flight, did Telemachus realize that he had entertained a deity unawares.

The wooers had feasted that night and called for song, and Phemius, a bard of great renown, was singing to them of the sorrows endured by the Achæans after they departed from Troy —sorrows that had been ordained for them by Pallas Athene. The prudent Penelope, sitting in an upper chamber, heard the divine song, and she came down the lofty stairs, followed by two handmaidens, and entered the hall in which the wooers sat. She shed tears, and, veiling her face, spoke to the bard, saying: "Phemius, many other lays relating the deeds of men and gods, that stir mortals, are known to you. Sing one of these now while the men drink their wine in silence, and oh! cease from the sad strain which wears away my heart, for more than any other woman must I endure grief without comfort. For I cannot forget my dear one, that glorious man whose fame is far spread through Hellas and mid Argos."

Telemachus, to whom Athene had imparted courage, spoke to her, saying: "Mother mine, do not forbid the bard to sing as his heart moves him. 'Tis not the bards who are to blame for their themes, but Zeus, who gives to men according to their choice. Nor blame the bard if he sings of the sorrows of the returning Danaans, for men are ever prone to admire the newest lay. Then listen like the others, for Odysseus is not the only man who never returned from Troy; other heroes perished too. . . . Return to your chamber and mind your household work, the loom and distaff, and bid your maids make haste with their work. The talk here will be for men, and especially for me, for I am the master of this house."

Penelope was astonished to hear her son speak in this manner. Pondering his words in her mind, she returned to her chamber. There she wept for her dear husband Odysseus until Athene had shed sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

Meanwhile the wooers clamoured as to who should have Penelope for his spouse. Telemachus censured them and said: "On the morrow let us all go to the assembly, where I shall declare my will, which is that you all depart without delay from this house."

The wooers bit their lips and marvelled, because the youth had spoken so boldly. Thereafter the bard resumed his song, and the wooers drank wine far into the night.

Now when Morning, the rosy-fingered, had followed Dawn, her child, the loud-voiced heralds summoned the long-haired Achæans of Ithaca to an assembly. Telemachus came forth with a spear of bronze in his right hand, and followed by two swift-footed dogs; he sat in the seat of his father, and the old men made no protest.

The aged Ægyptius spoke first, recalling that not since Odysseus left them had they gathered together. "Who now bids us assemble?" he asked. "Have tidings come that Odysseus is about to return? Or will his son speak of something affecting the common good? A goodly young man is he. Let him speak forth."

Telemachus rose and complained bitterly of the evil which had come upon his father's house. Wooers, sons of noblemen, were urging his mother to marry against her will. Instead of going to her father, Icarius, so that he might fix the bride-price and give her to the one acceptable to him, they spent the days in the house of Odysseus eating and drinking. "I am not a man of might like to my father," said the youth, "or I should protect with the sword what is mine. The doings of the wooers are beyond endurance."

He spoke angrily and shed tears. To him Antinous, chief of the wooers, made answer, saying: "Blame us not; rather blame your mother, who is the most cunning of women. For three years she has kept us in hope, making promises to everyone. Having begun to weave a great web, she said: 'Wait

until I shall finish it.' Each day she wove it, and each night she unravelled it. Thus craftily has she beguiled us all. When we discovered this we made her finish the work, although much against her will. . . . Send your mother away, Telemachus. Bid her marry the man her father selects for her and she herself is pleased with. So long as she remains obstinate, the wooers will continue to devour your substance. Nor will we leave your house until she marries the Achæan whom she selects for a husband."

Telemachus refused to send his mother away, and invoked the aid of Zeus to punish the wooers. As he spoke two eagles appeared flying overhead; they tore each other's cheeks and necks with their talons and passed over the town. The people wondered what the event foretold. Then an old man, knowing the omens of birds, arose in the assembly and said: "Methinks Odysseus is not far off. He is coming to punish the wooers. As I have already foretold, the crafty Odysseus, having suffered many ills, will return in the twentieth year."

Eurymachus scoffed at the old man, and spoke defiantly, like to Antinous. Then Telemachus said he would go to Sparta and Pylos to make enquiry regarding his sire. He promised that if he heard naught of him within a year he would return and build for him a grave-mound and perform burial-rites.

The wise Mentor then rose and warned the wooers, saying: "You place your lives in peril, deeming Odysseus will not come back. Angry am I with the people who do not rebuke you and restrain you."

Thereafter Telemachus went to a lonely place, and, washing his hands in grey sea-water, invoked Athene. The goddess appeared in the likeness of Mentor. She spoke, saying: "You will not be a coward after this. If you are your father's son you will do what you propose to do. Not many sons are like their father; most sons are worse, and few are better. . . . You are not entirely devoid of your father's wisdom. There is some hope, therefore, that you will do what must be done. . . . Little do the foolish wooers think that they are already doomed — that they will die in one day." The goddess then promised Telemachus to accompany him on his voyage.

Now the wooers would fain have held back Telemachus; but he gave them much wine, and stole away when they lay in a drunken sleep.

Accompanied by Athene, in the guise of Mentor, the young man sailed all night long, and when next morning the sun rose out of the beautiful sea, hastening to the brazen heaven to shine on gods and men, Telemachus reached sandy Pylos. He went at once to the house of Nestor. The aged hero welcomed him, and said: "There never was a wiser man than Odysseus. . . . When I look at you I am amazed, because you speak like him. Who would ever think that a youth would speak in the very manner of an elder?"

Nestor then related all he knew of the warriors who sailed from Troy, but he could not tell whither Odysseus had gone. Having entertained the youth, Nestor bade his son Pisistratus to yoke swift horses in his car and convey Telemachus to Sparta.

Menelaus of the fair hair welcomed the young men; and when they had feasted, and ere yet the king knew who they were, he told them that for eight years after Troy fell he had been a wanderer in Cyprus, Phœnicia, and Egypt—he met with Ethiopians, Sidonians, Erembians, and Libyans. "Alas," he sighed, "I can take no pleasure now in my possessions! When I was far from home my brother Agamemnon was slain, owing to the treachery of his wicked wife. . . . Would I had but a third of my wealth, and that those men who fell for me on the plain of Troy were still alive. . . . Among the Achæans none was dearer to me, or a greater help, than Odysseus, and we know not whether he is now alive or dead. For him does his aged father Laertes make lament, likewise the faithful Penelope and his son Telemachus, who was but a babe in arms when Odysseus went to Troy."

A tear fell from the eyes of Telemachus, and he held his purple robe before his face. Helen, who had entered and sat down, looked steadfastly at Telemachus, and said: "Menelaus, do you know who this young man is? I have never beheld so close a resemblance between one person and another as there is between him and Odysseus. This surely is no other than

Telemachus, who was but an infant when his sire left home to wage war at Troy on my account—ah, shameless me!"

Menelaus was deeply moved, and that evening he told Telemachus of a revelation made to him on the coast of Egypt by Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea. Proteus spake to Menelaus of Odysseus, among others, and said he was still alive but full of sorrow, being a captive on the island of Calypso, who held him in spell.

Meanwhile the wooers in Ithaca had come to know that Telemachus had sailed for Pylos, and they were wroth indeed. Said Antinous: "This boy will yet bring trouble to us. Let a swift ship be sent to the strait of rugged Ithaca and Samos, so that his search for his father may come to a sorrowful end."

When Penelope learned that the wooers thus plotted to sink the ship in which Telemachus sailed, her heart was filled with grief, and she prayed to Athene: "Oh, save my dear son, and protect him from the overbearing wooers who conspire wickedly against him!"

That night Athene assumed the shape of Penelope's sister, Iphtime, and appeared to the queen in a dream. "Are you sleeping, heart-stricken Penelope?" said the goddess. "The gods bid you not to sorrow; thy son is about to return; he is no sinner against the gods. . . . Pallas Athene is with him, and she pities you and has sent me hither."

Said Penelope: "If you are indeed a deity, tell me whether my husband is still alive or is already dead and in the dwelling of Hades?"

The goddess made answer: "I cannot tell ye of him, whether he be alive or dead; it is base to utter words of no weight."

Penelope awoke, but the vision had faded in the night.

At that very hour the ship of the wooers was crossing the watery way to lie in wait for Telemachus, for whom a speedy death had been planned.

II. Odysseus and Nausicaa

The gods assembled on Olympus when Eos[1] (Aurora), the dawn, arose from her couch beside Tithonus, the immortal brother of Priam. Once again Athene pleaded that Odysseus should be set free, and Zeus, granting her petition, sent Hermes to the island of Calypso, so that Odysseus might be permitted to return home. Calypso of the braided tresses sorrowed greatly when Hermes made known to her the will of Zeus, but she took pity on Odysseus, who sat on the beach day by day weeping and sighing for Penelope. She urged him to build a raft, and gave him an axe and other tools with which to fashion it. When he sailed away she granted a fair wind.

For seventeen days Odysseus voyaged over the sea in safety, and on the eighteenth day he saw the shadowy mountains of Scheria, the island of the Phæacians; the headland that was nearest to him rose up like a shield out of the dusky sea.

Now Poseidon was at this time returning from Ethiopia, and he beheld, gazing from the top of a high mountain, the raft that bore Odysseus across the deep. The god resolved that the wanderer should suffer more grief, and raised a fierce storm. The raft was then pitched hither and thither by angry billows until it was broken in pieces. Odysseus seized a plank, to which he clung for a time, but a sea-nymph, even Leucothea, who when a mortal was named Ino, came to his aid, and to him she gave a scarf, which supported him among the waves. For two days and two nights Odysseus was tossed about on the deep ere he reached the shore.

When at length he left the sea he lay in a swoon. As soon as he revived he rose, went inland, and kissed the earth, which

[1] Eos, who loved Tithonus, won for him immortality, but omitted to ask for perpetual youth, and he became decrepit with old age; he was transformed into a tree-hopper.

gives men corn. Shelter he found in a woodland on a river bank. There he lay on a couch of dead leaves among the bushes, covering himself with leaves, and Athene shed sleep on his wearied eyes.

That night Athene went to the city of the Phæacians, and, entering the palace, appeared in the shape of a maiden to the fair young princess Nausicaa, daughter of King Alcinous, while yet she slept on her couch. The goddess spake, saying: "Nausicaa, you are heedless. Your marriage day is near, and yet your splendid garments lie neglected. When you marry you must needs be clad in beautiful garments, and must also have clean garments for those who will conduct you to the bridegroom's dwelling. Arise at dawn and set forth to that distant place where such a washing must take place."

And thus it came about that Nausicaa and her maidens set forth in the morning in a mule-car to wash wedding garments in the river beside which Odysseus lay asleep. At midday they had finished the washing and spread out the garments to dry. Then, having partaken of food, the princess and her maids played a ball game. After a time, when the time of returning was at hand, the princess cast the ball at a maiden. It missed her and fell in the river, whereat all the girls screamed. Their screams awoke Odysseus. He rose up, wondering what country he had reached. Plucking a branch from a tree to cover his body, he crept forward through the trees. So appeared he before the maidens, to whom he seemed most fearsome, for he was dishevelled, foam-stained, and uncomely. The maidens fled shrieking from before him, but the princess, to whom Athene gave courage, remained where she stood.

Odysseus spoke to Nausicaa, saying: "I supplicate you, O Queen, whether you are a goddess or a mortal. If you are a goddess, I will liken you to Artemis, because you are so beautiful, shapely, and tall; if you are a mortal woman, blessed indeed are your father and mother and your brethren, because you are a very flower among maidens. But most greatly blest will be he who shall have you for his bride. Never before have I seen one to compare with you: your beauty fills me with awe."

Then Odysseus told the princess that he had been wrecked

and washed ashore, and he asked her for a garment to put on. "I know no one here," he said. "Lead me to the city."

Said the princess: "Stranger, you shall not want for aught you need when you reach our city. This is the land of the Phæacians, and I am the daughter of the great-hearted King Alcinous."

Nausicaa then called her maids to give food and drink to the stranger, and also a garment to put on.

Odysseus went to the river, while the others drew away, and washed himself clean. Then he anointed his hair and body with oil, and put on the garments that were laid out for him. Athene renewed his strength and made his hair curl like to the hyacinth.

Odysseus sat down on the river bank, and when the princess saw him washed and clothed she whispered to her maids: "This man does not come hither against the will of the gods. Unseemly he appeared when first I cast eyes on him; now he is like unto a god. Would that such a one as he were my husband. . . . But, haste ye! he is in need of food and drink."

Greedily did Odysseus partake of his meal, for days had gone past since he had eaten or drunken aught.

Thereafter the princess spoke to Odysseus, saying: "Rise now, stranger, and I shall conduct you towards the house of my sire. Walk you with my handmaidens, while I, driving the car, lead the way till we come nigh to the harbour beside the city. I shall leave you in a grove, beside the road which leads into the city. I dread the gossip of sailors, for some base man may say: 'Who is this tall and comely stranger following Nausicaa? Where did she find him? Will he become her husband, her dear one? She has either found a shipwrecked man from a distant land, or else a god whom she prayed for, a god who will possess her for ever more. It were better if she departed from here and found a husband in a land of strangers, because she despises the Phæacian youths who woo her, many though they be, and noble withal.' Thus will they speak of me. . . . Wait therefore in the grove until I have had time to reach home. Then come to my father's house. A little boy could lead you to it, for there is no other house to compare with

it. Enter the court, go quickly through the great hall till you reach my mother, who sits beside the fire spinning purple wool with her handmaidens behind her. My father sits at her side. Make your petition to my mother, and, if she is well disposed to you, your wishes shall be granted."

The princess then mounted the car and led the wanderer to the grove, and there she left him. He tarried a time ere he went towards the city. Grey-eyed Athene met him on the way. She had assumed the guise of a young maiden, carrying a pitcher; and when he spoke to her she became his guide and counsellor, and said: "Do not address any man you meet. The Phæacians dislike strangers, and are rarely friendly to them. Trusting to their swift ships, they cross the mighty deep. Poseidon has given them power so to do; their ships are speedy as a bird or as a thought."

She led Odysseus to the glorious dwelling of Alcinous, on which he gazed with wonder. The walls within the threshold were of brass, and a blue frieze adorned them right up to the inner chambers. Golden were the doors, with pillars of silver on a brazen threshold, and the lintel was of silver. Golden and silvern dogs guarded the entrance. Round the walls of the long hall were seats on which lay well-woven coverings, the work of women. Statues of golden youths held flaming torches in their hands to give light to those who feasted in the palace. Busy handmaidens were at work, moving restlessly like the leaves of a poplar. As the Phæacians excel all other men as mariners, so do their women surpass other women as spinners and weavers.

When Odysseus had entered the palace he followed the advice of the princess. He went to her mother, Queen Arete, and appealed to her for help and protection. It was his good fortune to be welcomed both by the queen and the king. And to them, when he had been given food to eat, he told how he had been kept captive for long years by Calypso, until Zeus commanded that he should be released, and how he had been wrecked and washed ashore, and how the Princess Nausicaa had found him and given him garments and food.

King Alcinous was ill-pleased because his daughter had not

led the stranger to the palace, but Odysseus said: "Chide not the innocent maiden. . . . For fear and shame I could not come before you following her."

Then said the king: "Would to Zeus, Athene, and Apollo, that you, who are so comely, and one who thinks as I do, were my daughter's husband. If it is your will, you shall wed her. I shall give you a house and riches; but if such is not your will, I shall send you in a speedy ship to whatever land you desire to reach, even although it be beyond Eubœa, which has been seen by those of my mariners who conveyed red-haired Rhadamanthus[1] over the deep when he went to visit Tityus, son of Gæa."

Odysseus gave thanks to Zeus, saying: "May Alcinous fulfil his promise, so that I may return to my native land!"

Next day the Phæacians held games in honour of Odysseus. Young men excelled in running and wrestling, and in boxing and weight-throwing. It chanced that, ere the games were ended, Prince Laodamas, son of Alcinous, challenged Odysseus to try his skill in the sports, saying: "No greater fame can come to a man while he lives than what he wins with feet and hands. Come and make trial, and dismiss sorrow from your mind."

Odysseus was reluctant to do aught, but at length, having been taunted by the young men, he rose and seized a big weight and flung it farther than the lighter ones which the Phæacians had been throwing. Then said he: "Now reach my mark if you can, young men." But none could outstrip him.

Thereafter the king made gifts to Odysseus, and the ship was got ready for his departure. The Princess Nausicaa, who was filled with admiration for the noble hero, approached him and spake in a low voice, saying: "Stranger, farewell! . . . When you come again to your native land remember me sometimes, for to me you owe the breath of life."

Said Odysseus: "Nausicaa, daughter of great-hearted Alcinous, may it please Zeus that I shall go home and see the day of my safe returning. You I shall adore like a deity all my days, for you, fair lady, have saved my life."

A feast was held in honour of the stranger, and then the

[1] The brother of Minos.

king called for Demodocus, the bard. Inspired by the god, Demodocus took his lyre and chanted a lay which told of the taking of Troy, when the wooden horse was dragged to the walls and the Achæans pretended to depart in their ships. He sang of the deeds of Odysseus, and that hero wept. Seeing the tears falling down the stranger's cheeks, King Alcinous asked him to declare who he was, and he answered, saying: "I am Odysseus, son of Laertes."

All who were there marvelled greatly, as, in response to the king's wish, Odysseus told the tale of his wanderings.

III. The Lotus-Eaters and the Cyclops

Odysseus related first the story of the sack of Ismarus, towards which city his ships had been driven by a gale after leaving the Trojan shore. The spoils were shared among the sailors and warriors; but although Odysseus bade them depart speedily, they drank much wine and slaughtered sheep and cattle. Then they were attacked by the well-armed Cicones, who outnumbered them. Only a remnant escaped to the ships.

Southward sailed the fleet of twelve ships for nine days. On the tenth they reached Lotophagi, the land of the Lotus-eaters. The men went ashore for water, and some of them began to mingle with those who dwelt there, and to eat the lotus fruit, which is sweet as honey, and brings forgetfulness to the minds of those who partake of it. Odysseus had to drive his lotus-eaters to the ships; they moaned and wept to leave that land in which they desired to dwell for the rest of their days.

Sailing away from Lotus-land, the wanderers next reached the land of the Cyclopes, a folk without laws. Outside the haven of this land is a long island on which are numerous goats. The Cyclopes never visited the island, having no ships. The wanderers went ashore, and with their bows and arrows slew many goats and feasted merrily.

Next morning they visited the adjoining land, and saw there a great cave in which a Cyclopean giant, with one eye, was wont to sleep. Odysseus went ashore with twelve men and entered the cave. They found there a great store of cheeses, pens packed with lambs and kids, and many vessels full of whey. The men proposed to take away the cheeses and drive

the lambs and kids to the ships, but Odysseus said they should wait until the giant returned, and perhaps he would give them gifts.

When the giant at length came nigh he tossed so large a log into the cave that the men fled into an inner recess and hid there. Their hearts were filled with terror. The giant next drove in all his fatted flocks; then he closed the mouth of the cave with a great boulder. He sat down and milked his sheep and goats, and when the milking was done he kindled a great fire and beheld the strangers.

"Who are you?" he asked in a gruff voice. "Where do you come from? Are you traders, or are you pirates who wander over the sea robbing aliens?"

Said Odysseus: "Achæans are we from Troy, who have been driven hither and thither by unfavourable winds. We have come by chance to your dwelling, and plead for hospitality, which is the right of strangers, whom Zeus protects and avenges if need be."

"Stranger, you speak foolishly," the giant answered. "A Cyclops fears not Zeus, nor will I myself avoid the enmity of Zeus by sparing you or your comrades."

Soon afterwards he seized two of the men, killed them, and devoured their bodies, swallowing even their bones. Having feasted thus, he lay down to sleep. Odysseus took thought whether or not he would slay the giant, but withheld his hand; because if the monster were slain, he and his men could never roll away the boulder from the mouth of the cave.

Next morning the giant pushed out the boulder and drove his flocks to the pasture. Then he rolled it back, so that his prisoners might not escape.

Odysseus hit on a plan for overcoming the giant. He found a great club of green olive wood in the cave, and made his men whittle it down at one end to a sharp point; and when this work was finished he hid the weapon.

The Cyclops returned in the evening, and, having milked his sheep and goats, devoured other two men for supper. Then Odysseus, who had taken a skin of wine with him from the ship, filled up a cup for the monster to drink. The Cyclops

quaffed the wine, and, finding it pleasant, asked for more, saying: "Tell me your name, so that I may give you a hospitable gift."

Odysseus filled up the cup again and again, and when the giant's wits were muddled with wine he said: "O Cyclops, you asked my name. I will tell you so that you may give me a hospitable gift. My name is No-man."

The tipsy Cyclops answered, saying: "No-man, I will eat you last of all. Such is my hospitable gift."

Having spoken thus, the monster fell asleep, lying on his back. Odysseus thrust the green olive-wood club into the fire, and left it there till the point was red-hot. Then, using it as a man who bores a plank with an auger, he thrust it into the giant's one eye and blinded him. Horribly the Cyclops howled. Thrusting away the boulder from the mouth of his dwelling, he called loudly for the other Cyclopes who dwelt in mountain caves to come to his aid. Quickly they flocked towards him. "What is wrong, Polyphemus," they asked, "that you shout for us in the night-time, disturbing our rest? Is any mortal robbing your flocks, or is someone killing you by craft or by force?"

Polyphemus made answer, and said: "O my friends, No-man is killing me by practising deceit."

To this the others made answer: "If indeed no man has done you an injury it is impossible for you to escape an affliction sent upon you by Zeus. You had better pray for help to your sire, King Poseidon."

In this manner the monsters spoke as they turned away, and Odysseus laughed within his heart because he had tricked the giant.

Next morning Polyphemus sat at the mouth of the cave, so as to prevent any man escaping. But Odysseus devised a cunning plan. He bound the rams together in threes, so that three might carry a man between them. For himself he selected a powerful young ram and lay under its belly, clinging to the rough wool, face upward.

Polyphemus allowed the rams to leave the cave, and when the ram to which Odysseus clung reached him, he stroked it,

saying: "Dear ram, why are you the last to go out? It has not been your wont to follow the others, but to hasten in front so as to be the first that reaches the pasture. . . . Are you sorry for your master, who has been blinded by No-man after he was muddled with wine? But this fellow shall not escape me. Oh! if you could only speak you would tell me where he hides, for he moves about to avoid me. When I have slain him, my heart will be less heavy with the wrong which No-man has brought upon me."

Then the giant pushed the ram from him. The animal carried Odysseus to a place of safety, and he dropped on the ground. Without loss of time he unloosed the thongs that bound his companions, and he and they went towards their ship, driving the plump rams before them.

After putting to sea, Odysseus shouted to the blinded monster, saying: "O Cyclops, you were not destined, after all, to eat my comrades and me within your cave. Zeus has punished you because you denied us hospitality."

The enraged Cyclops lifted up a great boulder and flung it in the direction from which the voice came. It fell in front of the ship and raised a great wave that drove it back to the beach. With the aid of a long pole, however, Odysseus kept the vessel from running aground.

When Odysseus was well out to sea again he rose to shout to the giant once more, although his companions endeavoured to make him keep silence. "O Cyclops," he said, "if any mortal man should ever ask you why you are blind, say that you have been blinded by Odysseus, the sacker of cities, son of Laertes, whose house is in Ithaca."

Polyphemus groaned. "Alas! a prophecy spoken of old has been fulfilled," he said; "for Telemus, the soothsayer, said in olden times that Odysseus would blind me. For long have I expected to see coming towards me a man of great stature, very strong and very comely, and not the dwarf and worthless weakling who has bereft me of sight after subduing me with wine."

Polyphemus invited Odysseus to return for a hospitable gift, but this the hero refused to do.

Then that Cyclops prayed to blue-haired Poseidon, his sire, saying:

"Grant that never more
Ulysses, leveller of hostile tow'rs,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair,
Behold his native home! but if his fate
Decree him yet to see his friends, his house,
His native country, let him deep distressed
Return and late, all his companions lost,
Indebted for a ship to foreign aid,
And let affliction meet him at his door." *Cowper.*

Poseidon heard the prayer. Once again Polyphemus flung a boulder which fell behind the ship, and it almost smote the helm. Heart-stricken because of the prayer of the Cyclops, yet still glad to be alive, the wanderers sailed away from the lawless land of the Cyclopes.

IV. Odysseus visits Hades and the Fabled Isles

Odysseus continued his tale in the hall of King Alcinous. He told that after leaving the land of the Cyclopes he reached the Æolian island which floats on the deep and drifts about hither and thither. A smooth high cliff fronts it, and it is surrounded by a wall of bronze. Æolus, King of the Winds, and his wife and their twelve children, dwell in the island city, and when Odysseus went ashore he was made welcome by them. He related his adventures in Troyland, and when he was going away the king gave to him a bag of ox-hide in which all the winds were fettered except the western wind, which was to waft the ships of Odysseus towards Ithaca. For nine days and nights the ships scudded across the deep, and on the tenth day Odysseus beheld his native land so near at hand that he took note of men building fires on the shore. Then a heavy sleep fell upon him.

Now, while yet Odysseus slept, his companions began to whisper one to another that the bag which King Æolus had gifted to their leader contained gifts of silver and gold. They opened the bag, to make certain of this, and when they did so a fierce tempest arose and drove the ships away from Ithaca and back to the Æolian island.

Sorrow-stricken, Odysseus went ashore; he told the King of the Winds what his companions had done, and said: "Oh! make good this ill happening, for the power is yours so to do."

Said Æolus: "Begone, vile man! It is not lawful for me to give aid to one who is hated by the blessed gods, as it would seem you are."

The next land that the wanderers reached was that of the Læstrygonians, whose lofty city is Lamos. Odysseus sent

three men ashore to discover what sort of people dwelt in that country. They met a damsel at a well, and she led them to her father's house. When they entered it they found, to their horror, that the girl's mother was a giantess. This huge woman called at once on her husband, whose name was Antiphates, and when he came he seized one of the sailors to cook him for the midday meal. The other two escaped, but the giants were all called together and followed the sailors to the shore. There they cast huge boulders at the ships, eleven of which were wrecked. The giants then carried off the sailors as fishermen carry off fish that they have speared. Odysseus and his ship's company managed to escape, but all their dear comrades were lost.

Sailing onward, Odysseus next came to the Island Ææa, on which dwells fair Circe of the braided tresses, who is a goddess and an enchantress. Odysseus, desiring to explore the island, divided his men into two bands; one he led himself, while Eurylochus led the other.

Eurylochus went inland and came to the palace of Circe. He heard the sweet voice of a woman, who sang as she wove a mighty web in her room. His men raised a shout, and the fair enchantress came out and invited them into her house. All entered except Eurylochus. Circe gave food and drink to the men; but the drink was mixed with herbs that brought on forgetfulness. Then she smote them with a wand and transformed them into swine. To the pigstyes she drove them forthwith.

Eurylochus hastened to Odysseus and informed him of the doom that had befallen his companions. The bold son of Laertes was made angry; he girt on his silver-studded bronze sword and seized his bow and arrows and went boldly towards the dwelling of Circe. It was well for him, however, that he first entered a sacred grove, for there he was met by Hermes, who gave to him a black-rooted herb with milk-white flowers, which in heaven is named Moly, to protect him against the spells of Circe. The god also instructed Odysseus how to compel the good favour of the enchantress.

Odysseus entered Circe's house, and when he had partaken

of the food and drink she placed before him she struck him with her wand and said: "Go now to the pigsty and lie there with your companions."

Protected against her magic, because he carried the herb, Odysseus drew his sword and made as if to slay her, and then he had her in his power. He compelled her to release from their swine shape his dear companions, and also made her take a vow to entertain him and all his followers. In Circe's hall, therefore, they abode for a full year, eating flesh and drinking wine, and their strength and courage were thus renewed.

Odysseus longed to reach his native land, and he asked Circe to fulfil a promise she made to send him thither, but she told him he must needs go on another voyage first and visit the abode of Hades (Pluto) and terrible Persephone (Proserpine), and there consult the spirit of Theban Tiresias, a blind prophet. "He alone," she said, "retains his understanding; the other souls flit about like shades."

Odysseus wept and moaned, saying: "Oh, who will pilot me on such a voyage? No man has ever yet reached the abode of Hades in a ship."

Then Circe instructed him how he could visit the land of the dead. "Erect the mast," she said, "and spread out white sails, and the north wind will waft you thither. When you have crossed the ocean you will reach the shore on which are the groves of Persephone, even high poplars and willows from which fall unripe fruit. Haul up your ship on the beach and walk towards the palace of Hades. You will soon reach the Rivers Phlegethon (flaming) and Cocytus (lamentation), a branch of the Styx (hatred), that flows into the River Acheron (sorrow). There is a great rock at the place where the rivers meet. Near it you must dig a trench a cubit long and a cubit broad, and when you have done so fill it with libations to the dead, honey and wine and water, and sprinkle on these white meal. Then call upon the dead, making promise of sacrifices when you return home. After doing this, draw your sword and slay sheep and let their blood flow into the trench.

On the next day Odysseus set out for Hades. Without mishap he reached that misty land on which the sun never

shines. Having beached his ship, he went towards the great rock at the meeting-place of the dreaded rivers. There he dug a trench and poured out offerings, and the dead came flitting towards the blood—betrothed girls and youths, old men who had known evil in their lives, tender maids with their sorrows still fresh in their hearts, and many warriors with blood-red arms who had fallen in battle. Odysseus kept them all back from the trench, because he waited for Tiresias. Long he waited, but at length the prophet came and spoke, saying: "Odysseus, son of Laertes, O wretched one, why have you left the sunlight and come hither to the joyless land of the dead? Stand back from the trench, so that I may drink the blood."

Having drunk the blood, the blind prophet then told Odysseus that Poseidon was wroth with him because that his son, the Cyclops, had been blinded. "Yet," he said, "you will return to your home in your ship if your men, when you reach the isle Trinacria, will not slay there the sacred cattle of the sun. For if harm be done to the sacred cattle, your ship will be wrecked and your companions will perish, and when, at length, you yourself return to Ithaca, you will have sorrows in your house." So spoke Tiresias, who told Odysseus of other things that were in store for him. "To you," he said, "death will come from the sea, an easy death indeed, in your old age, among a happy people."

Next came the mother of Odysseus, of whose death he had no previous knowledge. She spoke, saying: "My dear son, why have you ventured into this dark region? Are you still a wanderer, and have you not yet reached Ithaca? Have you not yet seen your dear wife and child?"

"O my mother," answered he, "necessity has brought me hither, for I had perforce to consult the soul of Tiresias. But tell me what fate befell you. Tell me also of my father, my son, and my dear wife."

The shade of his mother answered, saying: "Penelope remains constant, although her days and nights are full of misery. No one has yet seized your land, and Telemachus overlooks it. Your father remains in the country, nor ever goes near the city.

He awaits the fate that was mine—death beneath the burden of old age."

Odysseus would fain have embraced his mother, but she shrank from him, because no living being can embrace a shade.

Afterwards Odysseus saw other spirits who came to drink the blood—queens and princesses renowned of old. Then, when Persephone had driven back the shades of the women-folk, the ghosts of heroes who had fought at Troy drew nigh. First came Agamemnon. He told of his sorrowful death at the hand of Ægisthus, who had conspired with the accursed Clytemnestra. "When I fell," he said, "my shameless wife turned her back upon me; she did not draw down my eyelids nor close my mouth in death." Thus did Agamemnon make moan. Next came Achilles, who had no knowledge of what had happened after he died. Odysseus told him of the great deeds performed by his son, Neoptolemus, and of the sack of Troy, and Achilles rejoiced because Neoptolemus had won great renown, and went away proudly with mighty strides across the meadow of Asphodel.

Other souls of the dead who were waiting to drink of the blood spoke to Odysseus also, and asked him regarding those who were dear to them in life. To each one he spoke words of comfort.

Aias the Greater came nigh, and Odysseus addressed him; but Aias was still angry because Odysseus had won the armour of Achilles, and he answered not a word, but passed away.

Thereafter Odysseus beheld King Minos of Crete, who judges the dead. He also saw Orion wielding his bronze club and hunting beasts on the meadow of Asphodel; the gigantic Tityus, lying on the ground, whose liver is ever torn by vultures; Tantalus, tormented by thirst, standing in a lake which ever shrinks when he stoops to drink; and Sisyphus constantly rolling a huge boulder up an incline, suffering greatly, for when the boulder is pushed to the summit it ever rolls back again. Odysseus also beheld Heracles (Hercules), who spake to him. Thereafter, fearing that he would have to gaze at the head of the Gorgon, he hastened to his ship, which he launched

and put to sea. The tide drove the ship back to the island of Circe. Nor did the son of Laertes meet with any mishap.

Now before Odysseus bade farewell to the enchantress she warned him of the perils he would next encounter as he endeavoured to reach Ithaca. First, the Sirens would try to bewitch him; then he must needs pass between Scylla and Charybdis. Circe warned him also regarding the cattle of the sun on the Isle of Trinacria, saying: "If you harm the sacred kine your ship will be lost and your men will all perish."

Odysseus sailed away on the next day. He repeated to his men what Circe had said, and gave them wax to deafen their ears so that they might not hear the songs of the Sirens. "Tie me to the mast," he said, "and if I call upon you to set me free, heed me not, but tie me with more rope."

When the ship entered the strait of the Sirens the wind fell, and the water lay smooth and bright. The sails had to be lowered and stowed below, and the sailors, having stuffed their ears with wax, and tied Odysseus to the mast, put out the oars and whitened the waters with them as they rowed through the strait. The Sirens saw the ship coming, and raised their voices in sweet song, calling to Odysseus to tarry and hear their songs of the war between the Argives and Trojans and their sweetly-sung prophecies of all that would take place in future days on the fruitful earth.

Odysseus beckoned to his men to set him free, and he even frowned at them, but they heeded him not, and took a rope and bound him more securely. The ship passed safely through the strait of the Sirens, and then Odysseus was set free. So did he escape from the Sirens.

Soon afterwards the ship drew nigh to the strait of Scylla and Charybdis. Odysseus, looking ahead, saw smoky spray and a vast billow; he also heard the loud roaring of the sea. He spoke courageously to his men, who were stricken with terror. Then, armed with two spears, he mounted the prow of the ship; but he looked in vain for Scylla. The ship was tossed about in the surging waters, which were being constantly sucked in and vomited out by Charybdis, and in the midst of the terror and confusion Scylla seized six sailors and carried them away.

Afterwards the ship passed through the strait and reached the Island of Trinacria. Odysseus desired greatly to avoid it, but his men pleaded with him to be allowed to go ashore. He gave way to their wish, and warned them not to meddle with the cattle of the sun. They took an oath to obey his command.

For a whole month the ship lay wind-bound at the island; and the sailors, having grown tired of fish and fowl, were tempted by the cattle, and began to slay them and devour their flesh. Odysseus rebuked the men, but he could do naught else when the cattle had been slain.

Soon after the ship left the island a mighty tempest arose. The mast snapped and fell on the deck, killing the steersman. Then Zeus cast his thunderbolt, which struck the ship and caused it to be swamped after it had been driven towards Scylla and Charybdis. All who were on board perished save Odysseus alone. He clung to wreckage, and for nine days and nights was driven across the deep, until he was washed ashore on the island of Oxygia, the abode of Calypso of the braided tresses. And there, as the unwilling guest of that goddess, Odysseus dwelt until Zeus decreed that he should be set at liberty.

V. Odysseus returns to Ithaca

After Odysseus had related, in the palace of Alcinous, the story of his wanderings, he bade farewell to the Phæacians. The king accompanied him to the ship, in which had been placed many gifts for his illustrious guest. A bed was laid out at the stern for Odysseus, and as soon as the ship put to sea he lay down on it, and immediately sweet sleep fell on his eyelids. Safely and steadily ran the ship all night long, nor could a falcon hawk, swiftest of birds, have kept up with it. When the bright star arose—that star which is herald of the dawn—the ship drew near to the Island of Ithaca. It was run aground in a safe harbour. The Phæacians did not awaken Odysseus, but carried him ashore in his bed and laid him on the soft sand; near him they laid the box which contained the gifts of King Alcinous. Then the vessel put to sea again.

Now Poseidon was wroth when he found that the Phæacians had carried Odysseus back to his native land with richer gifts than he had won for himself in Troyland. The sea-god hastened to Scheria, and when he saw the ship returning from Ithaca he transformed it into a stone that was rooted to the sea bottom. Then he went away.

When Odysseus awoke, he did not at first realize that he was in Ithaca, because Athene had shed a mist round him which made all things look strange. The goddess afterwards appeared before him, and not only gave him counsel, but also transformed him into an old and withered man; his fair hair fell from his head, his limbs and back became bent, and his eyes became bleared. He was clad in a ragged garment, and looked like to a beggar man.

Having concealed his treasure in a cave, Odysseus first visited Eumæus, the swineherd, his most faithful servant, nor did he make himself known to the man; to whom, however, he

said: "Odysseus is about to return. This I say not lightly but on my oath."

The swineherd would not believe him, but he said: "Would that Odysseus came home again, for such is my dearest wish, and it is the wish also of Penelope, and of Laertes, and of Telemachus."

That night Odysseus slept in the house of the swineherd.

Meanwhile the grey-eyed Athene appeared before Telemachus in a dream, and urged him to return to Ithaca. The young man gave heed to the goddess, and, having hastened to Pylos, he took ship to Ithaca. Nor were the wooers able to intercept him. He landed secretly, and, having sent his ship towards the city harbour, went himself to the house of Eumæus, the swineherd, who greeted him and kissed his forehead, and his eyes, and his hands. Odysseus did not make himself known. He sat gazing in silence at his son. Telemachus asked who this stranger was, and the swineherd made answer saying: "He boasts that he is a son of Crete, and says he has wandered far and met with many adventures."

Telemachus bade Eumæus hasten to the city and bear tidings of his return to his mother, Penelope. "Here will I wait," he said, "until, having informed her in secret, you will return to me. Of my arrival say naught to the Achæans, because some among them are plotting to do me injury."

When the swineherd had departed, Athene entered the house, and, touching Odysseus with a golden wand, restored him to his former shape. Telemachus marvelled at the change and said: "Are you a god that you have so transformed yourself? If so, be merciful to me, I pray you."

Said Odysseus: "No god am I. Why do you liken me to the immortals? Know now that I am your father, for whose sake you have suffered many sorrows and endured ill-treatment from men."

Having spoken thus he embraced and kissed his son, shedding tears continually.

Telemachus would not believe for a time that the stranger was indeed his dear sire, but when Odysseus convinced him, he threw his arms round his father's neck and wept with him.

Now when the wooers discovered that the ship which bore Telemachus across the ocean was lying in the city harbour, they were angry indeed, for their spies had kept watch for him by day and by night on the windy promontories, while the ship that had been sent out to intercept Telemachus had lain constantly in wait for him. These disappointed and insolent wooers then took counsel together, so as to devise by other means the death of the son of Odysseus.

On the next day Telemachus went to the city. He was welcomed by his dear mother, Penelope, who came out of her room like to Artemis or golden Aphrodite. She threw her arms around her son, shedding tears, and kissed his forehead, and his beautiful eyes, and said: "Oh, you have come, Telemachus, like a sweet light in the darkness! I feared I should never set eyes on you, after you departed in a ship to Pylos, without my knowledge and against my will, to get tidings of your dear father. Now tell me what you know."

The young man gave an account of all that had passed, and all he had heard, and he repeated what Menelaus had told—that Odysseus was still alive and a prisoner on the island of Calypso.

To his own house came Odysseus in the guise of a beggar man; he was led thither by the faithful swineherd. One man kicked Odysseus as he went past, and then railed at him, but the hero walked on, nor took heed of cruelty or insult. He saw the wooers within his hall; they were drinking wine while Phemius the bard sang to them. No one recognized him except his old dog Argus. As he spoke to the swineherd, the dog, which was lying down, raised its head and pricked its ears. Well it knew that Odysseus was nigh; it wagged its tail, and laid back both its ears, but was so weak that it could not drag itself to its feet. Odysseus turned away his face and shed a tear unobserved by Eumæus. Argus died immediately after it beheld Odysseus once again; twenty years had gone past since its master had left for Troyland.

Odysseus entered the hall, and Antinous and the other wooers were insolent to him as he went among them begging for food.

After this the swineherd departed to his home, and a beggar named Irus began to taunt Odysseus and challenge him to fight. The wooers came outside, and made the men stand up against one another. Odysseus struck but a single blow with his right fist, and broke the jawbone of the boastful Irus. The wooers laughed merrily, yet they wondered at the strength and skill of the old beggar man.

That night, after the wooers had departed, Odysseus bade Telemachus to remove all weapons of war from the hall. His son did as his father advised him, and concealed the weapons in an upper chamber.

Odysseus lingered in the house, and Penelope spoke to him, but she did not recognize him in his beggar-man form. To his dear wife the noble son of Laertes spoke, saying: "O lady, no mortal living could find fault with you. Your fame, like that of a blameless king, reaches to high heaven."

Penelope then told him of the sorrows she endured because of the wooers, and she said: "Oh, my heart is wasted away, because I pine constantly for Odysseus!"

Odysseus was deeply moved, and, wishing to bring comfort to her heart, spoke saying: "Let your sorrows come to an end, for no great time has gone past since I heard of your husband. He is returning hither, and when last I saw him he told me that his ship was ready to sail to his dear native land."

Said Penelope: "Ah, stranger, would that what you say were true! But my heart is heavy, and greatly I fear that Odysseus will never again return to Ithaca."

But although Penelope had no knowledge of who the stranger was, he was recognized by Euryclea, the aged nurse, as she washed his feet. Said Odysseus to her: "Keep your secret to yourself, and leave all to the gods."

Thereafter Penelope spoke to him again, and told him that on the morrow trial would be made in archery between the wooers, and that she would consent to wed the man who could bend the bow of Odysseus, and shoot an arrow through twelve axes[1] set up in a row like the ribs of a ship.

On the day that followed, Penelope brought forth the great

[1] Probably hollow axes.

bow of Odysseus and his quiver of bright arrows, which had been kept concealed in a secret chamber. She carried the bow to the hall, where the wooers were taunting Telemachus bitterly, and said: "I shall become the bride of the man who can bend and string the bow of god-like Odysseus, and can also shoot an arrow through twelve axes set up in a row.

Telemachus at once set up the axes and tested the bow, which he almost bent; but his sire, in the disguise of the beggar, frowned and signed to him not to bend the bow.

Thereafter the wooers attempted, one after another, to bend the bow, but none could do so. "On the morrow," they said, "we shall try again, after offering up a sacrifice to the gods."

Odysseus, who had gone outside and made himself known to the swineherd, then entered the hall and said: "Come, let me try the bow, so that I may know whether I am as strong as once I was."

The wooers were unwilling that a beggar should take part in the contest, but Penelope intervened on his behalf. Then Telemachus declared that no one could prevent him giving the bow to anyone he cared to offer it to. And, having thus declared his right, he sent his mother to her own room and bade her remain there. Greatly astonished, Penelope obeyed his command; she went to her room and wept for Odysseus on that fateful night until Athene shed sleep on her eyelids.

After Penelope had departed the bow was given to Odysseus. He took it in his hands and examined every part to make sure that it would not fail him. Then he bent the bow, and, having strung it, twanged the bow-string, which gave forth a sweet swallow-like note. The wooers were astonished; their faces turned pale. A peal of thunder rent the silence of night as Odysseus lifted the bow, and his heart rejoiced to hear the voice of Zeus.

First Odysseus shot the arrow through the row of twelve axes, and, having done so, he spoke to Telemachus, saying: "My strength and skill have not yet deserted me." Thus did he hint to his son that he should make ready for what was to follow. Telemachus immediately girt on his sword and seized a spear and stood at his father's side.

ODYSSEUS BENDS THE BOW

Said Odysseus: "Now that the contest is over, and I have won, I shall see whether I can hit another mark which no man as yet has struck. May Apollo grant me glory!"

Having spoken thus, Odysseus again bent the bow, and, aiming at Antinous, sent the arrow through the throat of that insolent leader of the wooers, just as he was raising the wine-cup to his lips. Antinous fell, his life-blood flowing fast. Then arose a great tumult among the wooers. At first they thought that their friend had been slain by accident, and they chided the archer, but Odysseus called out fiercely: "Dogs, you declared I should never return home from Troyland! You have devoured my substance and have wooed my wife while I was still alive, dreading not the avenging gods. Now death claims you all."

Quickly he shot arrows among the wooers, and each arrow brought death. One bold wooer sprang at Odysseus with his sword, but he was struck down by the spear of Telemachus. And after all the arrows were shot, Telemachus brought armour and weapons to his father, and to Eumæus, the swineherd, and Philætius, the neatherd, and also girt armour on himself. Then these four warriors, with bronze armour and helmets of bronze, adorned with horse-hair plumes, and with shields and spears, attacked the wooers. The wooers had obtained javelins and swords from the room in which Telemachus had hidden them, and fought desperately for their lives. In the end, however, they were all slain. Odysseus went through his house searching for them, and he hauled out their bodies and heaped them up like a fisherman who takes fish from his net and makes a heap on the shore.

Then Odysseus bade Telemachus call the old nurse Euryclea, and she came forth and found Odysseus amongst the slain, his hands and feet red with blood. The old woman cried aloud when she beheld the mighty deed that had been done, but Odysseus said: "Rejoice not, old woman! Restrain yourself and do not shout. It is unholy to boast over slain men. These fellows have been subdued by the gods because of their foolish deeds."

He then bade her bring forth all the handmaidens who had

consorted with the wooers, and these he made to cleanse the hall. Thereafter they were hanged.

Thereafter Odysseus made himself known to Penelope. At first she did not recognize her husband, but when she was convinced that the stranger was Odysseus, and no other, she shed tears and embraced him tenderly, and kissed him, saying: "Be not angry with me if I have not welcomed you at sight. My heart has ever dreaded that I might be deceived by words. But now I am persuaded that you are indeed Odysseus."

Odysseus embraced his faithful and loving wife. Sweet it was to Penelope to behold her dear husband once again. It seemed as if she could never again withdraw her white arms that were twined round his neck.

The souls of the slain wooers had meanwhile flitted, gibbering like bats in a cave, over the ocean, and over the white rock and past the gates of the sun, and past the country of dreams, until they reached, at length, the meadow of Asphodel in the land of Hades. They gathered round the phantoms of Achilles and Agamemnon, who were lamenting their own fates, and related to them all that had taken place. Then Agamemnon spoke of Penelope and praised her, saying: "How excellent is the mind of constant Penelope! The fame of her virtue shall never perish. The immortals will make for those who live on earth a beautiful song regarding her. Ah, how different to her was Clytæmnestra, who plotted to slay her husband! Of her a hateful song will be sung, for she has put all women, even the most virtuous, in ill repute."

On the morning after the wooers were slain, Odysseus, accompanied by his son Telemachus and the swineherd, visited Laertes and made himself known to him. Laertes embraced his dear son, and rejoiced that the wooers had been punished for their insolence and folly.

Then word came to Odysseus that the friends of the wooers, having discovered what had taken place, were arming themselves and were coming against him. The aged Laertes at once roused himself and put on his armour. He marched forth to meet the rebels, with his servant Dolius and the six sons of Dolius, and Odysseus, Telemachus, and the swine-

herd. The gallant band was joined by Athene in the guise of Mentor.

Odysseus spoke to his son, saying: "See that you do not bring shame to your father's house." And Telemachus answered: "You shall see that no dishonour will be brought to our family by me."

Laertes rejoiced to hear them, and spoke thus: "Oh, what a day this is, my dear friends! My son and my son's son are become rivals in valour."

The rebels were attacked fiercely by Odysseus and Telemachus, and ere long they threw down their arms and would have fled; but Athene, in the guise of Mentor, intervened, so that the bloodshed might come to an end. She spoke to Odysseus, saying: "O noble son of Laertes, refrain from further fighting, lest Zeus be angry with you."

Odysseus heard and obeyed her. Indeed, her words were pleasing to his heart.

Thereafter Athene, daughter of Zeus, arranged a peace between Odysseus and the people, and made both sides swear oaths and offer up a sacrifice. Like unto Mentor she appeared, and she spoke in the voice of Mentor.

Here ends the *Odyssey*.

VIRGIL'S ÆNEID

Introductory: Virgil and his Age

Of "the blind bard of Chios" it may have been declared:

> Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread[1];

and, in our own day, his very existence may be called in question; but no towns have had to wage war over Virgil, nor can it be suggested that he was a mythical personage. Indeed, the author of the *Æneid* seems so near and so familiar to us, especially when we think of the author of the Gilgamesh epic, who lived and sang some two thousand years before Rome was, that one feels he can almost be classed among modern poets. The "ancient classics" survive really from the dawn of the Modern Age, when "the glory that was Greece" rose out of darkness, comparatively brief, but thick as night. We now know that great men walked the world many long centuries ere fell the Troy of which Homer sang,

> Abode their destined hour and went their way,

and that renowned poets of the early civilizations "pondered the mysteries" and

> died content on pleasant sward
> Leaving great verse unto a little clan.

Yet to us life in ancient Egypt and Babylonia seems bizarre, even although we may sometimes hear snatches of song that

[1] Or, as Thomas Heywood rendered it in his *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells*:

> Seven cities warred for Homer being dead,
> Who living had no roofe to shrowd his head.

ring to Eternity, as in the Egyptian "Lay of the Harper", which brings thoughts of death into the minds of those who feast and make merry, and bids them follow their desires

> Until that sad day
> Of lamentation comes, when hearts at rest
> Hear not the cries of mourners at the tomb,
> Which have no meaning to the silent dead. . . .
> Then celebrate this festal time, nor pause—
> For no man takes his riches to the grave;
> Yea, none returns again when he goes hence.[1]

Virgil, on the other hand, lived under conditions in which we detect the touch of modernity. In his country home he knew that, beyond the quiet hills, many men lived strenuous and care-burdened lives in busy cities, with their factories and shipyards, and shops and counting-houses, and that legislators and administrators and others were

> Engulfed in courts, committees, institutions,
> Associations, and societies.

The great city of Rome was a centre of world-power, a veritable London, with complex conditions of life. In the Odes of Horace we catch glimpses of the busy Roman as glad of an opportunity to holiday as are modern city folks:

> He might be hastening on his way—
> A lawyer freed from business—down
> To green Venafrum, or a town
> Of Sparta, for a holiday.[2]

We meet, too, with the wealthy trader, whom the poet pities and advises:

> Thy cloying wealth and honours proud,
> Thy palace rearing to the cloud,
> And all the sycophantic crowd,
> Leave for a time;
> Avoid the din, the smoky shroud
> Of Rome sublime.[3]

[1] *Egyptian Myth and Legend*, pp. 246–7. [2] Book III, 5. Calverley's translation.
[3] Book III, 29. Lambert's translation.

Horace shared Virgil's love of country life.

> Happy the man, in busy schemes unskilled,
> Who, living simply, like our sires of old,
> Tills the few acres which his fathers tilled
> Vexed by no thoughts of usury or gold.[1]

Publius Virgilius Maro, to give the poet his full name, was a native of northern Italy, and the claim has been urged that he had Celtic blood in his veins. He was born on 15th October, 70 B.C., in the village of Andes, usually identified with modern Pietole, not far from the ancient fortress town of Mantua, which, according to tradition, had been founded by the Etruscans before Rome was built. We know that his mother's name was Maia. It is believed that his father owned a small estate; he was, at any rate, a farmer. The farm-house in which the great poet first saw the light appears to have been as humble a dwelling as that tenanted on the outskirts of Ayr by the father of Robert Burns. Virgil, in his first Eclogue, makes reference to it as "my poor cot thatched with turf", and to the farm as "my kingdom, some ears of corn".

When the poet was about thirty his father suffered eviction. This harsh proceeding was a direct result of the battle of Philippi in 42 B.C. Mark Antony and Octavianus had achieved ascendancy, and the latter rewarded the soldiers, on their return home, with gifts of land at the expense of the families that had to be displaced. Virgil, in the Eclogue just quoted, asks, "Shall these my well-tilled fields be possessed by a soldier ruffian?" The farm and house were restored, after a brief interval, as the result of a personal appeal made by Virgil, which appears to have been supported by friends, including Caius Asinius Pollio, the distinguished soldier, administrator, and man of letters who founded the first public library in Rome.

Virgil received an excellent education. It is possible that his father perceived that his son was a boy of exceptional intelligence, because he sent him to study first at Cremona and afterwards at Milan. That the poet fulfilled expectations is suggested by the fact that he completed his education at Rome,

[1] Book III, Epode 2. Martin's translation.

where, having taken a course in Rhetoric, he studied Philosophy under Siron the Epicurean. Then he returned home, and for about ten years lived the secluded life of a poet-scholar. We gather from his poems that he preferred the country to the town, and that he took a great interest in farming, loved flowers, and interested himself in the cultivation of the vine, in grafting pear trees, and in training plum trees, and that he was attracted by the tales about fairy nymphs and dancing satyrs that haunted deep forests and lonely retreats among the mountains. We can imagine him deep in his Homer on winter nights beside the fire, and under shady trees on the river-side in summer. Homer's influence permeates the *Æneid*, and the poet has himself sung of sylvan retreats: "In woods have dwelt the gods themselves and also Trojan Paris. . . . Let woods delight us above all things." No doubt he wrote more poetry than has survived to us. He had wooed the Muses from his early years. "I remember", he confesses in a pastoral, "that in boyhood I devoted myself to song during the long summer days; these songs are now forgotten by me." He began to produce his best work between twenty-eight and thirty-three, which is the period of his Eclogues. These pastorals reflect his love of woodlands and pleasant fields, and have an autobiographical interest.

A frail constitution prevented Virgil taking an active part in outdoor life. No doubt enforced leisure tended to make him devote much time to the congenial exercise of perfecting his poetic technique. Like Tennyson he was an exacting critic of his own work, and like him, too, he reached a high level of artistic excellence. He must have been a slow methodical worker, who revised a great deal; his poetry suggests as much. We never meet with "the first fine careless rapture" of a Shelley or a Browning, or with the sheer daring of an unconventional Keats. Despite the dignity, strength, and finish of his work, Virgil lacked the originality and creative power of a Homer or a Shakespeare. The *Æneid*, in parts, not only imitates the mannerisms of Homer but even adapts Homeric incidents. One must allow, however, in this connection, with so accomplished a critic as Walter Savage Landor, that "neither

in the spirited and energetic Catullus, nor in the masculine and scornful and stern Lucretius, no, nor in Homer, is there anything so impassioned, and therefore so sublime, as the last hour of Dido in the *Æneid*".

The eviction from the farm of his father and family, who for a time became the guests of Siron the Epicurean, brought Virgil to Rome. He was already known there as the brilliant author of the Eclogues and Georgics, which accorded with accepted standards of literary taste, and betrayed the influence of Theocritus, Hesiod, and others. The critics and patrons of literature welcomed him, recognizing, as they did, that his poems were distinguished by exquisite artistry. They found themselves charmed with the poet's personality. Virgil was a handsome man of refined and unaffected manners, a sincere and gentle friend, and apparently devoid of that pettiness of mind which has so often made "poet hate poet and potter potter". A warm friendship ultimately sprung up between him and Horace, who was also of yeoman stock. In his dissolute age Virgil lived a pure and upright life. The reputation he deservedly won during his lifetime had a commercial value, for he left a comfortable fortune.

Virgil does not appear to have cared for Rome, and no doubt, as his fame increased, he was glad to shun it because of its distracting social engagements as well as its din and smoke. When not at the farm, he appears to have resided at Naples, or near Nola in Campania.

In 20 B.C. the twelve books of the *Æneid* had been composed, and he set out on a holiday tour for Greece and Asia Minor. At Athens he met Augustus, then on his way back from the East, and was prevailed upon by him to return to Italy. It may be that the poet's health was at the time showing signs of breaking down. At Megara, in northern Greece, he contracted a serious illness after spending the greater part of the day out-of-doors in burning sunshine. He, however, continued his journey. Fatal symptoms became evident at sea, and soon after reaching Brundusium (Brindisi), in southern Italy, he died on 2nd September, 19 B.C., a few weeks before he had completed his fifty-first year. His body was conveyed

to Naples and buried there, and for long afterwards his tomb was revered. Mediæval Christian scholars regarded him as a prophet who had foretold the birth of Christ, because in the fourth Eclogue he sang of a New Age, which would be ushered in by an infant boy when the Virgin Astræa (the Virgo of the astronomers) would return again to the earth and "the serpent would die".

Virgil is more pronouncedly pro-Trojan than Homer is pro-Achæan. To him the Greeks, as a whole, are treacherous and deceitful, Achilles is hateful and pitiless, Neoptolemus a blood-thirsty avenger, and Ulysses (Odysseus) as crafty as he is cruel. In Hades the shades of the Achæans tremble and scream at sight of Æneas, although they did not dread him in the *Iliad*.

Of course Æneas's story of the sack of Troy and of his subsequent wanderings, as related in the second book of the *Æneid*, would have been undramatic had it not been tinged with bitterness, yet one cannot help feeling that if Homer had been the author, the chivalrous note would not have been so conspicuously awanting in this part. Although the elder poet dearly loved his Achæans, he has given us a noble Hector; a sublime Priam, too, confronts Achilles when he is exulting over the barbarous degradation of Hector, and that aged and helpless king becomes the hero of the scene, not only on account of his fearlessness and his love for his son, but because he arouses the better nature of Achilles and makes us forgive him much. It is otherwise with Virgil's Æneas when he resolves to desert Dido. His frigid meanness is unrelieved in the parting scene; the reader's sympathies are wholly with the wronged queen, whether or not the poet so intended. Virgil cannot defend his Æneas, except in so far as he makes him a puppet of Destiny, although the Trojan warrior is not the villain but the hero of the epic—the man who is to lay the basis of Roman greatness. Homer could exalt, even in his villainy, a human Agamemnon, as Shakespeare could a Macbeth; both characters are courageous enough—one to confess his fault and make amends, the other to defy his destiny. But Virgil did not possess the dramatic genius of a Homer or a Shakespeare. Either would have made Æneas courageous and convinced us of his love for Dido; they

would hardly have allowed us to despise the hero and regard him as a heartless deceiver who sneaked out of Carthage.

The best books in the *Æneid* are: the second, which relates the fall of Troy, the fourth, in which Dido is the heroine, and the sixth, in which Æneas visits Hades. Virgil appears to have shared this belief himself, for these were the portions of his epic he read to Augustus. The high level of excellence achieved in these and other books is not maintained throughout; there is a distinct falling off in the last three, but this may have been due to the state of the poet's health. He intended to revise the epic during his tour in Greece and Asia Minor. It is told that when he was in the throes of his fatal illness poor Virgil cried out feverishly for the cases containing the manuscript, and expressed the wish to have it burned. The blemishes of the *Æneid* preyed upon the mind of Rome's supreme poetic artist. Still, despite its shortcomings, the epic is a great work of genius and a worthy monument not only of a sincere artist and an upright man, but also of "the grandeur that was Rome".

Æneid

Arms and the man I sing . . . the man who first—
To exile doomed—came from the coast of Troy
To Italy and the Lavinian shore:
Much was he tossed on ocean and on land
By will of those on high, because that he
Had roused fierce Juno's unrelenting wrath:
Much too he suffered on the fields of war
Till he a city founded and had brought
His gods to Latium—whence the Latin race,
The Alban fathers and the walls of Rome.

To me, O Muse, the causes now reveal,
The goddess being offended, which provoked
That mighty Queen of Heaven; for she drove
This man supremely pious to contend
With great calamities and to endure
Unnumbered hardships dire. . . . Ah! can there be
Such vengeful passions in Celestial minds?

I. Æneas reaches Carthage

O blessèd tempests that did drive him in!
O happy sand that made him run aground!
Marlowe's *Dido.*

Now there was an ancient city, namely Carthage, peopled by colonists from Tyre, fronting Italy and the Tiber mouth, yet far remote. It had vast wealth, and was powerful in war. This city did Juno honour above all other places of her residence except Samos; her arms were there, likewise her chariot, and 'tis said she planned to make it the capital of a world-wide empire, if so the Fates would permit. But she came to know there would arise a race of Trojan origin that would one day cast down the Tyrian towers, and that this people, peerless in

war, would wield great power far and wide and devastate Libya, for so the Destinies had ordained. Juno dreaded the rise of the new Power. She remembered the war of Troy, in which she had given aid to her beloved Argos.[1] Nor had she forgotten the causes of her wrath and resentment—the affronting judgment of Paris, who had ignored her beauty, and the honour conferred upon Ganymedes.[2] Angered by these wrongs, she tossed on every sea the Trojans who had escaped from the Greeks and pitiless Achilles. Far from Latium she drove them, and for many years they wandered hither and thither on the wide ocean. Great indeed was the task of founding the Roman State.

When the Trojans had passed beyond Sicily, their ship prows ploughing the foaming waves, Juno hastened to Æolia, the island of Æolus, King of the Winds, and bade him send a tempest against the hated men who were sailing on the Tuscan Sea. Obedient to her command, that god smote with his spear the side of the hollow mountain in which the winds are fettered; immediately a fierce hurricane swept forth and raised great billows on the ocean; the sky darkened, thunder bellowed, and frequent flashes of lightning stabbed the gloom.

Æneas grew weak with cold, shuddering terror. Stretching his hands towards heaven, he moaned: "Happy they who died before their parents' eyes beneath the high walls of Troy! O Diomedes, son of Tydeus, bravest of the Greeks, why was not I fated to fall by your right hand upon the plain of Troy where fell stern Hector by Achilles's sword, where Sarpedon fell, and where the Simois scatters the shields and helmets and bodies of many warriors engulphed by its waters?"

As he thus made moan, the bellowing north wind smote the sail, cast high the billows, and shattered the oars; the ship swung round, and a mountain of water fell on the deck. Three ships ran on the rocks called Altars,[3] and three were driven on

[1] Agamemnon was King of Argos and Mycenæ.

[2] The son of Laomedon, grandfather of Priam of Troy, who was the most beautiful of mortals. Zeus carried him to Olympus, and caused him to supersede Hebe, daughter of Hera (Juno), as cup-bearer to the gods. The Romans called the boy Catamitus. The astronomers placed him among the stars as Aquarius.

[3] The Ægates, three little islands near Carthage.

sandy shoals. The vessel that bore Orontes and his Lycian crew was swamped before the eyes of Æneas, and he afterwards saw men clinging to wreckage amidst the waves. Disabled were the vessels that bore Ilioneus, the brave Achates, Abas, and aged Alethes; planks were loosened, and through the gaping joints poured in hostile brine.

Meanwhile Neptune (Poseidon), perceiving the storm-stricken deep and the scattered fleet of Æneas, arose and bade the winds return to the island of Æolus. "The sea", that god declared, "is my empire; let Æolus reign in his mountain dominion." Having spoken thus, Neptune raised his trident and stilled the waves, and then drove his chariot over the smoothed surface of the sea.

Thereafter the wearied Trojans made for the nearest shore, which was Libya, and found refuge in a bay that a jutting island forms into a harbour of safety. Hither Æneas brought seven ships, all that were left of his fleet, and the Trojans, who were wearying for dry land, went ashore, and stretched their brine-drenched limbs on the beach. There Achates struck sparks from a flint, and lit a fire of dead leaves, while the men, having brought wetted corn from the ships, dried it over the fire, and ground it with stones.

Meanwhile Æneas, having gone inland to survey the land, slew seven stags, one for each ship's company; then he divided the wine that had been taken from Sicily. He bade his men eat and drink and be of good cheer, remembering the perils they had escaped. "To Latium we steer," said he, "for in Latium will arise once again the Trojan kingdom. Persevere, therefore, because prosperous days are in store for us all."

Meanwhile Jove (Zeus), as he surveyed from heaven the land and ocean, fixed his gaze upon Libya. To him spoke Venus (Aphrodite) in mournful mood, saying: "Of what sin can my Æneas or the Trojans be guilty that, after suffering many deaths, they should be kept back from Italy? You promised aforetime that they should be the ancestors of the Romans who will rule the sea. O Father, why have you changed your purpose? When will the sorrows of the Trojans have end?"

Said Jove: "Fear not! The destiny of your people will not be changed, for Æneas will yet build the city and the walls of Lavinium. In Italy he shall wage a three-years' war, and then reign in Latium."

Having spoken thus, Jove foretold the birth of Romulus and Remus, descendants of Hector, and of the building of Rome by Romulus, after whom the people would be named Romans, and of the age to come when Rome would conquer Greece; he also foretold of the coming of Julius Cæsar, a Trojan by descent, who would found a great empire. "Then", said the father god, "wars shall come to an end, for fierce nations will soften into peace."

Thereafter Jove sent Mercury (Hermes) to Libya, so that Dido, Queen of Carthage, might receive the Trojans in peace.

Meanwhile Venus, having assumed the form of a girl, appeared before Æneas and told him he had arrived in the city State of Carthage, a Tyrian colony, and that the country was Libya, the people of which were invincible in war. Queen Dido reigned in Carthage. She had fled from Tyre to escape the oppression of her wicked brother, King Pygmalion, who had slain her husband, Sichæus, a rich landowner.

Having counselled Æneas to seek the friendship of Dido, the goddess showed him the path that led to the city, and then winged her sublime way to Paphos, where there is a temple sacred to her, and where a hundred altars, fragrant with garlands, smoke with Sabean incense.

Accompanied by Achates, Æneas made his way to the city. Both were shrouded in a mist sent by Venus, so that no man beheld them. They entered the city and walked towards a sacred grove in the centre of it. In this grove Queen Dido had built a stately temple to Juno, which was adorned with the works of skilled artists. There Æneas beheld scenes of the Trojan war, and he spoke to Achates saying: "What country on earth is not full of our disaster? Look at Priam! Even in this land good deeds meet with due reward; here there are tears for our misfortunes, and hearts that pity our sorrows. Be not afraid; our fame will bring us friends."

While they surveyed these scenes of triumph and sorrow,

Queen Dido entered the grove, and Æneas, to his surprise, saw other Trojans, who, he thought, had been lost, approaching her and pleading for the hospitality of her shore. Then he knew that the ships that had been driven on shoals and rocks had been set afloat by Poseidon.

The queen received the Trojans as friends, and invited them to settle in Carthage, saying: "Would that your prince, Æneas, were here also!"

No sooner had she spoken thus than Æneas came forth in the likeness of a god, for Venus had restored to him the bloom of youth, and had shed lustre on his eyes. To the queen he spoke, saying: "O great queen, I of whom you speak am here before you—Trojan Æneas, rescued from the Libyan waves." Then he praised Dido, saying: "So long as rivers run to the sea, so long as shadows move round the mountains, and so long as heaven sustains the stars, your honour and name and fame will endure for me."

Queen Dido was astonished, for she had heard of the fame of Æneas, and graciously she welcomed him. She bade him and the other Trojans enter her palace, saying: "I who have met with misfortunes have learned to succour those who are in distress."

A great feast was prepared, and Æneas sent Achates to the ships to bring from them gifts for Dido. Now these gifts were a mantle figured with gold, ornaments of the Grecian Helen, a sceptre, a royal veil, a necklace of pearls, and a crown adorned with gold and gems, which had been saved from Troy. They were borne to the queen by Cupid in the shape of the boy Ascanius (Iülus), for Venus had designed that Dido should be smitten with love for Æneas. When, therefore, the queen received the treasure, she became unhappy with love.

After the feast had ended, and the long-haired minstrel Iopas had tuned his lyre and sung his lay, the queen asked Æneas to tell the story of his adventures and wanderings on land and sea.

Silence fell upon the hall, every eye was fixed upon Æneas, and all listened intently, as, seated in his high couch, he told his story.

II. The Sack of Troy

"Troy is a-fire, the Grecians have the town!"
"Kill, kill!" they cried. *Marlowe.*

O queen, you urge me to renew unspeakable woes, to tell how the Greeks shattered the power of Troy and its dominions, to tell of the scenes I witnessed, and of those in which I took part. Not even a Myrmidon or Dolopian, or one of stern Ulysses's band, can refrain from tears when this tale of sorrow is being told. . . . The soft night is falling, the sinking stars lure us to sleep; yet, as you ask me to relate our misfortunes and the last struggle of Troy, I must needs unfold what I know.

The leaders of the Greeks, baffled by the Fates, had grown disheartened of the long war, and, with the aid of Pallas, constructed a horse, big as a mountain, ribbed with planks of fir and maple, which they pretended was an offering to secure their safe return home—so the rumour spread. Inside this horse they concealed armed men, who were chosen by casting lots. Then, launching their ships, they sailed across the Helespont to the Island of Tenedos, and hid themselves on its desolate shore.

Believing they had set out for Mycenæ, and that Troy was at long last relieved of its sufferings, the city gates were thrown open, and the people issued forth with great joy. All of us hastened across the empty plain to the Grecian camp on the deserted shore. We noted all things. Here had been the Dolopian bands, there Achilles had pitched his tent; here had the beached ships lain, there the enemy had arrayed themselves in fierce conflict. Not a few gathered round the great horse, the reputed offering to Minerva (Athene), and wondered at its stupendous size. Some urged that it should be dragged to

Troy, and others that it should be set on fire or thrown into the sea, or split open and ransacked. Divided counsels prevailed.

Then came hastening from Troy Laocoon, son of Priam, a priest of Apollo, with many followers. Ere yet he reached the shore he called out: "O wretched countrymen, do not be deceived! Do you imagine the enemy has gone? Think you the Greeks can be free from treachery? Know you not Ulysses by repute? Either the enemy are concealed in this horse, or it is a contrivance to overtop our walls. Some wicked purpose lurks in it. Trojans, shun this thing. Whatever it be, trust not the Greeks even when they offer gifts."

Thus he spoke. Then he flung his spear at the horse; it stuck in its wooden side, and a hollow sound, like to a groan, was heard by all. Alas! but for the decrees of heaven, and our own folly, Laocoon would have had the horse cut to pieces, and Troy would be still a city and the high tower of Priam would not have been cast down.

Then came into our midst some Trojan shepherds, shouting excitedly. They dragged before King Priam a young Greek whose hands were tied behind his back. He was indeed a resolute youth, ready to carry out his design or to meet with a speedy death. The young Trojans gathered round the shepherds, vying one with the other in reviling the captive.

Now hear of the treachery of the Greeks! From the tricks of one of them learn what they all are.

As the captive youth stood there defenceless and confused, with all eyes fixed upon him, he moaned: "Ah me! what land, what sea can now receive me? What further extremity can I reach? There is no refuge for me among the Greeks, and the Trojans are thirsting for my blood."

Hearing his lament, we took pity on him. We asked him who he was, what he had to tell us of himself; we urged him to confide in us, being our prisoner.

Then the youth, addressing King Priam, pretended that he had been ill-used by the Greeks, and especially by Ulysses, who desired to have him offered up as a sacrifice to the gods. Having decided to evacuate the plain of Troy, disheartened by

the long war, the Greeks, he said, had sent Eurypylus, the soothsayer, to consult the oracle of Apollo, and he from the sacred shrine brought forth this message: "When you were about to come hither, O ye Greeks, you raised the winds by shedding a virgin's life-blood; by shedding the life-blood of a Greek you may purchase your safe return." Thereupon Ulysses, the dissembler, ordered Calchas to select a victim. "Then", said the youth, "he destined me to the altar. . . . When the day of my sorrow was at hand, however, I made escape and hid in a slimy marsh among the reeds, until the Greeks sailed away. Alas! I have no hope of returning to my native land or of again seeing my kith and kin, who will be made to suffer on my account. . . . Now, I pray you, have compassion upon me."

He shed tears, and we pitied him, and granted him his life. Then Priam asked this youth, whose name was Sinon, why the great horse had been constructed, and he declared it was an offering to Minerva (Athene), who had been offended because the Palladium had been carried away from Troy. Calchas had urged that the horse should be made of great bulk, so that it could not be dragged into Troy. Withal, the youth declared that if the Trojans mutilated the horse speedy ruin would strike the empire of Priam, but that if it were taken into the city, then Asia would be able to conquer Greece.

Alas! Sinon's story was believed. We who had resisted Achilles and Diomedes and a ten-years' war were ensnared by guile and hypocrisy.

Meanwhile Laocoon, beside whom stood his two young sons, was offering up a bullock in sacrifice to Neptune. As he was so engaged there came from Tenedos (I shudder to tell of it) two monstrous serpents with flaming eyes. Swiftly they crossed the deep, with breasts erect and heads dripping blood, their bodies moving in rolling spires. The serpents made a loud noise as they came. Their quivering tongues licked their hissing mouths.

Half dead with terror, we fled this way and that as the serpents darted up the beach towards Laocoon.

> First round his two young sons they wreathe,
> And grind their limbs with savage teeth:

Then as with arms he comes to aid,
The wretched father they invade
And twine in giant folds: twice round
His stalwart waist their spires are wound,
Twice round his neck, while over all
Their heads and crests tower high and tall.
He strains his strength their knots to tear,
While gore and slime his fillets smear,
And to the unregardful skies
Sends up his agonizing cries. *Conington.*

So perished Laocoon and his children, and the serpents took refuge in the temple of Pallas and hid themselves there.

A new terror at once seized upon the Trojans, who declared that Laocoon had been killed because he had violated the sacred horse by hurling against it his profane spear. They urged that the image should at once be taken to Troy. Then, without further delay, a breach was made in the walls, and, wheels having been fixed to the horse's hoofs, it was dragged into the city. Boys and virgins accompanied it, singing sacred hymns.

On that unhappy day all the city temples were adorned with festive boughs, and wine was drunk. When night came on the Trojans sought sweet repose.

In the friendly silence of hushed moonlight the Greek vessels crept out one by one from Tenedos, following the signal light of the royal galley.

Meanwhile Sinon, whom the gods had shielded from death, came forth, and set free the armed men who had lain concealed inside the wooden horse in Troy. Down a strong rope slid Thessandarus and Sthenelus, the chiefs, then dire Ulysses, then Athamas and Thoas, then Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, then Machaon, then Menelaus, and then Epeus, the contriver of the trick. These wily Greeks made assault on the city when it was muffled with sleep and wine. They slew the sentinels and opened the gates to admit other Greeks who had been lying in ambush not far away.

It was the hour when the first sleep envelops weary mortals. And as I slept, lo! Hector appeared before me in a dream, shedding tears. He was naked and begrimed with mud, as when after he had been dragged behind the chariot of Achilles,

and the thongs were in his swollen feet. Piteous indeed was his plight.

To me the shade of Hector spoke, saying: "Ah, flee, son of the goddess![1] Escape from the flames, for the enemy is within the walls of Troy. I have done my duty to Priam and my country. . . . Rescue the sacred things of Troy, take away her gods, and with your companions go forth in quest of a city, for you shall erect a larger one in good time after wandering on the deep."

I started from sleep to find the city in confusion. The din of battle mingled with the roaring of fire. . . . I snatched up my arms in frenzied haste, and rushed out. First, I met a priest carrying holy utensils, and he cried: "Our last hour has come—the hour of Troy's doom. We are Trojans no longer." I met several young warriors, and called to them: "Let us meet death fighting the foe. There is but one hope for the vanquished, and that is not to think of his own safety."

We fought together, against bands of the enemy, in many a skirmish. Some Greeks were sent howling to Hades, others fled to the ships, while some hid in the wooden horse; but at length we were overpowered by numbers. . . . The enemy attacked Priam's palace. We helped to defend it, and made havoc among the enemy, but Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, led on a determined band. He exulted at the gate, clad in shining bronze. As when a snake, having slept all winter under the earth, comes forth renewed and sleek with youth, and, rolling up its slippery body, rears its head and shows its forked tongue in the sunshine, so seemed Neoptolemus. He smote the palace gate with his battle-axe, and hewed it down. Then he rushed inside with all his father's fury, and the rooms resounded with the cries of women. . . . Priam awaited his fate, clad in armour. Polites, son of the aged king, had been wounded, and the son of Achilles followed him into the inner chamber and killed him before the eyes of Priam, who cried out: "You have made me witness my own son's death, and thus defiled a father's eyes. Achilles was not so barbarous to Priam. He paid some respect to the laws of nations, and gave back to me

[1] Venus (Aphrodite), mother of Æneas.

my Hector's corpse to be buried, and he allowed me to return to my kingdom."

Said Neoptolemus: "Make your complaint to my sire; do not forget to tell him of the deeds of his wicked son. Die too!"

Thus did the son of Achilles speak as he slew old Priam. . . . I then thought of my own father, having found that my troops had vanished, and that I was alone. I made hurried retreat. As I passed the temple of Vesta I saw Helen hiding in a corner. At first I thought to avenge my country by slaying her, but my divine mother, Venus, appeared before me and urged me to save my sire, Anchises. To him I hastened. For a time he refused to depart: he wished to die among the ruins of Troy, and I said: "I cannot leave you behind. I shall return to the battle, and fall." My wife Creüsa then brought out my little son Iülus (Ascanius), and for his sake my sire consented to flee. I took the old man on my back, and my child in my right hand, while my wife followed behind. We made our way to the deserted temple of Ceres outside the city with other refugees, but when we reached this spot by different ways, I found that my wife was not with us. I hastened back to look for her. Through the streets of the city possessed by fire and the enemy, I searched for Creüsa, shouting aloud her name in my anguish. . . . Suddenly her ghost appeared before me; her figure was taller than in life. I started back; my hair bristled; my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. She addressed me tenderly, saying: "My darling husband, it has not been decreed that you should take me with you. . . . Over wide seas must you roam. . . . You will go to the land of Hesperia, where a crown awaits you, and also a royal spouse. . . . Farewell, and ever love our son!"

I returned to my father, and found many refugees gathered about him. Mothers, men, and youths wished to share my exile and follow me whither I should lead them. And now the morning star had risen. We had no hope of succour, and together we all went towards Mount Ida, I carrying my ancient father on my back.

Æneas then told of his wanderings. Troy had been burned,

and the remnant of the Trojans decided to follow him to a distant land. First, they sailed for Thrace. There they discovered what had befallen Priam's son, Polydore. The youth had been placed in the keeping of the Thracian king, who murdered him so as to possess himself of Trojan gold. "Oh, the cursed thirst of gold," lamented Æneas, "to what evil will it not drive the sons of men!"

The Trojans departed speedily from that evil land. Said aged Anchises: "Let us go to Crete, for there is Mount Ida,[1] the cradle of our race. It has a hundred cities and fertile land. From Crete came our mighty ancestor, Teucrus[2]."

It was rumoured that King Idomeneus had been banished, that the Cretan shore was deserted, that the dwellings of Crete were free of the enemy, and that its palaces were uninhabited.[3] The seamen said one to another: "Let us speed our course to Crete, the land of our ancestors".

Æneas and his followers reached the island and settled there, but a wasting plague broke out when the "dog-star" had burned up the barren fields. Anchises consulted the oracle, and said they must depart to Hesperia.[4]

The Trojans set forth again to cross the deep. They sailed amidst the Ionian islands but shunned Ithaca, the accursed land that had bred Ulysses. Then they cruised along the coast of Epirus, and landed at Buthrotus (Butrinto, opposite Corfu). Here Helenus, son of Priam, was king, and had Andromache, widow of Hector, as his queen, for he had succeeded to part of the kingdom of Neoptolemus, who had been slain by Orestes, son of Agamemnon, because both loved Hermione, daughter of Menelaus and Helen.[5]

Æneas was welcomed by Helenus and Andromache. He was shown the model of Troy that had been erected near a streamlet which was called the Simois. In a grove before

[1] There are two Idas—one in Crete and one in the Troad.

[2] The father-in-law of Dardanus, grandfather of Ilus, who built Troy after Hercules destroyed it.

[3] No doubt this is a memory of the sack of the Cretan palace of Knossos.

[4] Italy. At a later period it became the name of Spain.

[5] Hermione had been promised to Orestes, but was given to Neoptolemus. Orestes assassinated the son of Achilles to obtain her.

"Little Troy" was an empty tomb of green turf consecrated to Hector, at which Andromache regularly made offerings, lamenting for her husband.

The Trojans were feasted at Buthrotus, and thereafter set out for Italy. In time, having endured many perils, they reached Drepanum, in Sicily, where old Anchises died. It was after leaving Drepanum, with desire to reach Italy, that the Trojan fleet was caught in Juno's storm and driven to the coast of Carthage.

Thus ended the story of adventures and hardships told by Æneas in the presence of Dido, Queen of Carthage.

III. The Love and Doom of Dido

Dido. I 'll make me bracelets of his golden hair;
His glittering eyes shall be my looking-glass;
His lips an altar, where I 'll offer up
As many kisses as the sea hath sands;
Instead of music I will hear him speak;
His looks shall be my only library;
And thou Æneas, Dido's treasury,
In whose fair bosom I will lock more wealth
Than twenty thousand Indias can afford.
. . . . . .
It is Æneas' frown that ends my days.
If he forsake me not, I never die. . . .

Marlowe's *Dido.*

In such a night
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage. *Shakespeare.*

Queen Dido, pierced by the arrow of love, fed the wound with her life-blood. For she pined in secret, thinking of that hero Æneas, who did honour to his race. His face haunted her, his words re-echoed in her heart, and she slept not during the long night.

When morning came she spoke to her sister, saying: "Oh, Anna, I am distracted, I am made afraid by my dreams! . . . What think you of our noble guest? Oh, what a face, and what a bearing, and what mighty strength! Methinks a god's blood flows in his veins. . . . Ah! had I not vowed over the ashes of my husband never again to marry, mayhap I should have given way. . . . Dear Anna, frankly I confess to you that, since my husband died, no man save this Æneas has snared my heart and warped my mind. . . . But, oh! let him who loved me—he who perished—still possess my soul."

Gently did Anna chide her sister, the queen. To her she

spoke of the perils that surrounded the kingdom—of Iarbas, the Libyan king, and his unwelcome love for her, of other chieftains of Africa, of the powerful Gaetulians, the Numidians, and the inhospitable Syrtis, their warlike neighbours, and of the Barce, the barbarians of the desert. Ever from Tyre, too, war was threatened by their menacing brother, the king. "It was under the auspices of the gods," said Anna, "and by the favour of Juno, that the vessels of Ilion (Troy) have been sent hither. What a city and what an empire will ours be, my sister, if you wed Æneas! The glory of Carthage will, indeed, wax great when strengthened by the arms of the Teucrians (Trojans). Pray to the gods and obtain their favour. Continue your hospitality and delay your guests while the winter storms rage on the sea and the ships of Æneas remain battered as they be."

Thus did Anna fan the flame of love in Dido's heart.

To the temples the two sisters went; they made offerings in them, but the chief offering was to Juno, who has care of wedding bonds. Dido in all her beauty poured libations from the golden cup. . . . But what can prayers and temples do for the frenzy of love? All the time a flame fluttered within her; in her breast was a hidden wound. . . .

From her devotions Dido went all through the city, like to a doe wounded from a distance, till she found Æneas. She led the Trojan to her forts, and him she showed all her treasure. Oft, as she conversed with him, she stopped abruptly in the midst of sentences.

When day began to fade she led Æneas to the banquet, and once more she made him tell of his adventures and hardships. . . . After he had departed, she sat alone—although the moon had set and the stars lured mortals to sleep—mourning in the empty hall. Æneas was far away, yet she still heard his voice, she herself being far away.

Juno, perceiving that Dido was a-flame with love, spoke to Venus, saying: "We two shall rule Carthage. Let Dido wed a Phrygian husband."

Venus knew it was the wish of Juno to transfer the seat of empire from Italy to Libya, but answered softly: "Who can be so foolish as to reject your offer, and prefer to live at enmity

with you? But the Fates puzzle me. I know not whether it be Jupiter's[1] will that the Tyrians and Trojans should dwell together, or have separate kingdoms."

Then Juno told that on the morrow, when Æneas and Dido would join the hunt, she would send a sudden storm that would compel them to seek shelter in a cave. There would they pledge their love, and be united in marriage.

Venus nodded assent, and smiled at the trick she had discovered.

In the morning the queen went forth to hunt, wearing a purple robe, clasped with a golden buckle; her tresses were entwined with gold, and she had a golden quiver. Her fiery steed was richly decked with purple and gold, and princes waited on her.

Æneas resembled Apollo in his majesty; graceful and comely was he.

The company went to the hills, and there slew wild goats. Young Ascanius, son of Æneas, was in high joy. Mounted on a noble steed, he scampered hither and thither on the plain. He longed to see a wild boar, or yet a tawny lion, coming down from the hills.

While the hunt was in progress the sky grew dark. A storm-cloud swept overhead; the thunder rolled, the lightning flashed, and rain fell in torrents. Dido and Æneas sought shelter in a cave, and there pledged their secret love. Dido called it marriage; that name she wove over her fault to screen it.

Thereafter the cities of Libya rang with tales of Æneas, the Trojan prince, whom Dido had made her husband. It was told that the couple lived in luxury and idleness during the winter season, thinking of naught but their love, and unmindful of their kingdoms. King Iarbas was wroth. He appealed to Jupiter-Ammon,[2] saying: "Look down on Dido and Æneas as they feast on gorgeous couches and pour out wine. A wandering woman, to whom I gave land for her small city, has rejected me and taken Æneas for her lord. This second Paris, with his remnant of followers, his Mæonian (Lydian) cap, and his

[1] Jupiter = Zeus—pater. [2] Jupiter identified with the Egyptian god Amon or Amen.

perfumed locks, enjoys the prize, having won Dido, while I give offerings in your temples and keep alive the empty glory of being your son."

Thus he prayed, clutching the altar, and Jove heard him. The god looked towards Carthage, and saw the lovers. Then he bade Mercury (Hermes) to hasten to Æneas and address him, saying: "Not for this did your mother rescue you twice from the swords of the Greeks, but so that you might rule in Italy, where a new empire will arise, fierce in war, and worthy of Trojan renown—an empire which will bring the whole world under its sway. . . .

So spake Jupiter, and, as Mercury prepared to depart, the god said of Æneas: "Bid him set sail. Such is my command. I say no more."

Æneas was planning to build more houses at Carthage, and walked abroad, wearing a mantle of royal purple that Dido had gifted to him, when Mercury appeared before him in broad daylight, and repeated to him the command of Jupiter. The Trojan shuddered, his hair stood on end, his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. Immediately he longed to take flight from that pleasant land, so greatly did he dread the warning of Jupiter. Yet he hesitated for a time, thinking of Dido. In the end, however, he called Mnestheus and Sergestus and valiant Serestus, and bade them to get the fleet ready, and make secret preparations for flight, giving forth other reasons for busying themselves with the ships, while he himself would strive to inform the queen, and, at the right moment, obtain her consent. His captains obeyed him willingly, and hastened to carry out his orders.

But who can deceive a lover? Queen Dido suspected treachery from the first. She became frantic when she realized that the ships were about to sail away, and roamed through the city like to one who is insane, until she found Æneas, whom she addressed, saying: "Ha! did you hope, perfidious man, to be able to hide your wicked intention from me, and to steal away in secret from my kingdom? Can our love not compel you to remain? Can our plighted word not bind you? Does it matter not if it should be my doom to die a cruel death? Nay,

you get ready your fleet in the midst of winter to sail over a stormy sea. Oh, stony-hearted man! . . . Oh! would you desert me? If ever I have deserved your thanks, if ever you have looked on me with admiration, take pity now, I implore you, on my doomed house! If it is not too late to appeal to you, oh, change your purpose, Æneas!

> Hast thou forgot how many neighbour kings
> Were up in arms, for making thee my love?
> How Carthage did rebel, Iarbas storm,
> And all the world called me a second Helen.[1]

To whom do you leave me, my guest? . . . Why do I still live? Is it to wait for my brother to sack the city, or for Iarbas to carry me into captivity?"

So wailed Dido. Æneas remained silent for a time, thinking of Jove's command. Then he said: "Ever will I remember you with joy. . . . The Fates decree that I should go to Italy. . . . If you, a Phœnician, love Carthage, why do you deny the Trojans the right to settle in Hesperia? To me came the messenger of the gods, commanding me to sail. Oh! cease to afflict yourself and me with your reproaches; to Italy I must go, although not by choice."

Dido listened, now with averted eyes and now looking him up and down. Then her pent-up wrath broke forth as she spoke, saying:

> Thy mother was no goddess, perjur'd man,
> Nor Dardanus the author of thy stock;
> But thou art sprung from Scythian Caucasus,
> And tigers of Hyrcania gave thee suck,—
> Ah, foolish Dido, to forbear this long!—
> Wast thou not wreck'd upon this Libyan shore,
> And cam'st to Dido like a fisher swain? . . .
> O serpent, that came creeping from the shore,
> And I for pity harboured in my bosom,
> Wilt thou now slay me with thy venom'd sting,
> And hiss at Dido for preserving thee?
> Go, go, and spare not; seek out Italy:
> I hope that that which love forbids me do,
> The rocks and sea-gulfs will perform at large,
> And thou shalt perish in the billows' ways.[1]

[1] Marlowe.

"I shall hear of your ruin when I am among the dead," Dido cried, as she hastened abruptly from him. Her maids carried her fainting to her bedroom. Meanwhile Æneas, his mind weighed down by heavy love, went away to obey Jove's command.

Like to ants that, mindful of winter, plunder a store of wheat to hoard it in their nest, so did the sailors ply their work busily, carrying their booty across the meadow by a narrow path, some carrying sacks of grain on their shoulders, and others directing operations and urging on stragglers. All the path glowed with work.

Dido kept watch on her high tower; she saw the bustling workers and heard the clamour of voices. Oh, tyrannical love, how you sway the mind of mortals! The queen wept; she wanted to plead with Æneas, and be the slave of love, so that she might not rashly end her days without making one last effort. She asked her sister Anna to visit Æneas, in the hope that he would listen to her entreaties; but the Trojan refused to change his mind. No sorrowful words could move him, nor would he hear her patiently. The Fates stood in his way; Heaven had made him deaf to wailing. Like a sturdy old oak that remains firmly rooted, although the north wind strips off its leaves, so did Æneas remain steadfast against stormy pleadings, and Anna's tears were shed in vain.

Then was Dido heart-stricken with despair, and she longed for death; weary was she of the sight of the sweet heaven. . . . When night fell, her dreams were haunted by stern Æneas; now he chased her, and anon she found herself alone on a long and weary journey searching for her people in the desert.

In the morning she resolved to take vengeance and die. Pretending to Anna that she was to perform a magic ceremony, she commanded that a great pyre should be built, so that she might burn the garments and weapons that Æneas had left behind.[1] Little did Anna dream that the preparations for this strange rite were intended to conceal her sister's death. She

[1] By injuring the clothing of an individual, it was believed that the individual would suffer injury. This appears to be the meaning of the magical ceremony. In Egypt wax images were made and cast into a fire.

could not see through the cunning of such madness, and did not dread anything worse than what took place when Sichæus (Dido's first husband) perished, and so she had the preparations made.

The day passed and night came on, and with it sleep for beasts and birds; weary mortals forgot their cares in sweet rest. But Dido slept not; all night long she was tortured with doubts and fears. Now she desired to live, although she would have to become the bride of a Libyan chief; now she wished to follow Æneas, even although she had to desert her people; anon she was firmly resolved to die, and lamented that she had not kept the vow she had made over her husband's ashes never to love another. Heart-broken she wept and reproached herself.

Æneas slept that night on board his ship, and in a dream Hermes once more appeared before him to warn him that Dido plotted his death. "Flee," the god urged, "while it is in your power to flee. . . . Beware when you see the shore lit up with flames. . . . Hasten quickly; break off delay! A woman is ever a fickle and changeable being."

Æneas awoke with a start. Terrified by the vision, he repeated the god's warning to his men. Then he ordered the sails to be shaken out and had the cables cut. The rowers got out the oars, and the ships swept speedily seaward.

At dawn Dido looked forth from her tower and saw the fleet under sail. She smote her breast and tore her golden hair, crying: "O God! will he go? Will this stranger make a mock of my realm? Will my warriors not arm themselves and follow in pursuit? Will they not wrench my ships from the docks, unfurl the sails, and ply the oars? . . . Ah! what am I saying? Oh! where am I? My brain is awhirl with madness. . . . Oh, unhappy Dido, are you now tortured with remorse because of your sins? They should have tortured you aforetime, when you gave Æneas your crown. . . . Is this the man of honour and faith who carried away his country's gods and took his aged father on his back? I could have torn him to pieces and cast him to the waves. Him and his friends I could have put to the sword. . . . I could have had fire-brands flung on his camp and on his ships, and burned him and his

THE DEATH OF DIDO

son and all his people, and then flung myself amidst the flames. . . . If this unjust man will reach the port he seeks, may he never enjoy his crown or the life he longs for! May he die before his time, and lie unburied in a lonely place! Such is my prayer; may my Tyrians hate and persecute the Trojan people for all time to come! May an avenger rise from my ashes and punish the Trojans with fire and sword! . . . I curse them so that their shores and ours, their waves and ours, and their arms and ours may ever be opposed; may they and their sons and their sons' sons ever be in the throes of war!"

Queen Dido then called her nurse and bade her summon Anna, for she wished, as she said, to perform the rites and put an end to her sorrow.

When the old woman went away, Dido hastened to the pyre on which lay her nuptial bed and the garments and weapons of Æneas. She cast herself on the bed and moaned, saying: "Ye relics once dear to me, while the gods and the Fates permit, receive my life-blood and free me from my grief. I have lived my life. I have finished the course prepared for me by Fortune. Now my royal shade must pass to the world beneath. . . . I have built a glorious city and seen the walls finished. I have avenged my husband and have punished an unnatural brother. . . . Ah, happy, happy beyond belief, would I have been had the Trojan ships never touched my shores!" So she spoke; and then, having kissed the bed, she cried out: "Shall I die, nor be avenged? . . . But let me die! . . . Thus with joy I shall pass to the shades below. . . . Let the heartless Trojan at sea have his eyes filled with the flames; let him carry away with him the omens of my death."

And even while she spoke her attendants beheld her falling on the sword, the weapon stained with blood, and her hands red with it.

Shrieks arose and reached the palace. Rumour ran wild through the city. Women smote their breasts and wailed. Cries of sorrow and distress went up to heaven. It was as if Carthage had been invaded by the foe and its towers were wrapped suddenly in flames.

Anna heard and rushed forth. She pressed through the

crowd and called out the name of the queen. "Oh, sister, was this your secret?" she moaned. "And so you plotted but to deceive me. . . . Why did you abandon me? Was I not worthy to be your companion in death? . . . O my sister, you have brought ruin on yourself and me, on your nobles, and on your city. . . ."

Anna bathed the wound with water. She stooped to find if Dido still breathed. She embraced her dying sister. Dido strove to raise her eyes towards Anna, but they sank down again. Thrice she strove to raise herself on her elbow; thrice she fell back on the bed. Her swimming eyes were turned towards the light of heaven, and when she saw it she groaned.

Juno, looking down, took pity on Dido, and sent Iris to release her soul. . . . Then the warmth left her body, and her life passed into the air. . . .

Far out at sea the fleet of Æneas ran before the wind. Looking back, the Trojan leader saw the flames rising from Dido's pyre, and he wondered greatly, not knowing what the blaze signified. The minds of the sailors were greatly troubled; having knowledge of what frenzied women can do, their hearts were filled with dismal forebodings.[1]

[1] They probably feared that a magical ceremony was being performed with intent to do them injury.

IV. Æneas visits Hades

A great storm drove the fleet of Æneas to Drepanum in Sicily, and there, on the anniversary of the death of Anchises, funeral games were held. Thereafter a course was steered for Italy. Venus entreated Neptune, on behalf of her beloved Trojans, to allow them to reach Laurentian Tiber, and the King of Ocean answered: "It is but meet that you should confide in me, having been born in my realms."[1] The god promised to protect Æneas as he had done aforetime. A favourable wind wafted the fleet over pleasant seas; but one victim was claimed, and the steersman, Palinurus, was drowned during the night-time. On the day that followed, Æneas reached the Eubœan coast of Cumæ, in Italy. There he landed with his men, and went towards the temple of Apollo in Diana's grove, and the cave of the Sibyl, in which the god of Delos makes revelations of the future.

To Æneas the prophetess revealed that he had overcome the perils of the sea, but must endure perils on land. The Trojans would have to proceed to Lavinium, and then they would soon wish they had never seen it. "I see wars, terrible wars," she said. "I see the Tiber running red with blood. Another Achilles awaits you in Latium; he, too, is the son of a goddess. Nor will Juno withhold her avenging hand. A foreign bride will once again bring calamity to the Trojans."

Then Æneas told the Sibyl that he had but one request to make, and that was to be allowed to visit the land of the dead, so that he might consult his father's shade.

"Easy is the path that leads to Hades," answered the prophetess, "but to retrace one's steps and return to the upper

[1] Venus (Aphrodite) rose from the sea. Her origin is closely bound up with primitive magical beliefs connected with shells and pearls as birth and love charms.

regions is a difficult task indeed." Having thus warned him, she told that he must needs make a gift to Proserpine of the golden bough if he desired to enter the realms of death below the earth. When this bough is plucked from the tree on which it grows, a second golden bough soon replaces it. She bade Æneas search for the bough. He therefore entered a spacious wood and uttered a prayer. Two pigeons rose in the air when he had prayed, and he called to them to guide him to the tree on which grew the golden bough. The birds accordingly went in front of him; they led him through the depths of the wood to the tree on which the bough shed its radiance all around. He beheld it with joy; he heard its leaves tinkling in the wind. Æneas broke off the golden bough and carried it to the cave of the Sibyl.

Thereafter the Sibyl led him to a black cave beside a dark lake in the depths of a lonely forest.[1] There Æneas sacrificed four black bullocks, a black ewe lamb, and a barren heifer. The earth shook, and then the Sibyl led him into the cave and through the long dark passage, and through the desolate halls of Pluto, past monstrous shapes and phantoms dire. They reached the banks of the dark River Styx, of which slovenly Charon is the ferryman. The souls of the dead who waited to be ferried across were numerous as withered leaves that fall in the woods before the first cold blast of autumn, or as birds that flock inland from the sea when the chilling year drives them to sunny climes. Some souls Charon admitted to his boat; others he drove back, because their bodies lay unburied on earth.[2]

> For never man may travel o'er
> That dark and dreadful flood before
> His bones are in the urn.
> E'en till a hundred years are told,
> They wander shivering in the cold:
> At length admitted, they behold
> The stream for which they yearn.[3]

As he carried the golden bough, Æneas was permitted to enter the boat of Charon, and the Sibyl accompanied him.

[1] Lake Avernus, near Baiæ, which filled the crater of a volcano.
[2] The same belief as in the Gilgamesh epic. [3] Conington's translation.

They crossed the river and beheld Cerberus, the keeper of Hell, to whom the black ewe lamb had been offered. The mouths of his three heads barked in the gloom; serpents writhed in his hair. To him the Sibyl flung a soporific cake. When he had devoured this offering, Cerberus lay down, and was soon buried in sleep. Æneas and the Sibyl passed on, and heard the sobbing and moans of the ghosts of infants, and next

> Minos, the strict inquisitor, appears,
> And sins and crimes with his assessors hears.
> Round in his urn the blinded ball he rolls
> Absolves the just and dooms the guilty souls.[1]

The good were sent to the Ælysian Fields, and the wicked to gloomy Tartarus, round the walls of which flows the Phlegethon, a river of fire.

> From hence are heard the groans of ghosts, the pains
> Of sounding lashes, and of dragging chains.[1]

Thereafter Æneas and the Sibyl entered the places of mourning which are occupied by those who die by their own hand. How gladly would such endure suffering and poverty were they allowed to return again to the world of mortals! In a spacious wood Æneas saw Dido. He beheld her but faintly in the gloom, as one who sees the new moon through clouds. Shedding tears, he spoke lovingly, saying: "Unhappy Dido, is it true, then, as I heard, that you slew yourself with the sword? Alas! was I the cause of your death? I swear, O Queen, by the stars, by the Powers above, and by whatever faith may be here, that I left your shores against my own will. I was driven from you by the command of the gods, who now compel me to wander in this gloomy realm. Never dreamed I that my departure would have caused you such deep anguish. Oh, tarry, do not leave me! Whom do you flee? Never again shall I be able to speak to you."

Æneas thought he could soothe Dido with these words, but she looked at him so sternly that he wept again. Then she turned from him, looking downward. Her expression changed

[1] Dryden's translation.

not when he had spoken; her face remained hard as flint or Parian marble. She left him abruptly and with unconcealed hate, and fled to a shady grove where Sichæus, her first husband, spoke tenderly to her, responding with love for love. Yet Æneas ran after Dido, mourning her fate, shedding tears, pitying her greatly.

Thereafter, resuming his destined way, Æneas reached the field of famous warriors. Ghosts of mighty Trojans thronged about him, wishing to detain him so that they might hear of his wanderings. When Agamemnon's men beheld him they trembled in dismay; then they turned and fled as aforetime they had fled to the ships, and uttered slender screams.

The Sibyl urged him onward where the roads divide, one on the right leading to Elysium (Heaven), and one on the left to cursed Tartarus (Hell). At the entry to Elysium, Æneas sprinkled his body with clean water and fixed the golden bough on a portal. Then he was able to reach the abode of the happy dead,

> the realms of tranquil bliss
> Green spaces, folded in with trees,
> A paradise of pleasaunces.
> Around the champaign mantles bright
> The fullness of purpureal light:
> Another moon and stars they know
> That shine like ours, but shine below.[1]

There he found his father, Anchises, who welcomed him, saying: "Are you come at length, O pious one? Am I permitted once again, my son, to see your face and hear your familiar voice?"

As they conversed together, Æneas saw many souls fluttering round the River Lethe, like bees about flowers on a summer day, and his father told him that these souls were drinking from the river of oblivion to forget their cares, because they were destined for other bodies, as were all souls whose guilt had been washed away or purified with fire, or after they had dwelt in the fields of bliss for a fixed period.

Then Anchises led his son among the souls of Trojans who were to be born in Italy so that they might be great kings or

[1] Conington's translation.

warriors. He even saw a son that was to be born to him when he had married Lavinia; he saw Romulus and he saw Augustus Cæsar, the offspring of a god, and many other great and noble men. "O Romans," Anchises said, "your care will be to hold imperial sway over the nations; you shall impose terms of peace, sparing the humbled and crushing the proud."

Thus did Anchises fire the soul of Æneas with love of future fame. Anchises told his son of the wars he must yet wage, and informed him how he could overcome every trouble.

Thereafter Æneas departed through the white ivory gate of dreams and passed quickly to the ships and his friends.

V. Æneas and Turnus

Setting sail from the Eubœan coast of Cumæ, Æneas reached Latium. The sea was reddening with the beams of the rising sun, and the saffron-hued Morn shone in her rosy car; he saw the green bird-haunted grove through which the sweet River Tiber, of which Tiberinus is the god, rolls its swift yellow waves.

Now Latium was the realm of King Latinus, son of King Faunus. His only son had died, and there remained but a daughter, named Lavinia, to preserve his line, and she was ripe for marriage. Many a noble prince sought her hand, but the most powerful of these was Turnus, king of the Italian realm of Rutuli, and his suit was favoured by Queen Amata, wife of Latinus. It chanced, however, that the oracle of Faunus had declared to Latinus that Lavinia must not be united in Latin wedlock, but married to a foreigner, who would exalt the kingdom of Latium to the stars and be the ancestor of mighty rulers on land and sea. When, therefore, Æneas sent messengers to Latinus, announcing his arrival and begging for land on which he and the Trojans could settle, the king granted the prayer, saying: "While I am king you shall want neither the fatness of the soil nor the wealth of Troy. Let Æneas himself come hither."

The goddess Juno was angered when she saw the Trojans settled in Latium and beginning to erect houses and divide the land. "I cannot keep them out of the realm of Latinus," she said, "nor can I prevent Lavinia becoming the spouse of Æneas, but a costly price must be paid in Trojan blood. The dowry of Lavinia will be paid in the blood of Trojans and Rutulians."

Juno summoned from Tartarus the black Fury Alecto, who carried her torch and whip of scorpions, and had serpents twined in her hair. To her the goddess spake, saying: "Do as I command you, and permit not Æneas to wed Lavinia and possess the Italian territories. Stir up strife and sow the crimes that lead to war."

The Fury first roused bitter enmity against the Trojans in the breast of Queen Amata; then she inflamed Turnus, who became frenzied for battle and passionate for the sword. Next she visited the Trojans. Ascanius (Iülus), son of Æneas, was following the chase, and she caused him to slay the pet stag of Sylvia, daughter of Tyrrhus, the shepherd of King Latinus. Tyrrhus roused his band to attack the huntsmen, and thus war broke out between the Latins and the Trojans. So did Alecto bring discord and cause strife.

When Æneas found that the Rutulians and the Latins had combined against him he was greatly disturbed in mind. That night he had a vision. The good Tiberinus appeared to him as he slept, clad in a sea-green garment, and said: "Here is your sure abode, and your people will prosper. Go to King Evander, who is an Arcadian—he who has built a city in Latium called Pallanteum—and he will become your ally. You shall honour me when you are victorious." Having thus spoken, the river-god dived into a deep pool.

Without delay Æneas set out with two ships for Evander's realm. Ere he sailed he invoked the river-nymphs and Father Tiber. As he went towards the ships he beheld, on a green bank beside a wood, a milk-white sow and her milk-white young, and he sacrificed them to Juno. Thus auspiciously did he begin his voyage.

King Evander welcomed Æneas, and furnished troops under the command of Pallas, his son and heir, to help the Trojans in the war.

Meanwhile Venus, mother of Æneas, prevailed upon Vulcan to make armour for her son like to the armour he had made for Achilles. The goddess bore her gifts to Æneas, laying them beneath an oak on the river bank. With wonder and joy the great Trojan gazed on a gleaming helmet, a sword fraught

with death, a great brazen corslet, greaves of electrum and gold, a wondrous shield, and a matchless spear.

Juno, who favoured Turnus, sent to him Iris, her divine messenger, who spoke, saying: "Æneas has gone to Evander. Why do you tarry? Fall upon his camp while yet it is in confusion."

Turnus immediately marshalled his army and advanced towards the stronghold of the Trojans. He rode a white-spotted Thracian steed, and on his head was a golden helmet with crimson crest. He rode in front, and with twenty chosen horsemen surveyed the camp with its trench and strong walls. Like to a wolf that watches a full cot of sheep, so did that ruthless and angry king gaze on walls and camp. He addressed his men, and fired them with courage and ardour. "It is my destiny," he proclaimed, "to extirpate this accursed race, because that Lavinia is now denied to me. A painful sense of indignity moves not the sons of Atreus alone. Once again do the Trojans commit the same crime which caused Troy to be burned. Now they shall know that they have not to deal with Greeks and Argive striplings, whom Hector kept at bay until the tenth year of the siege. . . . Prepare for battle."

On the day that followed, Turnus led his army against the Trojans. He hoped to fill up the trenches and demolish the walls, but when his men rushed forward with scaling-ladders, the Trojans, being practised by long war to defend their walls, thrust back the enemy with poles and threw down rocks and every kind of missiles. Desperate was the fighting, which waged all day. Ascanius, son of Æneas, fought his first battle, and with an arrow slew Numanus, a mighty Rutulian warrior, who kept constantly reviling the Trojans with loud voice. Eager was the youth for the fight, and he had to be restrained by his elders.

Turnus, having oftentimes been baffled, at length broke through a gate and drove the Trojan youths before him, but the Trojan leaders, Mnestheus and Serestus, rallied them. Mnestheus led a band against Turnus and drove him, fighting fiercely, towards the river bank, as hunters, throwing darts, drive back a lion. Turnus raged furiously, but he was over-

whelmed with darts and stones. To escape the Trojans, who then rushed at him with spears, Turnus leapt into the Tiber and swam to his joyful friends.

In high heaven Jupiter called a council of the gods, at which Juno pleaded the cause of Turnus, while Venus spoke an behalf of Æneas. The father-god having endeavoured in vain to reconcile the goddesses, forbade either to fight in the war. "The Fates", he said, "shall take their course."

On the next day Æneas returned to the camp, bringing with him Pallas and his troops. Turnus deployed his men on the shore to prevent the great Trojan landing, but in this he failed. A fierce battle ensued. The Rutulian king attacked Pallas, who led his Arcadian warriors. Pallas flung his spear, but it grazed the body of his mighty enemy. Then Turnus hurled his spear, which passed through Pallas's shield and entered his breast, so that he fell, his blood and soul issuing forth.

When Æneas heard with grief that Pallas was slain, he went against Turnus, but the Rutulian was shielded by Juno, who was permitted by Jupiter to aid him once. The goddess caused a phantom Æneas to appear in flight before Turnus. The Rutulian king followed the phantom, which went on board a ship as if to seek safety in escape. Turnus leapt on board, and then the ship went out to sea. Thus did Juno protect her favoured warrior from Æneas.

On the next day King Latinus held an assembly, and urged that peace should be made with Æneas; but Turnus, to whom Lavinia had been promised, refused to be reconciled. He longed to fight Æneas in single combat.

Mighty deeds were done in battle by Camilla, the Amazon, who fought for Turnus, commanding her Volscian squadron. She pleaded to be allowed to open the battle, and Turnus said: "O, heroine, the glory of Italy, how can I reward you? I have devised a stratagem of war. While you engage the Tuscan horse, supported by the Latin troops, and act as general, I shall lead my men through the wood and fall upon the enemy's flank."

Camilla made fierce assault on the Trojans. Many warriors fell by her hand. She swept across the battle-field with one

breast bared, shooting arrows, flinging javelins, and anon wielding her battle-axe. She rode amidst heaps of slain. At length, however, Aruns, the Trojan, flung a javelin, which smote her naked breast so that she was overthrown by sudden death. The earth drank her virgin blood. The goddess Diana was wroth. She descended from heaven, and, bending her bow, avenged the Amazon's death by slaying Aruns.

Meanwhile Turnus was lying in ambush. When he heard that Camilla had been slain, and that the Trojans were scattering the Latin army before them, and were advancing against the city, he had to forsake the wood and withdraw his men, raging furiously.

That night Æneas pitched his camp in front of the city.

King Latinus, perceiving that Æneas prevailed in battle, again pleaded with Turnus to make peace. Queen Amata declared that if Æneas won she would share the fate of Turnus. To her Turnus spoke, saying: "Let the Trojan and Rutulian warriors withhold from the fray, and I shall fight Æneas in single combat."

On the next morning Juno intervened to prevent the combat between Turnus and Æneas. While the truce was being arranged, an arrow was shot at Æneas, which wounded him on the right hand, so that he had to retire from the battle-field.

Turnus, perceiving this, led his warriors against the Trojans, and made havoc amongst them. Then Venus hastened to the bleeding Æneas, whose wound was being dressed by the aged Iapyx. She stood invisible beside her son, and caused the wound to be miraculously healed. Then, panting for the combat and impatient of delay, Æneas rushed into battle. He struck dismay into the hearts of his enemies and drove them back across the plain. He led his men against the city of the Latins, and when Queen Amata beheld him coming she sought death by hanging herself in the palace. Lavinia tore her hair with grief, and Latinus ran hither and thither, rending his robe and sprinkling ashes on his hair. Much did the old king blame himself for not having before received Æneas and married that noble Trojan to his daughter.

Meanwhile Turnus endeavoured to rally his scattered troops

on the extremity of the field. Æneas beheld him and went against him. He sought out Turnus alone, and the Trojans, Latins, and Rutulians looked on. From the city battlements King Latinus himself watched the mighty heroes encountering each other so that the quarrel might be decided once and for all.

Æneas and Turnus rushed to the combat; Turnus raised his sword to smite down his enemy, while both armies watched the conflict. But when Turnus struck, his sword was shattered on the armour of Æneas. He was then left at the mercy of his foe unless he should take flight. He decided to flee, and swifter than the east wind he fled from Æneas.

Eagerly Turnus fled, but no less eagerly did Æneas pursue him. Like a hound that pursues a stag, so did the Trojan follow the Rutulian king. Five times they raced round the field. Then Turnus perceived the spear of Æneas transfixed in the stock of an oak tree that had been cut down. He endeavoured to pull it out, but failed. Æneas next seized it, but could not tear it from the root until Venus gave strength to his arm.

Turnus seized a great boulder, and, raising it aloft, hurled it at his pursuer, but it fell short. Then, wearied by his exertions, the Rutulian king grew faint and afraid. He turned his eyes now on the Rutulians and now on the city, and stood waiting for death. Æneas flung a dart, which smote Turnus on the right thigh so that he sank to earth.

The Rutulian warriors groaned when they saw Turnus falling.

Turnus pleaded for his life, saying: "This I have deserved, but spare me, O Æneas, for the sake of my sire, the aged Daunus. Lavinia is your bride."

But Æneas thought of Pallas, whom Turnus had slain, and answered back: "Are you to escape from me with the fame of having slain my friends? . . . I will strike for Pallas the next blow and avenge him with your blood."

With these words Æneas plunged his sword in the breast of Turnus, whose limbs were relaxed in the coldness of death. With a groan his indignant soul hurried down to the shades.

Here ends the *Æneid.*

THE MAHÁBHÁRATA

Introductory

India, like Greece, has given the world two great epics. These are the *Mahábhárata*[1], which has been compared to the *Iliad*, and the *Ramáyana*[2], which has been compared to the *Odyssey*. The resemblances are not very close, except in so far as the *Mahábhárata* deals with a great war between rivals for supreme power, and the *Ramáyana* with the wanderings and adventures of a king.

The *Mahábhárata* is a work of vast bulk, about eight times as long as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined. It is divided into eighteen Parvas or Books, and there is a supplementary Parva called "Hari-vansa", which deals chiefly with Krishna, an avatar of the god Vishnu (Hari). With this book added, the poem runs to 107,389 slokas or stanzas. It is believed that the original epic, however, comprised no more than 24,000 slokas. The reputed author is the poet-sage Vyasa, the grandfather of the rival royal families, the Pandavas and Kauravas,[3] who waged a war of succession like the Achæans and Trojans.

There is no agreement among European and Indian Sanskrit scholars as to the probable date of the composition of the epic in its earliest form. It must have had origin prior to 500 B.C., because it is pre-Buddhistic in character. As it had grown to great dimensions ere Buddha's time, several centuries must be allowed for its gradual development. The kernel of the narrative is concerned with wars waged between rival Aryo-Indian tribes in the Vedic Age at some period prior to 1000 B.C.

The origin of the Aryo-Indians is wrapped in mystery. Max Müller invented the generic term Aryans, and applied it to the peoples of Indo-European speech, whom he regarded

[1] Pronounced mä-hä'bhä"rä-tä (*ä* like *u* in *fur*; *ä* as in *palm*).
[2] Pronounced räm-ay'ä-nä or rä-my'ä-nä. [3] Pronounced kow'rävăs (*ă* like *u* in *cut*).

as a distinct race. He repudiated this idea, however, when he wrote of the Aryans: "We predicate nothing of them except that the grammar of their language is Aryan. . . . The same applies to Hindus, Greeks, Romans, Germans, Celts, and Slavs." Modern ethnologists are inclined to regard the Aryan drift across India as partly racial and partly cultural. Other settlements of seafaring peoples took place on the coast some time during what is known as the "Epic period", when new gods like Vishnu, who carries the conch shell of the pearl-fisher's sea god, came into prominence. Egyptian and Babylonian influences can be traced in the myths and religious practices embedded in the epics.

The word "Arya", from which "Aryan" has been derived, is, in the Vedic hymns, applied to three upper Aryo-Indian castes or classes—the Brahamana (priests), Kshatriya (military aristocrats), and Vaisyas (traders, &c.), as distinct from the Sudra or native Indian caste or class of the Punjab. It is evident that the Aryan invaders entered India from the Iranian plateau, wherever their original homeland may have been. The earliest tribes of settlers reached the Punjab, "the country of five rivers", before 1200 B.C., but not earlier than 1500 B.C. Their gods included Dyaus, the sky-god; his son Indra, "the hurler of the thunderbolt"; Mitra (the Persian Mithra) Varuna, controller of the waters above and beneath the firmament[1]; and Nasatya.

Another branch of the Iranians swept across Assyria prior to 1400 B.C. and settled in northern Mesopotamia. There the military aristocracy of invaders formed the kingdom of Mitanni. The deities of Mitanni included, as an inscription shows, Mi-itra (Mithra), Uru-w-na (Varuna), In-da-ra (Indra), and Na-sa-at-ti-ia (Nasatya). The kings of Mitanni had names which resemble closely those of Indian rulers referred to in the Sanskrit epics. Dushratta, who became the ally of an Egyptian Pharaoh, reminds us, for instance, of the Indian king Dasaratha[2] in the *Ramáyana*.

The Aryan peoples of the Iranian plateau were "tamers of

[1] As the Egyptians believed in a celestial Nile, so did the Indians believe in a celestial river which was ultimately identified with the Ganges.

[2] Pronounced dăs-ăr-at'ha (*ă* like *u* in *cut*).

horses". It is believed that they introduced the domesticated horse into Babylonia, where it was called "the ass of the East", a good indication whence it came. The horse revolutionized warfare in ancient days. When the Aryans entered India they had horses and chariots.

Among the invading tribes were the Kurus, the Purus, the Bharatas, the Panchalas, &c. They founded city states, and extended their conquests and cultural influence eastward from the Punjab towards the Ganges. At an early period the Kurus and Panchalas and Purus were merged into a confederacy in Madhyadesha, "the Middle Country", between the Punjab and the upper reaches of the Ganges. The Kurus were, for a time, the predominant tribe. Their country, Kurukshetra, in the Delhi area, was the centre of Brahmanic influence and culture. In the *Mahábhárata* the Kurus are defeated in the Battle of Kurukshetra. Their enemies, the Pandavas, who drove them from Kurukshetra, may represent a tribe of kinsmen that achieved ascendancy at one period in the "Middle Country". Some, however, regard them as invaders from the hill country north of the Ganges.

Mahábhárata signifies "The Great Bharata". The Bharata tribe was of great importance in the Punjab during the Vedic period. As the Kurus, in the epic, are regarded as descendants of Bharata, it is possible, as has been urged, that the Bharatas became the overlords of the Kuru-Panchala peoples.

In the epic story of the *Mahábhárata* there is, therefore, a substratum of historical facts relating to tribal wars and conquests that occurred at about the same period as the war between the Achæans and Trojans, who figure in the *Iliad*.

Vyasa, the Indian Homer, may have utilized the hero-poems of the Aryan fighting-folk when he planned his long epic. The great war is waged by the descendants of King Bharata, whose kingdom was called Bharatvarsha (Hindustan), a name subsequently applied to India as a whole. The capital of Bharata was called "Hastin-a-pura", after "Hastin", the elephant. Indra, the chief god, rode an elephant. King Shantanu, grandson of Bharata, first married Ganga, the goddess of the Ganges, and their only surviving son was Bhishma, one

of the heroes of the epic. His name signifies "Terrible", because he took a vow renouncing his claim to the throne, so that a beautiful woman of miraculous origin might consent to marry his father. The maiden's name was Satyavati. She had previously given birth to Vyasa, who became a famous ascetic and the author of the *Mahábhárata*. Her two sons succeeded their father in turn, but died childless. The two widows of the youngest brother afterwards each bore a son to Vyasa, the Indian Homer. The elder boy was born blind, and was named Dhrita-rashtra; the younger was named Pandu, the "Pale One".

Pandu became king and married two wives, named Pritha and Madra. Before her marriage Pritha gave birth, in secret, to a son named Karna, whose father was Surya, the sun-god. Like the mother of Moses, she set her boy adrift in an ark. The five children of Pandu (the Pandavas) were Yudhish-thira, Bhima, Arjuna, and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva. These Pandavas, like the Homeric Achæans, are the heroes of the epic.

Dhrita-rashtra, the blind prince, had, like King Priam of Troy, a numerous family. There were in all a hundred sons, the eldest being Duryodhana, who is the villain of the epic.

King Pandu,[1] after reigning for a period, gave up his throne and kingdom, and went into the Himalayan Mountains to live the life of an ascetic. His wives accompanied him, and their children were born in the mountain retreat.

Dhrita-rashtra succeeded his brother as king, and his eldest son, Duryodhana, regarded himself as the rightful heir to the throne.

When Pandu died, his wife Madri desired to be burned with him, and her wish was granted. Pritha, the surviving widow, after the funeral ceremony was over, returned to Hastina-pura, the capital of the kingdom, taking with her the five Pandava brothers. Drita-rasthra sorrowed when he learned of his brother's death. He welcomed the five boys, and, being their guardian, had them reared in the royal palace with his own children.

The Pandava brothers are in the epic exalted above their cousins, the Kauravas, so called after their ancestor, King Kuru. All the Pandavas, with the exception of the muscular and

[1] It has been suggested that the "Pale One" was a victim of leprosy.

impulsive Bhima, are represented as mild and pious men. Yudhish-thira, the eldest, is of exemplary character. He was reputed to be an incarnation of Dharma, god of justice;[1] Bhima was an incarnation of Vayu, the wind-god, and, like him, could be stormy on occasion; Arjuna was an incarnation of Indra, who resembles Zeus, and was consequently a peerless warrior; Nakula and Sahadeva, the twin sons of Madri, were incarnations of the twin sons of the sun, the Hindu Castor and Pollux. Karna, the son of Pritha and the god Surya (the sun), became the ally of Duryodhana. During his lifetime the Pandavas were unaware that he was their brother.

When the rival families of cousins reached manhood, the kingdom of Hastina-pura was divided between them. Duryodhana became the rajah of one portion and Yudhish-thira of the other. These princes had been rivals from boyhood. Yudhish-thira claimed to be overlord of the various petty States of the Middle Country and performed the great Rajasuya ceremony to confirm his supremacy. When the horse sacrifice was performed at this ceremony, Duryodhana, his brothers, and other kings had to acknowledge themselves, by presenting gifts, the vassals of Yudhish-thira. With his allies, Duryodhana plotted to accomplish the overthrow of his rival. He challenged him to a game of dice, staking their kingdoms. Duryodhana won and the Pandavas had to go into exile for twelve years and then pass an additional year in concealment.

The Pandavas returned in the fourteenth year and claimed their kingdom. Duryodhana, however, refused to allow them to enter into possession of it. War was therefore declared, each side being supported by allies. In the battle of Kuru-kshetra, which lasted for eighteen days, the Kauravas were defeated and almost exterminated, Duryodhana being among the slain. Yudhish-thira then entered into possession of a ruined kingdom.

Such, in brief, is the story of the *Mahábhárata*. The vast work, however, contains much else besides the history of the rival families. In the course of the narrative other stories are told, the most famous being that which relates the adventures of Nala, another king who lost his kingdom over a game of dice

[1] A form of Yama, judge of the dead, the Indian Minos or Osiris.

and won it back again after enduring great sufferings in exile. In addition to the minor stories there is a great mass of doctrinal matter, philosophic speculations, accounts of the World's Ages, of the Deluge, of miraculous events, of wars between gods and demons, &c. The narrative is frequently interrupted to allow one of the characters to expound a religious doctrine, embellished by long and glowing illustrations, for the purpose of deciding what course of conduct should be pursued by some hero or other. The famous Bagavad-gita, for instance, is delivered on the battle-field by Krishna, an incarnation of the god Vishnu, when Arjuna, the Indian Achilles, exclaims on beholding the army led by his cousins: "What joy can come to us if we commit the crime of slaying our own kinsmen?" Krishna delivers his long instruction to convince Arjuna that it is his duty to fight, no matter what may befall him or others.

The *Mahábhárata* is thus not only the *Iliad* but the Old Testament of the Hindus. In the eighteenth Parva it is declared: "This history is sacred and of high import. . . . He who, with fervid devotion, listens to a recitation of the *Mahábhárata* attains (hereafter) to high success in consequence of the merit that becomes his through understanding even a small portion thereof. All the sins of that man who recites or listens to this history with devotion are washed off. . . ." The reciter must be a man of "good and pious conduct" and must be "robed in white". He should recite the text "without too much slowness, without a labouring voice, without being fast or quick, quietly, with sufficient energy, without confusing the letters and words together, in a sweet intonation and with such accent and emphasis as will indicate the sense, giving full utterance to the three-and-sixty letters of the alphabet." When the *Mahábhárata* has been read from beginning to end a pious man "should place a copy on an auspicious spot and cover it with a piece of silken cloth and worship it, according to due rites, with scents and garlands, offering one at a time". The gods should then be invoked and gifts made to the Brahmanic clergy. "The Bharata", declares the poet, "is the foremost of all scriptures."[1]

[1] *Swargarohanika Parva*, Section VI, pp. *17 et seq.* (Roy's translation).

Mahábhárata

I. The Rival Princes

Now King Pandu had given up his kingdom and crown, leaving his blind brother Dhrita-rashtra[1] to reign in Hastina-pura. With his two wives, Pritha and Madri,[2] he lived the life of an ascetic in the Himalayas. When he died his body was laid on the pyre. Both his wives wished to perform suttee, but Madri, shedding tears, prevailed upon Pritha to allow her to be burned with Pandu. "O revered sister," she said, "do not deny me this. You will bring up the children. I have no other wish to express." Having spoken thus, Madri ascended the pyre of her lord and the flames clasped her.

Pritha went to Hastina-pura with her three sons, Yudhish-thira, Bhima, and Arjuna, and Madri's twin sons, Nakula and Sahadeva.[3] Several god-like Rishis (saints) accompanied her. When Dhrita-rashtra heard of his brother's death, he wept and said: "Let us celebrate the funeral rites of Pandu and Madri in right royal manner, and let gifts be distributed for the welfare of their souls. Lament not for the sinless Pandu. He was a good king, and his five sons are like to gods.

After the time of mourning was over, Vyasa, the half-brother of the king, spoke to his mother, saying: "Our joy is ended, and calamity is near at hand. The Kuru empire will perish because of wrong and tyranny." Satyavati,[4] widow of King Shantanu, then retired to the forest where she lived as an ascetic.

Having performed rites of purification, the Pandava brothers

[1] Pronounced pan'doo and dreet'a-rash"tra.

[2] Pronounced preet'ha and mud'ree (*u* as in *cut*).

[3] Pronounced yoo-dish'thiru, bhee'mu, ar'joona, nuk'oolu, suhu'deva (*u* short as in *cut*).

[4] Pronounced sut'yu-vatee (*u* as in *cut*).

were brought up with their cousins, the Kauravas,[1] in the royal palace. When the princes engaged in sports the Pandavas displayed greater strength than their kinsmen. Bhima, son of the wind-god, could fight ten of his cousins at once, and they displayed great hostility against him because of his prowess and muscular power. One day Duryodhana,[2] the eldest of the Kauravas, plotted to get rid of Bhima. He gave Pandu's mighty son poisoned food which made him sleep. Then he bound him with cords and threw him into the river. Bhima sank like a stone until he reached the kingdom of the Nagas.[3]

Now Pritha was a grand-daughter of the brother of the Naga king, Vasuki, and when Vasuki beheld Bhima, his kinsman, who had already burst his bonds, he embraced him and gave him healing, for snakes had bitten the youth.

Meanwhile Duryodhana returned to the palace. He told that Bhima was missing, and Yudhish-thira, who was without guile, regarded others as being honest and truthful, and suspected no treachery. He and his brothers mourned for Bhima, as did also their mother Pritha.

On the eighth day Bhima returned, and was received with joy by the Pandavas. He told all that had taken place in consequence of the villainy of Duryodhana, and Yudhish-thira said: "Let nothing be said of this. Tell no one else, my brother. From this day forward each of us must protect the other with care."

When the princes grew up, Dhrita-rashtra appointed Drona to instruct them how to wield arms. They proved to be ready pupils and acquired great skill, but among them none was the equal of Arjuna. One day he slew with arrows a crocodile that attacked Drona in the river, and thus saved his instructor's life. Said Drona: "O Arjuna, you are the greatest archer in the world. No foeman will ever vanquish you."

As soon as the princes had acquired skill in the use of arms a tournament was held, and it was attended by the king and

[1] Pronounced kow'ruvus (*u* as in *cut*). [2] Pronounced door-yo'dhunu (*u* as in *cut*).

[3] Serpent beings of the dragon type. They had three forms: (1) snakes, (2) half human, half reptile, and (3) human with snakes in their hair. Nagas are demi-gods and inhabit the Underworld.

queen, and Pritha, and all the great nobles and ladies, and a great crowd of citizens. The field of arms was chosen:

> A level plain, where tree and bush was none
> To break the smoothness of the turfy ground,
> Wide was the champaign spread and round the marge
> A cool pellucid stream meandering flowed—
> Within the circle pious Drona reared
> An altar for an offering to the Gods.
> Next on the borders of the plain arose
> A tall pavilion rich with gold and pearl,
> And hung with trophies and the spoils of war—
> With gorgeous seats provided for the King,
> The peers, the Queens and beauty of the palace.
> Then soon around the busy artists reared
> Innumerous galleries, and tents and booths,
> To shade the throngs that from the city poured
> In countless concourse to behold the scene.[1]

First the Pandava brothers, mounted on horses, displayed their skill as bowmen, hitting targets with their arrows.[2] The spectators marvelled greatly, and shouted "Well done!" The brothers next rode chariots, and displayed their powers with sword and buckler, fighting a mimic battle with their kinsmen the Kauravas. Duryodhana and Bhima stood apart for a time, but at length rushed one against the other like two elephants, armed with maces, and fought frantically in fierce encounter until Drona sent his son to separate them.

Then Drona called Arjuna to come forth. The youthful bowman was greeted with applause, and conch-shells were blown. "This is the son of Indra," the spectators called one to another. Modestly Arjuna advanced in golden armour

> As glorious as a cloud at set of sun,
> Upon whose edges the parting day yet lingers.

Obedient to Drona's command, he drove his chariot across the field, standing now in the middle of it and now on the pole. At length he leapt out, drew his bow, and shot five arrows into the mouth of an iron boar and twenty arrows into the hollow

[1] Professor Wilson's translation. [2] Like Parthians.

of a cow's horn which hung on a rope swaying to and fro. He also displayed his skill with mace and sword.

> Applauding shouts repaid the archer's skill
> And heaven and earth loud echoed with his praise.

The exhibition was by this time almost ended, but suddenly a tumult broke out at the gate. The thunderous rattle of arms was heard, betokening might and strength. All eyes were turned towards the entrance, through which came Karna, son of Surya (the sun), and Pritha (mother of the Pandavas). He wore his natural armour.[1] He wore dazzling ear-rings, he grasped his bow in his left hand, and his sword was girt on his thigh. Tall was he, like a golden palm tree; he seemed able to combat with a lion. His features were handsome—greatly skilled in arms was this mighty warrior. "Who is he?" the people asked one another; "who is he?"

Then, with a voice deep as Indra's, Karna spoke, saying: "O Arjuna, I shall perform feats greater than yours before this assembled multitude. You will be astonished to behold them."

Hearing these words, the heart of Duryodhana was filled with joy. Arjuna was made angry. He gazed with flashing eyes at the intruder.

With Drona's permission, Karna then displayed his skill. He did all that Arjuna had done, and Duryodhana, followed by his brothers, rushed forward and embraced Karna, saying: "Welcome, O mighty warrior, anything you wish for will be granted by the Kauravas."

Said Karna: "I take you at your word. I have longed for your friendship. Now, I would fain engage Arjuna in single combat."

Duryodhana said: "With us you will enjoy all the luxuries of life. Help us, and smite down our and your enemies."

Arjuna, being deeply offended, addressed Karna, saying: "You will meet the fate of the unwelcome intruder and uninvited talker by being slain by me".

[1] He was born, like Minerva, fully armed, and his armour grew with his body. The Pandavas did not know he was their brother.

Karna made answer: "This field is for all and not for you alone. Those who are greatest heroes are kings indeed. Verily, the warrior regards might alone. Why should we hold dispute? Leave the weakly to quarrel with their tongues. Speak with arrows, O son of Bharata, until with arrows I slay you."

Arjuna embraced his brothers and Karna embraced Duryodhana and his brothers. Then both advanced for the combat. Indra caused the clouds to cast a deep shadow over Arjuna, and the sun shone brightly on Karna. The young warriors, who stood looking on, took sides, and the spectators took sides, some supporting Karna and some Arjuna. Then Pritha, who suddenly came to know that Karna was her son, fell down in a swoon. When she regained consciousness she saw her two sons advancing against one another, but, although her heart was filled with terror, she could do nothing to protect them.

Then Kripa[1] intervened. He told Karna that Arjuna would not shrink from the conflict. "But", he said, "you must first declare your lineage, the names of your father and mother, and the royal line which you adorn. . . . Sons of kings never fight with men of humble birth."

Karna's face turned pale as a lotus in the rainy season.

Said Duryodhana: "If Arjuna will not fight with one who is not a king, I shall declare Karna King of Anga."

Thereupon the Kauravas led Karna to a golden seat and bade the Brahmans instal him as king. The royal umbrella was held over his head. Karna was afterwards embraced by Duryodhana, who said: "I desire your royal friendship". Karna answered: "It is granted."

After this old A-dirat-ha, the charioteer, the foster-father of Karna, crossed the field leaning on his staff.[2] Shedding tears, he embraced Karna affectionately. Beholding this, Bhima shouted out in a mocking voice: "O Karna, you son of a charioteer, you deserve to die at the hands of Arjuna! Would you dare to cross swords with a prince? The cattle-driver's

[1] Pronounced kree-pa.

[2] He had found Karna in the ark which had been set adrift on the river by Pritha, and brought him up as his own son. Karna was not aware that he was a son of Queen Pritha.

whip is more suitable for the hand of a man of your birth. You are not worthy to rule over the kingdom of Anga."

Karna heard the taunts with quivering lips, and, sighing deeply, gazed towards the sun.

Duryodhana was made angry. Roused like a mad elephant, he answered Bhima, saying: "Unworthy are the words you have spoken. The proudest hero may fight with the humblest. Like the sources of rivers, the lineage of great heroes is ever unknown—Drona was born in a water-pot,[1] Kripa sprang from a clump of heath. Your own births, ye Pandava princes, are known to me. Can a she-deer bring forth a tiger like to Karna, who was born clad in natural armour and with ear-rings? He is a prince among men and worthy to be king of Anga. If any man here opposes what I have done, in declaring Karna a king, let him mount his chariot and meet me in combat to the death."

The crowd murmured approval of Duryodhana's words. But the sun began to set and the air grew dim. Lamps had to be lit. The combat could not therefore take place:

> As the red lamp's fitful lustre shone upon the field around,
> Slowly with the peerless Karna Duryodhana left the ground.
>
> Pandu's sons with war-like Drona marked the darksome close of day,
> And with Kripa and with Bhishma homeward silent bent their way.[2]

The crowd scattered noisily, some declaring Arjuna victor of the tournament, some Karna, and some Duryodhana.

Pritha had recognized her son Karna by certain marks upon his body. In her secret heart she rejoiced when he was declared King of Anga.

Duryodhana was well pleased to win such an ally. He no longer feared Arjuna. Karna delighted Duryodhana's heart with his pleasant conversation, while Yudhish-thira could not help feeling that Karna was the greatest hero in the world.

[1] Drona's name signifies "Pot born". The pot was a symbol of the mother goddess.
[2] Romesh C. Dutt's translation.

II. Burning of the "House of Lac"

A year went past, and Dhrita-rashtra, in accordance with the desire of the people, installed Yudhish-thira as heir apparent of the kingdom. Yudhish-thira was admired and trusted because of his high and exemplary character, his firmness, patience, benevolence, and honesty of heart. Before long the courteous and wise young prince became more famous and more beloved than his father Pandu had been.

Then Duryodhana, having consulted with Karna and Shakuni, his uncle,[1] prevailed upon his father to send Pritha and the Pandava brothers to Varanavarta to attend a festival, so that he himself might win the affections of the people by conferring upon them gifts and privileges, and be declared heir apparent. "When the sovereignty is vested in me," he said, "the Pandavas can return to Hastina-pura."

As he desired, so did Dhrita-rashtra do. He bade Pritha and the Pandava princes prepare to depart to Varanavarta for a time.

Before they left Hastina-pura, however, Duryodhana sent Purochana, his friend, to build a house for them. This house was constructed of combustible material; hemp and resin were packed in the walls, and between the floors and the walls were plastered with mortar mixed with tar, grease, and lac. It was called in after days the "House of Lac".

The people of Hastina-pura lamented greatly when they came to know that the Pandava princes were going away. So did the royal counsellors. Vidura, the half-brother of Pandu and Dhrita-rashtra, on bidding his nephews farewell, spoke to Yudhish-thira in the Mlechcha tongue, which none of the other

[1] King of the Gandari, the people of Kandahar and part of Afghanistan.

brothers understood, warning him of the perils of fire. "Keep yourself alert," he said. "The person who accepts an inflammable house, constructed by his enemies, can make it safe by imitating the jackal, whose abode has many outlets."

The Pandavas were welcomed by the citizens of Varanavarta. For eight days they dwelt with Brahmans. Then they went to the "House of Lac". Yudhish-thira inspected the house, and showed Bhima that it had been built of inflammable material.

Soon afterwards a friend of Vidura's arrived, and offered to construct an underground passage leading from beneath the centre of the house to a secret place in the forest. His services were accepted, and the work was accomplished in secret.

One night a great wind-storm arose. Bhima went out, and, having secured the doors of Purochana's house, set fire to it. Then he set the "House of Lac" on fire also. Pritha and her sons made escape through the secret underground passage, and took refuge in the forest. Believing that they had perished, the people of Varanavarta lamented greatly. Tidings were sent to Hastina-pura regarding the disaster, and its citizens lamented also. Dhrita-rashtra wept, but Duryodhana rejoiced in secret, believing that his rivals had perished.

For a time the Pandavas dwelt in the forest, where Bhima took for wife a Rakshasa maid, who bore him a son named Ghatotkacha. Thereafter the brothers sojourned in the city of Ekachakra,[1] where they disguised themselves as poor Brahmans.

One day they came to know that Drupada,[2] King of Panchala, had arranged the Swayamvara[3] of his peerless daughter, the Princess Draupadi.[4] Many people prepared to attend it, because of the sports and the merry-making. The Brahmans, knowing that gifts would be distributed to them, made ready also to attend the great gathering. Yudhish-thira and his brothers resolved to accompany the Brahmans.

[1] Pronounced eka-chak'ra (*ch* as in *chance*). [2] Pronounced droo'pada.

[3] A Swayámvara is a ceremony at which a high-born lady chooses a husband. The princes assemble and take part in a competition to win her affections, or she may simply select for a husband one who attracts her. She places a garland of flowers round the neck of the man of her choice. [4] Pronounced drow'pa-dee.

THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF DRAUPADI

III. How Draupadi was Won

Now the lotus-eyed Princess Draupadi was dark and beautiful; blue-black were her long curly locks; shapely were her eyebrows, and her finger-nails were like burnished copper; she was deep-bosomed and slender-waisted, and her body had the odour of a blue lotus. Indeed, the princess seemed a daughter of the gods, for so great was her beauty that she had no equal in the world. No mother gave her birth. One day, when her father, King Drupada, had performed a sacrifice, with desire for offspring, she arose from the ashes on the middle of the sacrificial platform. As soon as she appeared, a celestial voice was heard, saying:

This dusky girl will be the foremost of all women. She will cause many warriors to die, so that the decrees of the gods may be accomplished. From her many dangers will beset the Pandavas.

Immediately before the princess entered this world, her brother arose from the flames on the sacrificial fire on which a libation had been poured. He was clad in armour, and grasped in one hand a sword, and in the other a bow, and no sooner did he leave the fire than he leapt into a war-chariot, shouting for battle. A celestial voice spake regarding him, saying:

This prince hath come to destroy Drona. He will dispel the fears of the Panchalas and increase their fame. By him will the sorrows of King Drupada be quenched.

Drona, who had trained the Pandavas and Kauravas in the use of arms, was the chief enemy of Drupada, King of the Panchalas, although the two had once been devoted friends. With the aid of his pupils Drona had waged war on Drupada, captured the capital, and compelled the king to give up part of the kingdom of Panchala. Drupada's son was destined to

be his avenger, and his daughter to win to his side as allies the powerful Pandava princes. The King of Panchala had long cherished the hope that Arjuna would become the husband of Draupadi, his beautiful daughter, and before he proclaimed the Swayamvara he thought of the great Pandava archer, and caused to be made a mighty bow that none but Arjuna could bend.[1] He also had a curious and difficult target constructed. A high pole was erected, and on the top of it a golden fish was poised above a swiftly-revolving wheel.

Said Drupada: "He who is able to string the bow and strike the fish with one of my well-adorned arrows shall be given my daughter in marriage."

He issued a proclamation to the kings and regents and princes of the world (India), inviting them to attend the Swayamvara, and setting forth the conditions under which his daughter would make choice of a husband.

The Pandava brothers resolved to attend the Swayamvara, and set out from Eka-chakra disguised as Brahman beggars. With them went Pritha, their mother. They met many Brahmans on the way. "We are going", these men said, "to the country of the Panchalas. King Drupada is holding a great Swayamvara, on which much money is being spent. Kings and princes from many lands will attend the ceremony, and, desiring to win the maiden, will give away much wealth to Brahmans. From many lands will also come bards who will sing the praises of mighty men, and actors, dancers, and athletes who will entertain the people."

"Said Yudhish-thira: "Ye Brahmans, we are going with you to attend the Swayamvara of the princess."

On arriving at the capital, the Pandava brothers went with their mother to the house of a potter, and abode there. No one recognized the heroes as they went about in Brahmanic disguise collecting alms.

Many illustrious kings and princes arrived in the capital. Among others came Duryodhana and his brothers, accompanied by Karna.

A level plain had been prepared for the ceremony, and at

[1] Like the bow of Odysseus.

the north-eastern gate stood the white royal amphitheatre, which was shaded by a many-coloured canopy, and adorned with flowers and gold and gems; the floors were covered with rich carpets and rugs. Large crowds assembled round the field on the day of the Swayamvara, and the Pandava brothers stood among the Brahmans, while the Kaurava brothers mingled with kings and princes. After the bards had chanted their lays, praising their patrons, and the actors and musicians and athletes had performed in turn, the Princess Draupadi came forth

> in royal garb
> Arrayed, with costly ornaments adorned:
> A garland interwove with gems and gold
> Her delicate hands sustained—from the pure bath
> With heightened loveliness she tardy came,
> And blushing in the princely presence stood.[1]

A priest of the lunar race then lit the sacrificial fire and poured libations on it to Agni, god of fire. Then came forth King Drupada's son, named Dhrista-dyumna[2]. He took his sweet sister's arm, and, in a voice deep as thunder, addressed the royal guests, saying: "Hear me, ye assembled kings and princes! This is the bow, that is the mark, and these are the arrows. He who shoots an arrow through the whirling wheel and strikes the golden fish shall obtain my dark sister as his wife."

Having spoken thus, he addressed Draupadi, naming all the royal guests present, beginning with Duryodhana: "These celebrated warriors," he said, "have come for you, O blessed one. You will choose for a husband one of those who will strike the mark with an arrow."

The youthful princes came down from the amphitheatre. All their hearts had been smitten by the flowery god of love. Each desired to win the beautiful princess; each regarded his best friend with jealous eyes.

In the air above gathered the invisible gods: the Nagas, the Apsaras, and other celestial beings. They looked down on the

[1] Professor Wilson's translation.

[2] A name "derived from the pride and power with which he was endowed from birth". (Pronounced dhris'ta-dyum"na.)

gathering, and one said: "That is Yudhish-thira, that is Bhima, that is Arjuna, and these are the twins." Some of the gods looked only at Draupadi, the beautiful, slender-waisted maiden.

One by one the princes lifted the bow, but none of them, not even Duryodhana, could bend it. Some of the kings who put forth all their skill, endeavouring to adjust the bow-string, fell on the ground with swollen lips. At length Karna's turn came. He took the bow, strung it quickly and deftly, and placed an arrow in the string. Surya (the sun-god) looked down well pleased, resolved to assist his son.

Beholding Karna, Draupadi called aloud: "I will not choose a Suta[1] for my lord."

Karna laughed in vexation, and, glancing towards the sun, flung down the bow which he had drawn, ready to shoot.

Thereafter several kings tried to string the bow. Most of them fell on their knees exhausted, and, as each king fell, peals of laughter rose from the spectators.

When all the kings and princes had tried, and failed to bend the bow, Arjuna stepped forth from among the Brahmans.

Guised as priest serene and holy, fair as Indra's rainbow bright,
All the Brahmans shook their deerskins, cheered him in their heart's delight.

Some of the Brahmans, however, feared that Arjuna would bring shame and ridicule on the caste by endeavouring to do what kings had failed to accomplish.

"Shame he will not bring unto us," other Brahmans made reply,
"Rather, in this throng of monarchs, rich renown and honours high,

"Like a tusker strong and stately, like Himàlay's towering crest,
Stands unmoved the youthful Brahman, ample-shouldered, deep in chest,

"Lion-like his gait is agile, and determined is his air,
Trust me, he can do an emprise who hath lofty will to dare!

"Let this young and daring Brahman undertake the warlike deed,
Let him try and by his prowess win the victor's noble meed."[2]

Arjuna walked towards the bow, and, while the Brahmans were speaking, stood beside it motionless as a mountain. Then he walked round the bow, and having, with bended head,

[1] Base born. [2] Romesh C. Dutt's translation.

uttered a prayer to the great God, remembering Krishna also, he lifted it up. He strung it in the twinkling of an eye, and shooting the five arrows swiftly, one after the other, hit the mark and caused the golden fish to fall down through the wheel.

Sudden shouts
Burst from the crowd long silent: fluttering waved
The Brahman scarfs, and drum and trumpet brayed,
And bard and herald sung the hero's triumph.[1]

The gods showered down celestial flowers, first on the head of Arjuna, and then all over the amphitheatre.

Well pleased, King Drupada gazed at Arjuna, and, amidst the clamour raised by princes and kings, resolved to assist the hero with his forces if necessary.

The heart of the Princess Draupadi was filled with joy when she saw Arjuna, who resembled Indra, hitting the mark. Without hesitation she walked towards him with a white robe and the garland and flowers.

Like a queen the beauteous maiden smiled upon the archer brave,
Flung on him the bridal garland and the bridal robe she gave,

Arjun[2] by his skill and prowess won Panchala's princess-bride,
People's shouts and Brahmans' blessings sounded joyful far and wide.[3]

When the royal guests found that King Drupada was willing to give his daughter to the man in Brahman attire, they were angry indeed. "The king," they said, "passes us by, regarding us as straw, and gives his peerless daughter to this beggar. He has no consideration for us. Let us slay him, for he is undeserving of the reverence due to age. He and his son have this day insulted kings. Does Drupada not find among us one he regards as his own equal? A Brahman has no claim upon a princess. . . . If the maiden wishes to marry the Brahman, let us cast her into the fire. As for the Brahman, we cannot slay him,[4] but something must be done with him."

Speaking thus, one to another, the royal guests seized their weapons.

Bhima stood beside Arjuna, with purpose to give him aid.

[1] Professor Wilson's translation.
[2] Arjun, a rendering of the hero's name. [3] Dutt. [4] Being a holy man.

He had torn up a tree by the root and was ready to wield it like the mace-bearing Yama (god of death). Arjuna stood fearlessly, with the great bow in his hand, and he seemed the equal of Indra. Many Brahmans shouted aloud: "Fear not, Arjuna, we shall fight for you;" but Arjuna smiled and made answer, saying: "Stand aside and be ye spectators. With my arrows I shall hold the proud monarchs at bay."

The royal guests, beholding Arjuna making ready to oppose them, called out: "It is permitted to slay a Brahman in battle," and rushed towards him. Karna went against Arjuna, and Shalya, King of Madras, against Bhima, while Duryodhana and others scattered the Brahmans. Arjuna wounded Karna, and made him feel faint. Then Karna became more cautious. For a time they shot many arrows, one at another. Then Karna cried out: O foremost of Brahmans, I admire your skill. Are you Indra, or Rama, or Vishnu in disguise?"

Said Arjuna: "I am not Indra, or Rama, or Vishnu, but only a Brahman who is foremost of all warriors. I am here to vanquish you. Therefore tarry a little."

Believing that the Brahman was invincible, Karna refused to fight any longer, and withdrew from the combat.

Meanwhile Bhima and his opponent fought fiercely, until the powerful Pandava prince seized Shalya and flung him across the field. Everyone was astonished at this feat.

When Shalya was thus thrown down, and Karna was struck with fear, the monarchs and princes became greatly alarmed. Gathering round the Pandava brothers, they exclaimed: "Surely these bulls among Brahmans are mighty warriors. Let us fight no longer against them. Who can they be?"

Then Krishna, King of the Yadus, who had recognized the heroes, but said naught, soothed the indignant rulers, saying: "This maiden has been justly won by the Brahman."

> His gentle intercession lulled their rage,
> And sullen from the field the Kings retired
> Midst shouts of triumph from the Brahman train.[1]

Wearing round his neck the marriage garland, Arjuna led Draupadi away.

[1] Wilson.

Meanwhile Pritha had become anxious because her sons had not returned, after collecting alms, at the usual hour. She began to dread that some evil had overtaken them—that perhaps they had been recognized by the Kaurava princes and slain.

Then, at length, in the stillness of late afternoon, Arjuna entered the potter's house, leading Draupadi. His brothers were with him, and they said, referring to the princess: "We have brought the gift obtained to-day." Pritha then stood in the inner room and answered: "Enjoy ye all what you have obtained."

In a moment later she beheld Draupadi, and exclaimed: "Oh! what have I said?"

She had, however, spoken words she could not withdraw, and the princess became the wife of the five brothers.[1]

That evening Draupadi partook, in the potter's house, of humble Brahman fare, sitting at table with the brothers.

Meanwhile King Drupada came to know that the Brahmans were the Pandava princes in disguise. He sent for them and welcomed them graciously. When he heard how they had escaped from the "House of Lac", he rejoiced greatly. Thereafter he formed an alliance with them, and gave them many gifts.

When Duryodhana came to know that the Pandavas were still alive, and had become the allies of the King of Panchala, his heart was filled with jealous wrath, and he became deeply depressed. A council was held, and although the young men clamoured for war, their elders protested against such wickedness. At length Dhrita-rashtra gave command that the Pandava portion of the kingdom should be restored to Yudhish-thira and his brothers, and he sent Vidura with gifts to the princes, and bade them return home. Yudhish-thira consented to return, and it was arranged that he should accept a share of the kingdom, with Indra-prashta as his capital.

Duryodhana did not, however, cease to plot against the Pandavas. Greatly did he desire to accomplish their downfall.

[1] Romesh C. Dutt writes in this connection: "The custom of brothers marrying a common wife prevails to this day in Tibet and among the hill-tribes of the Himalayas, but it never prevailed among the Aryan Hindus of India. It is distinctly prohibited in their laws and institutes, and finds no sanction in their literature, ancient or modern. The legend in the *Mahábhárata*, of brothers marrying a wife in common, stands alone and without a parallel in Hindu traditions and literature."

IV. A Kingdom Won and Lost

When the Pandavas removed to Indra-prashta[1], on the banks of the River Jumna, they were quite content with their share of the kingdom, although it was little better than unreclaimed desert. They laid out and built a mighty city. Its walls were very high, and as white as clouds or moon rays. They were protected by turrets and hooks and spear points. The streets were wide and long, and lined by white mansions. In a well-favoured part of the city the Pandavas had their palace built, and it resembled a mass of stately and beautiful clouds. Public parks and gardens were laid out with shady groves haunted by peacocks and kokilas,[2] and bowers of brilliant creepers, artificial mounds covered with flowers, and crystal ponds with lotus blooms and aquatic birds.

The brothers lived happily in this city, and were beloved by the people.

After a time Arjuna went on a long journey and met with many adventures. He visited, among other places, the kingdom of Dwaraka, where Krishna reigned as king. The two heroes became devoted friends and allies.

So powerful did Yudhish-thira become that he resolved to celebrate the Rajasúya (Imperial Sacrifice) to assert his supreme greatness over all other rulers. The brothers went forth with armies to subdue those who did not acknowledge Yudhish-thira as overlord, and to receive tribute from those who submitted peacefully.

Then arrangements were made for the imperial feast and sacrifice. All kings were invited to it, including Duryodhana, who came from Hastina-pura with his brothers.

[1] Like Indra's city. [2] Pronounced ko-kee'-la. The Indian cuckoo.

Supported by his allies, Yudhish-thira proclaimed his supremacy, and the Kaurava brothers had to perform menial services at the sacrifice, and afterwards to make gifts as tribute to their royal kinsman.

Brahmans sprinkled holy water on the Empire's righteous lord,
All the monarchs made obeisance, spake in sweet and graceful word:

"Born of race of Ajamidha! thou hast spread thy father's fame,
Rising by thy native virtue thou hast won a mightier name,

"And this rite unto thy station doth a holier grace instil,
And thy royal grace and kindness all our hope and wish fulfil,

"Grant us, King of mighty monarchs, now unto our realms we go,
Emperor over earthly rulers, blessings and thy grace bestow."

One by one the kings took leave of Yudhish-thira. Last of all went pious Krishna, who, standing in his chariot, gave the Emperor his blessing, saying:

"King of men! with sleepless watching ever guard thy kingdom fair,
Like a father tend thy subjects with a father's love and care,

"Be unto them like the raindrop nourishing the thirsty ground,
Be unto them tree of shelter, shading them from heat around,

"Like the blue sky ever bending, be unto them ever kind,
Free from pride and free from passion, rule them with a virtuous mind."

Thereafter Yudhish-thira took a vow, saying: "I shall never speak harshly to any of the kings of the earth, nor will I show favour to one above another. Disagreement is ever the cause of war. I shall keep war at a distance, and ever do what is good in men's eyes.

The heart of Duryodhana was filled with jealousy because Yudhish-thira had grown so rich and powerful. As he returned home he sat moodily in his car, pondering in silence. Frequently his uncle, Shakuni, King of the Gandari,[1] spoke to him, but he made no answer. At length Shakuni asked: "O Duryodhana, why do you sit sighing and sighing?"

Said Duryodhana: "By day and by night my heart burns with jealousy because Yudhish-thira holds sway over all kings."

[1] The people of Kandahar.

Shakuni said naught, and Duryodhana again spoke forth, saying: "I tell you, my uncle, I shall throw myself in fire or water, or swallow poison. I cannot live any longer. What man is there who can endure to see his enemies prospering while he himself remains poor? I have neither vassals nor allies like Yudhish-thira. Fate is against me. I strove to accomplish the death of Yudhish-thira and his brothers, but I have been baffled, and they have grown in prosperity like a lotus in a pool of water. Behold the sons of Pandu becoming more and more powerful, and the sons of Dhrita-rashtra becoming weaker and weaker. Menials smile at me. . . . Oh, my heart burns as if it were wrapped in flames!"

Said Shakuni: "The Pandavas have powerful allies, including Drupada and Krishna, and they are mighty in battle; but do not say that you have no allies yourself. You have your brothers and powerful Drona and Karna, the renowned bowman, the valiant Kripa, and my brothers and me. With such allies you could conquer the world."

Duryodhana said: "O uncle, if it is pleasing to you, I would fain subjugate the Pandavas and rule supreme."

Said Shakuni: "It would be difficult to subdue them speedily in battle; but I have a plan for bringing about the downfall of Yudhish-thira. Listen to me, and adopt it."

Duryodhana said: "Speak and I shall hear."

Said Shakuni: "Yudhish-thira is devoted to dice, although he knows not how to play. If asked to play, he will not refuse; and I am a skilled player; indeed, I have no equal in the world. Send a challenge to Yudhish-thira, and I shall win his kingdom—yes, I shall win for you his entire possessions."

Duryodhana pleaded with his blind father to be allowed to challenge Yudhish-thira. Dhrita-rashtra hesitated for a time, but his son spoke now affectionately and now in despair, threatening to kill himself, and at length the blind king gave his consent.

Vidura, the king's half-brother, opposed the scheme, fearing that a dispute would arise, but Dhrita-rashtra said: "When I am near, with Drona and Bhishma and you to support me,

nothing evil is likely to take place. Go to Indra-prashta with all speed and challenge Yudhish-thira to the game of dice."

Before Vidura took his departure Duryodhana filled his father's ears with an account of all he had seen at Indra-prashta and of the rich gifts brought as tribute by many kings. "O father," he said, "having gazed on the possessions of the Pandavas, I cannot enjoy peace of mind. I am plunged in grief."

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Be not jealous of Yudhish-thira, my son; he is not jealous of you. Have you not strong allies? You are his equal in power. Why, therefore, do you covet his possessions? It is exceedingly mean to covet the possessions of others. He who is content with his own enjoys happiness; such a man perseveres in his own affairs and guards his wealth, and is unmoved even by calamity. The sons of Pandu are your arms. Do not cut off your arms. Do not cause internal war and weaken yourself and them. It is a great sin for friends to quarrel. Live happily here and enjoy peace."

Duryodhana said: "O father, are you hostile to me? Your sons and your allies are doomed to destruction, having such a one as you for their ruler. The king who desires to prosper must subdue all rivals like to a charioteer who tames horses with his whip. Those who wield weapons declare that whatever act, done openly or secretly, brings about the downfall of a rival, it should be called a 'weapon'. Not that which cuts is alone a weapon. . . . Who is to be regarded as a foe and who as a friend? The choice does not depend on relationship or reputation. He who gives pain is the enemy of the man who is pained, and I have been pained and am discontented. . . . O King, he who strives to prosper is a wise man. No man should set his affections on his possessions, for his possessions may be plundered. . . . As the frog is swallowed by the snake, so is a peace-loving king swallowed by the world. . . . O King, no man is born the enemy of another. My enemy is he who strives to attain the same object as myself—my rival is my enemy. Foolish indeed is he who neglects a rival growing daily more powerful. No matter how insignificant an enemy may be, if he is allowed to grow strong, he may act as do the white ants that

eat into a tree. . . . O King, do not be pleased to behold a rival prospering. It is a foolish policy to neglect an enemy. He that wishes to prosper must grow in power, as one's body grows from childhood. Prowess promotes speedy growth of power. I covet the prosperity of the Pandavas, but I have not yet made that prosperity mine. I doubt my ability to do so, but I am determined to settle my doubts. I am resolved to wrench their power from them, or die in the attempt. . . . O King, what pleasure have I in life, and what love can I have for life, seeing the Pandavas with their possessions steadily growing, while mine know no increase."[1]

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Hostility causes a revulsion of feeling which is in itself a weapon although not made of steel. How can you regard as a blessing a wicked and hostile act that may lead to war? Once hostility begins it creates sharp swords and keen arrows."

Duryodhana said: "The use of dice is very ancient. No weapons are required in the game. Let gambling open the gates of Paradise for us."

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Do as you wish. But I fear you will have cause yet to repent, for no prosperity can come to one whose motives are immoral."

Once again Vidura spoke to the blind king, saying he feared dissension would result from the game of dice.

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Fate is inevitable, and if it be not hostile I shall not grieve. The whole world moves at the will of the Creator and is controlled by Fate. It is not free. Go to Yudhish-thira, O Vidura, and bring him hither."

Yudhish-thira had no desire to take part in a gambling match, and when he learned that Shakuni was to play, he said: "It seems that some of the most reckless and deceitful gamblers are to throw dice. . . . However, the whole world is at the will of the Creator and is controlled by Fate. It is not free. . . . Unwilling as I am to gamble, I shall go because Dhrita-rashtra has summoned me."

The Pandava brothers accordingly left Indra-prashta, accom-

[1] On the outbreak of the Great World War, native Indian scholars compared the Kaiser to Duryodhana.

panied by Draupadi, and set out towards the capital of the Kauravas. Said Yudhish-thira, as they turned their backs on their city: "Tied as with a cord by Fate, man submits to the will of God."

Dhrita-rashtra welcomed the brothers, but his daughters-in-law were made sad when they beheld Draupadi in all her splendour.

The gambling-match was held in an assembly-house in which many lords and ladies gathered. Draupadi remained, however, in the palace.

Shakuni said: "We are all here. Let the dice be thrown."

Said Yudhish-thira: "It is a sin to cheat at dice. There is no honour and no morality in deceitful gambling."

Shakuni said: "Gambling does no harm, but injury may come from the winning or losing of stakes."

Said Yudhish-thira: "The conduct of a gambler, even although he does not cheat, is unworthy of praise."

Shakuni said: "The motive of gambling is to win. If you think that I am dishonest, because I desire to win, do not play."

Said Yudhish-thira: "I have been challenged and will play. We are all under the control of Fate. Let the game be started."

Yudhish-thira staked a necklace of pearls against Duryodhana's jewels. The dice were thrown, and Shakuni won.

Yudhish-thira accused Shakuni of cheating, but played on until he had staked and lost all he possessed, even his kingdom. Then he staked and lost each of his brothers in turn, for Shakuni cheated constantly. He staked and lost himself.

"There is one stake left," said Shakuni. "If you win you will win your own freedom. Stake Draupadi."

Yudhish-thira staked Draupadi, although many spectators cried: "Fie! fie!" Bhishma, Drona, and Kripa looked on with horror, and Vidura sat with his head between his hands, face downwards, like to one bereft of reason. It was otherwise with blind Dhrita-rashtra. His heart rejoiced, and he could not hide his feelings.

The dice were thrown, and Shakuni cried out: "I have won."

Then Duryodhana arose and said to a servant: "Command Draupadi to come here. The beloved wife of the Pandavas will

sweep out the assembly-house and take up her abode among the slaves."

Vidura protested fiercely, and warned Duryodhana, saying: "Do not make the Pandavas your enemies. Pritha's sons never speak as you do now. It is only low dog-like men who use harsh words to all classes. Alas, the sons of Dhrita-rashtra do not know that dishonesty is one of the doors of hell!"

Duryodhana heeded not Vidura's warning. He had Draupadi brought before him, and spoke to her, saying: "I have won you. Go to my house and I shall have you put to menial work."

Draupadi protested that Yudhish-thira had staked and lost himself before he had staked her. Not being free, he did not possess her when he did so.

Duryodhana gave no heed to her protest. She tried to escape from him, but Duhsasana,[1] brother of Duryodhana, followed her and dragged her back by the hair, laughing and calling out: "Slave, slave, you slave!" Then he tried to tear off her garment and put her to shame; but she prayed to Hari (Krishna, an incarnation of the god Vishnu), covering her face with her hands. Krishna heard her prayer for protection and caused her garment to multiply itself. As Duhsasana snatched off one garment, another appeared in its place. He could not disrobe the Pandava queen.

Then Bhima, unable to restrain himself, called out in a loud voice: "Hear my words, all of you present here! I shall yet meet Duhsasana in battle, and if I do not tear open his breast and drink his life-blood, may I never reach Paradise!"

When those terrible words were uttered many rose up and protested against the action of Duhsasana. The elders spoke forth one after another. Then suddenly the king heard a jackal howling and asses braying in response; he heard also the screams of terrible birds. Terrified by these omens, the elders cried out: "Swashti! swashti!"[2]

"Alas, evil-minded Duryodhana, you are doomed!" cried the blind king. "Permit not your brother to wrong Draupadi."

Duhsasana shrank back, and Dhrita-rashtra spoke to Drau-

[1] Pronounced doo'sas"an-a. [2] Similar to "Amen".

padi affectionately, saying: "Ask of me a boon, O Princess of Panchala."

"Said Draupadi: "Let Yudhish-thira be set free."

"Ask another boon."

"Let Bhima, Arjuna, and the twin brothers be set free."

"The boons are granted," the old king said. "Ask another boon."

Said Draupadi: "I cannot. Now that the Pandava brothers are free they shall win prosperity by their own acts."

Dhrita-rashtra desired that the Pandavas should return to their kingdom with all their wealth restored to them, but Duryodhana prevailed upon him to challenge them to throw the dice again. "The Pandavas cannot forgive us after what has happened," he said. "Let them gamble for freedom or exile. If they lose, they must go into exile for twelve years and spend the thirteenth year in an inhabited country unrecognized and unknown. If during the thirteenth year they are recognized, they must go into exile for a further period of twelve years."

The elders all protested against this proposal, but Dhrita-rashtra favoured his sons. Queen Gandhari made moan, saying: "When Duryodhana was born he cried out like to a jackal, and Vidura said: 'It would be well to send this unworthy one to the Otherworld.' Oh! Duryodhana will bring about the destruction of us all."

Said the blind king: "If our race is destined to be destroyed, how can I prevent it? . . . Let the Pandavas throw dice."

Again the Pandavas lost, and they had to go into exile in the jungle, clad in bark like to ascetics. Draupadi went with them, but the aged queen, Pritha, remained behind in the care of Vidura.

A celestial Rishi appeared before Dhrita-rashtra and Vidura, after the Pandavas had departed, and spoke, saying: "On the fourteenth year the Kauravas will be destroyed by the might of Bhima and Arjuna, because of Duryodhana's sin."

Having spoken thus, the Rishi vanished, ascending the skies.

When Drona heard of the celestial's visit he said: "Let the Pandavas be brought back."

Dhrita-rashtra sat mourning in silence. His priest spoke to him ironically, saying: "O King, you have won the whole world and sent the sons of Pandu into exile; why is it that you sorrow now?"

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Can I do aught but sorrow, knowing that my sons must yet meet the Pandavas in battle?"

Shakuni said: "Although forbidden so to do by Bhishma and Drona and Vidura, your evil-hearted son sent a slave to take Draupadi before the assembly. The gods first deprive of reason that man whom they wish to disgrace and destroy. When calamity is at hand, that which is sinful appears to be good. . . . No other but Duryodhana could have done what has been done."

"Alas!" exclaimed Dhrita-rashtra; "I did not listen to wise counsel because my heart yielded with affection to the wishes of my son."

V. The Pandavas in Exile

Defeated at dice, and made angry by the insults of Dhrita-rashtra's wicked sons, the Pandava brothers turned their backs on the city of Hastina-pura and set out towards the north. And with them went Draupadi, her hair in disorder, clad like a beggar, and her heart filled with grief. The citizens followed them in large numbers, and some said: "Alas! the world (India) is doomed now that Duryodhana has become the chief ruler;" and others: "Permit us to go into exile with you, O merciful and high-minded sons of Pandu!"

Yudhish-thira blessed the people and sent them away. Many Brahmans then followed the brothers into the jungle. "Alas!" said Yudhish-thira; "I cannot dismiss these Brahmans, nor can I feed them if they remain with us."

Therefore he invoked the sun-god, and that deity appeared before the pious son of Pandu and gave him a copper vessel, saying: "For twelve years I shall support you. In this inexhaustible vessel will be found fruits and roots and meat. When the fourteenth year will come you will regain your kingdom."

The Pandavas left the banks of the Ganges and went to the field of Kuru-kshetra, on which the great battle was to be fought, although they had no knowledge of that. They performed their ablutions in the Jumna and Saraswati rivers, and wandered westward from one forest to another, leading the life of ascetics. After a time they took up their abode in the lonely woods of Kamyaki, the haunt of holy men, on the banks of the Saraswati. They were welcomed by Brahmans and comforted by them.

Meanwhile Dhrita-rashtra continued to sorrow. One day

he spoke to wise Vidura, saying: "What should I do regarding the Pandavas? How can I secure the goodwill of the people so that they may not destroy my race root and branch?"

Said Vidura: "Call back the Pandavas and restore their kingdom to them. Send Shakuni away in disgrace. If you do not do this the day must come when Arjuna and Bhima shall slay their enemies, your sons. Set Duryodhana aside and proclaim Yudhish-thira Emperor of India. Compel Duryodhana to ask Draupadi for forgiveness, and Bhima also. What else can I advise you to do?"

Dhrita-rashtra said: "I perceive now that you favour the Pandavas. How can I set my eldest son aside for the sake of Pandu's eldest son?"

The blind king rose and went into an inner chamber, and Vidura said: "The Kuru race is doomed."

Vidura afterwards visited the Pandava brothers in the forest, and when he returned he said to Dhrita-rashtra: "Your sons are as dear to me as are the sons of Pandu, but, as Pandu's sons are in distress, my heart yearns for them." Then he and the blind king were reconciled.

Duryodhana was angry with Vidura, fearing he would prevail upon Dhrita-rashtra to recall the exiles. He took counsel with Shakuni and Karna. To him Karna said: "The Pandavas will never seek to return until they have completed their period of exile. If, however, they are called back by Dhrita-rashtra, you can defeat them again at dice."

Duryodhana turned away his face. He was not pleased with these words. Then Karna said, speaking angrily: "Let us arm ourselves, and, mounting our cars, hasten to the forest and slay the Pandava brothers. Then we shall all have peace."

"So be it," Duryodhana made answer. Shakuni was well pleased with Karna's proposal.

Vyasa came to know what thoughts were in the minds of Duryodhana and his followers, and spoke to the blind king words of warning, saying: "Let your foolish son desist from this attempt. 'Twere better if he himself lived as an exile in the forest."

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "I am unable to cast off my son, foolish although he may be."

Vyasa said: "If, loving your sons as you do, you wish them to live, command Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas."

Said Dhrita-rashtra: "Wise are your words. If you love the Kauravas I pray you speak to my wicked son Duryodhana and prevail upon him to act wisely."

Duryodhana, however, would not follow the advice of Vyasa, and resolved to visit the Pandavas with his armed followers. There was evil in his heart. But Dhrita-rashtra refused to allow him to attack the sons of Pandu.

Draupadi fretted in exile, wearied by suffering and a sense of shame. Krishna visited the brothers in the forest and she lamented before him, saying: "Oh, how long must I suffer wrongs at the hands of wicked enemies of small strength! I was born of a great race, yet was I put to shame by Duryodhana."

She wept and hid her face in her hands—those hands that were like buds of lotus.

"Weep not," said Krishna, "I shall give aid to the sons of Pandu. Together we shall be invincible in battle."

Draupadi spoke dolefully one evening before the Pandava brothers, addressing Yudhish-thira: "My heart grieves," she said, "when I think of your ivory throne as you sit there on withered grass, and when I think of your royal robes as you sit there in rags. Oh, my mind knows no peace! Is there no anger in your heart? Can you pardon your enemies who are the cause of our distress when you look at your brothers and at me? That warrior who shows no energy at the right moment is despised by everyone. Do not forgive those who have wronged you; slay them! The time has come for you to display your might. The humble forgiving man is persecuted. This is no time for you to show forgiveness."

Said Yudhish-thira: "Those who are angry cannot distinguish between right and wrong. The wise suppress wrath so that they may think clearly and act rightly. Ignorant people mistake anger for energy. . . . The pious, O beautiful one,

should forgive freely even when they are wronged or injured. He that controls his anger and is forgiving will win immortal bliss, but he who is vengeful and angry will go down to destruction. Forgiveness is holiness; forgiveness is truth; it is by forgiveness that the world is held together. Those who forgive are honoured in this life and exalted in the next. O Draupadi, do not give way to wrath. Duryodhana has seized my kingdom and cannot therefore acquire the virtue forgiveness, his heart being sinful. I, who deserve the kingdom, am full of forgiveness because it is an eternal virtue."

Draupadi said: "Virtue will not protect you. You will not abandon virtue, but you abandon your brothers and me. He who strives after perfection is like one who chases his own shadow. . . . It seems to me that God is angry with his children, because the good are persecuted and the sinful are made happy. If God wills this, then He is responsible for the sins committed by mankind. If, however, the man of might and not God protects himself, then I am sorry for the one who has no might."

Said Yudhish-thira: "I act virtuously not with desire for reward in this world, but with hope of immortality. Oh, do not doubt God or censure God! The one who doubts will never reach the realms of bliss, but go down to hell. Doubt not the ancient faith of our people; it is the only raft that will take us to heaven. Doubt not that virtue is fruitless, for without virtue this world would be peopled by men and women resembling wild beasts. We cannot solve the mystery regarding the fruitfulness of right or wrong living, but although you may not see the fruits of virtue, you should not doubt religion but continue doing good, worshipping God."

Draupadi said: "Everyone should perform works and not wait idly depending on chance. He who believes in chance lives a weak and helpless life and never achieves success. We are in misery and will so remain unless you act now. Success comes to the one who acts according to time and circumstances, snatching the opportunity to do what should be done."

Bhima also urged Yudhish-thira to act promptly, saying: "It was not by virtue or honesty that Duryodhana took the kingdom from you. We are tearing out our hearts by following

you. You submit to wrong like a weak man. You are powerful; therefore you should strike down your enemies, who are wrongdoers. Why should we be afraid to wrest our own kingdom from those who have seized it?"

Said Yudhish-thira: "It is destined that we should live the appointed time in exile. Be patient and await the return of better days. I have pledged my word to remain here until twelve years have gone past, and cannot break my pledge. Kingdom, sons, fame, wealth, are naught beside honesty and truth."

Bhima was angry. "Oh," he exclaimed, "you are like froth—like ripe fruit that falls on the appointed day, having entered into an agreement with Time! He who does not strive to undo a wrong, and punish his enemies, is like an unclean thing. Are you a priest or a warrior? You were born a warrior, but you act like a priest. Strike down your enemies, O King! To do so is to practise a virtue becoming to a warrior."

Said Yudhish-thira: "The Kauravas are strong and well-equipped, and not even the gods could overcome them at present, because Bhishma, Kripa, and Drona, who have celestial weapons, would support them. If we cannot vanquish these great men in battle, how can we slay Duryodhana? We must needs obtain celestial weapons by practising austerities and performing religious rites. Nor can we obtain these weapons if we fall away from virtue and break our pledged word."

Dhrita-rashtra often lamented the fate of the Pandavas, and Duryodhana was made angry and sad on that account. Shakuni, finding him doleful, spoke one day, saying: "Why are you sad now that you prosper? Come, let us go and visit the Pandavas in exile. What joy can be greater than when a prosperous man looks upon his enemies, who suffer adversity and are plunged in sorrow? Take your queen with you. Let her be attired in costly robes, so that Draupadi, with her bark and deerskin clothing, may see her and become even more sorrowful than she is."

Duryodhana was pleased with this proposal, and soon afterwards set out with a gay company to visit the Pandavas and

gloat over their sufferings. It happened, however, that a host of Gandharvas (celestial elves) occupied a wood through which the Kaurava soldiers desired to pass. Duryodhana commanded that they should be attacked, but the Gandharvas routed his men, forced Karna to seek refuge in flight, and captured Duryodhana.

The defeated warriors fled towards the Pandavas, who dwelt in the vicinity; they appealed to Yudhish-thira to rescue their king.

Said Bhima: "The Ghandarvas have done what we should have done. Duryodhana came hither for no good purpose and has met with a calamity he did not foresee. So are the wicked punished. How fortunate it is for us to find that there are still some beings in this world who desire to do us good. That wretch, Duryodhana, came hither to make us feel our adversity more keenly."

Yudhish-thira spoke, saying: "This is not the time for harsh words. Do not speak thus of the Kauravas when they suffer affliction and appeal to us for protection. Although kinsmen may quarrel among themselves, they must not allow the honour of the family to suffer. The interference of a stranger cannot be tolerated. Well does the Gandharva king know that we reside here, yet he insults our kinsmen. Arise and arm yourselves and defend the family honour! Compel the Gandharvas to deliver up Duryodhana!"

Bhima, Arjuna, and the twins obeyed their elder brother; they armed themselves, went against the Gandharvas, and compelled them to deliver up Duryodhana.

Yudhish-thira set his rival free, saying: "You have acted rashly, and a rash man never achieves happiness. I bless you, son of the Kuru race, and all your brothers. Go back to your capital when it pleases you so to do."

Duryodhana saluted Yudhish-thira. Heart-broken and ashamed, he then turned away to return home. Karna greeted him, saying: "It is fortunate you are alive."

Said Duryodhana: "It would have been better if the Gandharvas had slain me, for I have secured my liberation at the hands of the Pandavas. I have trampled on my enemies, but

have now fallen from my high position because I acted wickedly. I who am proud have been laughed at by my enemies. The prowess of the Pandavas makes me miserable."

During their residence in the forest the Pandavas were visited by many holy men, who comforted them and gave them instruction. One prevailed upon Arjuna to obtain celestial weapons from the god Shiva by taking vows and practising asceticism. This the Pandava archer did, and he received the matchless bow named "Gandiva". He also received weapons from the other gods.

Meanwhile Indra, who favoured the Pandavas, appeared before Karna in the form of a Brahman, and received from that son of Pritha his natural armour and ear-rings in exchange for an infallible dart.

Now Karna shortened his life by giving away the ear-rings, and he placed his life in peril by parting with the armour. Protected by his ear-rings and armour, no enemy could have slain him in battle.

When Indra gave Karna the infallible dart he said: "Do not hurl this dart if you have another weapon beside you, lest it should fall upon yourself."

Said Karna: "I shall not hurl it except when I am weaponless and in peril of death."

It was because the natural mail was peeled off the body of Surya's son that he was called Karna.[1]

The Pandavas were well pleased to hear that Karna's armour had been taken away by Indra, but the Kauravas sorrowed greatly.

The twelve long years of exile drew nigh to an end. Then Yudhish-thira's virtue and wisdom were tested by the god Dharma. One day a stag carried off the fire-sticks of a Brahman, and the holy man appealed to the brothers, who went after the animal. Unable to catch it, one brother after another approached a sacred pond to drink water, ignoring a Voice that called: "Answer what I shall ask of you before you drink." Each fell down as he tried to drink, and when Yudhish-thira came he found his four brothers lying dead at the brink

[1] The name signifies: "One who has been flayed".

of the pond. The Voice spoke to him, and he made answer, saying: "I shall answer your questions."

Many were the questions asked by the Voice—questions regarding the gods, the mysteries, and the duties of pious men. Then the god Dharma appeared before Yudhish-thira. It was he who had asked the questions, and he was well pleased because Yudhish-thira had answered them all. He granted the wise Pandava two boons, and Yudhish-thira said: "Restore my brothers to life, and grant that we may have power to remain unrecognized by anyone for the space of a year." Dharma granted the boons and then vanished.

The four brothers were restored to life, and they praised and blessed Yudhish-thira.

Soon afterwards Yudhish-thira invoked the aid of the goddess Durga, who counselled the brothers to go to Virata, King of the Matsyas, and enter his service. This they did without delay.

Now, during his stay in the forest, a wise Rishi, who visited the Pandavas, had instructed Yudhish-thira in the mysteries of dice, so that he became a player of exceeding great skill. He was thus able to become Virata's companion and dice-instructor. Bhima served the king as a cook, Arjuna as a dancing-master, Nakula as a keeper of horses, and Sahadeva as a keeper of kine, while Draupadi attended upon Virata's wife as a serving-woman.

The thirteenth year went past, and the brothers remained unrecognized, although Duryodhana's spies searched continually for them.

Then it chanced that the Kauravas and the Trigartas combined to harry the far-famed and numerous cattle[1] in Virata's kingdom. The Trigartas invaded the kingdom from the south and the Kauravas from the north.

Virata went out against the Trigartas when word was brought by a herdsman that his cattle were being seized by hundreds and by thousands. All the Pandava brothers went with the king except Arjuna. The Trigartas were defeated and their king taken prisoner. But meanwhile the Kauravas approached the city from the north and seized sixty thousand kine.

[1] Go-harana, "cow harrying", is the name of the Parva dealing with this cattle-lifting expedition.

The cowherds were scattered before them, but Arjuna armed himself and went out against his kinsmen, shooting clouds of arrows from the celestial bow Gandiva. He drove back the cattle-raiding Kauravas.

> Kuru soldiers fled in terror, or they slumbered with the dead,
> And the rescued lowing cattle with their tails uplifted fled.

Duryodhana and other leaders were stunned by the twang of Gandiva. When they recovered their senses they set out in dejected mood towards Hastina-pura.

Thereafter the Pandava brothers made themselves known to the King of Virata. That monarch rejoiced greatly to find who had aided him against the cattle-raiders. He became the ally of the Pandavas, and gave his daughter in marriage to Abhimanya, son of Arjuna.

As the time had now come for the Pandavas to be restored to their kingdom, King Virata invited their allies, including Krishna and Drupada, to an assembly in his Court.

VI. Duryodhana's Will for War

When the allied kings assembled in Virata's council-chamber Krishna lamented because Duryodhana still desired to work evil against the Pandavas. "Shall the allies wage war?" he asked; "or should we send messengers to Duryodhana to ask him to restore the kingdom of the Pandavas which he still continues to possess?"

Krishna's brother, Balarama,[1] opposed immediate war, and advised the assembly to send messengers to Duryodhana. "What has been gambled away," he said, "cannot be restored in battle."

His kinsman Satyaki[2] was wroth with Balarama, and said: "You have spoken like a woman. You cannot justify Duryodhana and blame the pious Yudhish-thira. Let the Kauravas get an opportunity to restore the kingdom, but if they refuse to do so, then let war be waged.

King Drupada of Panchala, father of Draupadi, rose and said: "Let us gather together a mighty army without delay. Many kings will side with the one who first asks their aid. Meanwhile, let my priest carry a peaceful message to Duryodhana. If he scorns our friendship, he will find us ready for war."

Krishna approved of Drupada's advice, and then returned home. He was afterwards visited by Duryodhana and Arjuna. Both asked for his help, and he answered them, saying: "You are my kinsmen. I shall not fight, but will give advice in battle. I shall be on one side and my army shall be on the other. Choose now whether you desire me or my soldiers."

Duryodhana asked for the army, but Arjuna preferred to have Krishna alone. Krishna promised to be Arjuna's charioteer.

[1] Pronounced băl-ă-rah'mă (ă like *u* in *cut*). [2] Pronounced săt'yăkee (ă like *u* in *cut*).

After this Duryodhana appealed to Balarama, brother of Krishna, who said: "Well you know you have wronged Yudhish-thira. Do your duty by acting justly and all will be well."

Duryodhana returned home in sullen anger.

King Drupada's priest went to Hastina-pura, and spoke to Dhrita-rashtra and his counsellors as they sat in assembly, saying: "The Pandavas ask that their kingdom should now be restored to them, for they have fulfilled the conditions of exile, and are ready to forgive all and forget what has happened. If their offer is rejected they will wage war. The sons of Pandu are not anxious to fight. They wish to get back their kingdom without involving the world (India) in ruin. They are more powerful than the Kauravas. Will the Kauravas dare to fight against the great allied army and against Arjuna, who will be advised by Krishna?"

Said Bhishma: "Your words are sharp. There is no doubt the Pandavas are entitled to the kingdom, and that Arjuna is peerless in battle."

Karna said: "Duryodhana will not give up a single foot of land because he is threatened. Yudhish-thira has not fulfilled the conditions of exile. His brothers were seen before the thirteenth year was ended. Confident of the aid of the Matsyas and Panchalas, he wishes to get back the kingdom. If the Pandavas abandon the path of virtue and truth, let them take the consequences."

Said Bhishma: "It is useless to talk in that manner. Arjuna cannot be overcome. If we do not act as Drupada's priest has advised, we shall all perish in battle."

Dhrita-rashtra soothed Bhishma, and then instructed Sanjaya, his priest, to visit Yudhish-thira and appeal to him to maintain peace. Sanjaya accordingly visited Yudhish-thira, who said: "Peace is better than war. Who is so cursed by the gods as to wish for war? Dhrita-rashtra asks for peace. Then let him treat us as he desires us to treat him. Let him not follow in the unrighteous path chosen by his sons, and especially by Duryodhana. The Kauravas desire to be overlords of the whole world. Peace, therefore, cannot be obtained by them. . . .

Duryodhana believes it is possible to rob the sons of Pandu of the kingdom, although Arjuna remains alive, and wields the celestial bow Gandiva and because he does not behold Bhima. . . . We have suffered greatly, and are prepared to forgive those who caused us to suffer. We desire peace. Let Indra-prashta be restored to us and there will be no war."

When Sanjaya returned to Hastina-pura and repeated what Yudhish-thira had said, Dhrita-rashtra's heart was filled with despair. "Alas!" he said; "my foolish sons desire to fight, although I sorrow. Desist from hostility, O Duryodhana. Give back to the Pandavas their share of the kingdom. Be not misled by Karna and Shakuni."

Duryodhana replied, boasting of his own prowess in battle, and said: "Either I shall slay the Pandavas and rule the world, or they shall slay me and rule supreme instead. I am ready to sacrifice all rather than live side by side with the Pandavas. I shall not surrender to them as much land as will cover the point of a needle. I am superior to the Pandavas in intelligence, valour, knowledge, and resources."

Said Karna: "With the infallible weapon I have received from the Rishi (Indra) I shall slay all the sons of Pritha."

Bhishma said: "Karna, your mind is clouded because your own doom is nigh at hand. The weapon given you by Indra will be reduced to ashes by the one who will protect Arjuna, even Krishna, who is greater and more powerful than you."

Karna was enraged. "I lay down my weapons," he said, "and will not fight until after Bhishma has fallen in battle. Thereafter the rulers of the earth will witness my valour in this life."

Having spoken thus, Karna left the Court and went to his own abode.

Bhishma then spoke to Duryodhana, saying: "Thus does the son of a Suta keep his promise to slay your enemies. Know you that the moment he lost his natural armour and earrings the vile wretch lost all his great power."[1]

[1] The wrath of Karna recalls the wrath of Achilles. Both lost their armour. It is possible that the attributes of some very ancient legendary hero were attached to Karna and Achilles. The Celtic Diarmid, like Achilles, could not be fatally wounded except in the heel.

As no answer was returned to Yudhish-thira, Krishna went to Hastina-pura and attended a council of war, over which the blind king presided. Vidura pleaded with Duryodhana to act justly towards the Pandavas, but that evil-hearted man made answer, saying: "I shall give naught except what can be won in battle." In vain did the elders plead for peace. "I shall never humble myself before the Pandavas," Duryodhana declared.

Pritha had a private meeting with Karna, and revealed to him the secret of his birth. "Become the friend of Arjuna, your brother," she pleaded. "Together you could conquer the whole world. It is right you should be with your brothers now. Be no longer known as a man of humble birth."

"You abandoned me at birth," Karna said. "No enemy could have done me a greater injury. I cannot now desert the Kauravas, who have been my friends. For Duryodhana's sake I must fight against your sons. I cannot forget his kindness. I cannot forget my own honour. Yet you have not solicited me in vain. I have power to slay Yudhish-thira, Bhima, Nakula, and Sahadeva, but I promise to spare them. I shall fight with Arjuna alone. If I slay Arjuna, great will be my fame; if I am slain by Arjuna, I will be covered with glory."

The reply which Duryodhana sent to the Pandavas was: "You have vowed to wage war. The time has now come for you to fulfil your vow."

Then the Kauravas and Pandavas marched to battle on the wide plain of Kuru-kshetra.

VII. The Battle of Kuru-kshetra

Duryodhana chose as the commander-in-chief of his army the veteran leader Bhishma, who had done his utmost to prevent war. Drona and Shakuni and other allies swelled the forces of the Kauravas. Karna refrained from battle in accordance with his vow.

The Pandava army was commanded by Dhrista-dyumna, son of King Drupada of Panchala, of whom it had been prophesied: "*This prince hath come to destroy Drona.*" Krishna drove the chariot of peerless Arjuna, who, armed with the celestial bow Gandiva, seemed to be "the formidable minister of Fate".

> Now as on either hand the hosts advanced
> A sudden tumult filled the sky: earth shook:
> Chafed by wild winds, the sands upcurled to heaven,
> And spread a veil before the sun. Blood fell
> In showers, shrill screaming kites and vultures winged
> The darkling air, whilst howling jackals hung
> Around the march, impatient for their meal;
> And ever and anon the thunder roared,
> And angry lightnings flashed across the gloom,
> Or blazing meteors fearful shot to earth.
> Regardless of these awful signs, the chiefs
> Pressed on to mutual slaughter, and the peal
> Of shouting hosts commingling shook the world.[1]

Arjuna hesitated to enter the fray when he saw his kinsman arrayed against him, but Krishna convinced the great archer that it was his duty as a warrior to fight whether he desired to or not. Then Arjuna raised his bow Gandiva, and the gods gathered in the air and looked down to witness mighty feats of arms.

[1] Professor Wilson's translation.

On the first day, despite the prowess of Arjuna, the Pandavas were driven back. As a fire sweeps through a forest so did Bhishma sweep through the ranks of his opponents. His arrows sprang from his bow like hissing serpents, and his path was strewn by fallen warriors. Night put an end to the slaughter.

Yudhish-thira was greatly depressed. Early next morning, however, Arjuna opened a fierce attack, opposing Bhishma, while Dhrista-dyumna went against Drona like a desert lion angry with hunger. Drona pressed his enemy hard. Then Bhima went to the aid of the Pandava leader. Observing this, Duryodhana sent a force of Nishada warriors against Bhima so that he might be held at bay. A fierce conflict was waged for hours, but in the end Bhima scattered the dusky Nishadas in flight. Arjuna also did valiant deeds, and, when evening was coming on, he routed the Kauravas who opposed him, and drove them terror-stricken across the plain.

The Kauravas rallied on the day that followed, but to neither side came victory. On the fourth day Bhima performed great feats. He was opposed by fourteen of Duryodhana's brothers, who had resolved to kill him, but the mighty Pandava slew eight of them and made the others seek safety in flight.

On the fifth day the Vrishnis suffered heavily. The impetuous Bhima narrowly escaped death on the sixth day. He drove deep into Duryodhana's army, and was surrounded by hundreds of warriors who thirsted for his blood. Drupada went to his aid, but was surrounded also. Both heroes were wounded and would have fallen had not Arjuna rescued them. Meanwhile Drona smote the Pandavas so heavily that on the following day Bhishma broke and scattered a wing of their army.

On the tenth day the Pandavas planned a fierce attack on Bhishma, who had caused them to suffer heavily. The aged hero was opposed by Arjuna, and all the warriors on either side paused to look on when these two met in combat. Shikandin,[1] who had been wronged by Bhishma in a former life, rushed forward like a foaming billow, and the aged warrior let his arms

[1] This enemy of Bhishma had been born a woman, but changed sexes with a Yaksha (elf). In the *Æneid* (bk. vi) Æneas met Cæneus, "once a youth, now a woman, transformed by fate to his former shape".

fall on beholding him. He could not fight with one who had been born a woman. Then was he pierced by Arjuna's arrows, and fell fatally wounded. That night the Kauravas sorrowed greatly, as did also the Pandava brothers who loved Bhishma. Friends and enemies gathered round him as he lay dying on the field.

Drona succeeded Bhishma as commander-in-chief. He arranged his army like a spider's web, and bewildered and drove back the Pandavas. Abhi-manyu, son of Arjuna, was slain with other strong warriors. On the next day Arjuna wrought havoc among the Kauravas. He pressed onward till he confronted Karna, who had entered the fray, Bhishma having fallen; but night came on quickly and prevented him meeting his great rival in combat. Drona slew Drupada next day, but that was the last great deed he performed. Dhrista-dyumna searched for Drona, and saw him in a state of bewilderment, because he believed his dear son had been killed.

> Then the prince of fair Panchala swiftly drove across the plain,
> Marked his father's cruel slayer, marked his noble father slain.
>
> Dhrista-dyumna bent his weapon and his shaft was pointed well,
> And the priest and proud preceptor, peerless Drona, lifeless fell.
>
> And the fatal day was ended, Kurus fled in abject fear,
> Arjun for his ancient teacher dropped a silent filial tear.

Proud Karna then became commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army. On the first day he fought fiercely, but was as fiercely opposed by the Pandavas. Night fell after hours of carnage which drenched the plain with blood. Duryodhana called a council of war, and exclaimed dolefully: "This is the seventeenth day of the war and many of our strongest heroes have fallen. Bhishma and Drona and numerous other warriors are dead."

Said Karna: "To-morrow will be the supreme day of the war, for I have vowed to slay Arjuna or fall by his hand."

On the next morning Karna drove fearlessly into battle. He was opposed by Bhima, but Duryodhana's brother, Duhsasana, sprang upon Bhima. Now Bhima had longed to meet that evil-hearted Kaurava who had put Draupadi to shame.

The conflict that ensued was brief. Bhima swung his mace and struck down Duhsasana, who fell heavily and broke his back. Then Bhima cut off his head and drank his blood, as he had vowed to do. "Ho, ho!" he cried out; "never have I tasted a sweeter draught."

Arjuna and Karna met in deadly combat. They shot arrows in clouds against one another. Karna was wounded, but one of his shafts struck the string of the Gandiva bow and severed it. Arjuna, however, restrung the bow and renewed the attack. For a time the issue hung in the balance. Then suddenly a wheel of Karna's chariot sank in mire. Arjuna placed a crescent-shaped arrow in his bow, drew the string, shot it, and smote off Karna's head.

Thus did a brother slay a brother in that fierce conflict.

When Karna fell, the Kauravas broke in flight, and were utterly routed. The Pandavas won an overwhelming victory.

Duryodhana concealed himself in a lake, neck-deep in the water among the reeds, but Bhima found him, and Yudhish-thira bade him come forth.

Said Duryodhana: "Take my kingdom now and have pleasure in it. Depart and leave me, for I must go into the jungle and engage in meditation."

Bhima threatened to slay him where he stood if he refused to come forth.

Said Duryodhana: "If you promise to fight one by one, I shall come out of the water and slay you all."

"So be it," Yudhish-thira answered. "Come forth now that you have spoken as befits a warrior."

Thereafter Bhima and Duryodhana met in single combat armed with maces. They fought like two fierce bulls, smiting heavy blows; for hours they fought. At length, however, Bhima smashed the right knee-bone of the Kaurava king, who fell heavily. Then the powerful and impulsive Pandava prince danced round his kinsman, shouting: "Draupadi is avenged! Draupadi is avenged!"

Duryodhana lay all night on the battle-field, blood flowing from his wound, and slowly dying. Of his foremost heroes only three remained alive. These were Ashwattha-man, son

of Drona, Kripa, and Kritavar-man. They came to Duryodhana in the darkness of night and told him they had raided the enemy camp and slain Dhrista-dyumna and the Pandava brothers and carried off their heads. A torch was lit and they showed the heads to Duryodhana, who cried out: "Alas! what horror is this? You have not slain the Pandava brothers but the innocent children of Draupadi, who, had they lived, would have perpetuated our name and fame. My heart burns against their sires, the sons of Pandu, but not against their harmless children."

Heavily Duryodhana groaned; then his heart broke with grief and he died a death of agony.

On the next day King Dhrita-rashtra and Queen Gandhari visited the battle-field, sorrowing for their fallen sons. The Pandavas approached the queen and she cried out: "Alas! the smell of Duryodhana is upon you all."

Deep was the anguish of Draupadi; she mourned for her brother, Dhrista-dyumna, and her five children who had been massacred in their sleep, and it seemed as if she could not continue to live.

Pritha lamented for Karna, and when his body was laid on the pyre she asked Yudhish-thira to pour out the funeral oblation over the ashes of his dead brother. The Pandava princes together performed the funeral rites of Duryodhana and his brothers. All the other heroes who fell in battle were cremated on the plain of Kuru-kshetra.

VIII. The Vision of the Dead

Thereafter Yudhish-thira was proclaimed king in Hastinapura with Draupadi as queen. The pious son of Pandu reigned wisely and well, but he took no joy in his possessions, and lamented continuously over the carnage of the great war. Vyasa, the holy sage, advised the melancholy king to sacrifice a white horse as an atonement for his sins, and this was done.

Dhrita-rashtra, Gandhari, his wife, and Pritha retired to the woods and lived as ascetics, preparing for the end of life and their passing to the next world. After several months had gone past they were visited by Yudhish-thira and his brothers. Vyasa and other Rishis also went to the retreat at the same time.

And after they had spoken one with another on holy things for several days, Vyasa addressed Dhrita-rashtra, saying: "O King, I know that your heart burns for your children. Tell me what wish of yours I shall grant to-day?"

The blind king said he longed to meet his dead sons. Vyasa granted the boon and promised Dhrita-rashtra celestial sight, so that he might behold his offspring.

Then Dhrita-rashta said: "Happy am I, for this day my life is crowned with success. The gift of sight that you have obtained for me has washed away all my sins. No longer do I dread my passing to the next world. Full as my heart is with love for my children, whom I shall ever remember, it is tortured when I think of the wrongs they have done, and especially the wicked acts of Duryodhana of evil understanding. Alas! he always persecuted the innocent Pandavas. Many have died because of what he said and did; many have been

taken from their dear wives and beloved parents—many heroes have become the guests of Yama[1] because of him. . . . Thinking of those who have fallen, and wondering what fate is theirs, my heart burns within me by day and by night. Duryodhana strove to obtain the sovereignty of the world and caused the Kuru race, which was prospering greatly, to be annihilated. I am without peace of mind, thinking of what has happened."

Those who heard this lament shed tears, for the blind king's words renewed their own particular sorrows. Queen Gandhari spoke, saying: "Thus for sixteen years the king has grieved for his sons. By night he breathes heavily and scarcely sleeps. He can never forget his children. What need is there for showing them to him? Many others sorrow for their dear ones. Oh! a hundred wives gather around me weeping for their husbands, the high-souled heroes who never retreated in battle, weeping for their sons, weeping for their brothers."

Pritha, who was wasted with suffering, grieved in silence for Karna. Vyasa read her thoughts and said: "Tell me what is in your secret heart, O blessed one."

Then Pritha told of the birth of Karna, whom she had cast into the waters. "I crave to behold him once again," she sighed.

Vyasa made answer, saying: "Blest may you be! Your wish shall be fulfilled. Your heart's fever will be taken away."

To Queen Gandhari he said: "Blest may you be! You shall this night behold your children and kinsmen and friends like men newly risen from sleep. Widows shall behold their husbands, daughters their sires, and mothers their sons. Dhrita-rashtra shall see those he still loves and has long mourned for. I shall take away all the grief in your hearts. Now, go all of you towards the holy Ganges, for the slain will arise to-night."

Then all who heard these words arose and went to the banks of the Ganges. With Dhrita-rashtra went the Pandavas and all the ladies old and young. All day long they waited; and when the sun reached the sacred mountain in the west they

[1] King of the Dead.

performed their evening rites, bathing in the waters of the holy Ganges.

In silence all waited on the river banks. Night came on as they waited with the old king and his queen—those who had fought on the side of the Pandavas and those who had fought on the side of the Kauravas.

Suddenly a great uproar was heard in the waters. It was like the noise of battle when Kauravas and Pandavas waged war. Then the people beheld the dead kings and warriors arising in thousands from the Ganges. Karna arose and Duryodhana arose; all the dead sons of Dhrita-rashtra arose; brothers and sons appeared together and were known to all. Resplendent were their bodies. Each one was clad in battle array, with armour and weapons; horsemen were mounted on their steeds, charioteers were in their chariots, and some rode on elephants; others marched proudly, singing songs of valour.

To Dhrita-rashtra was given, as promised, celestial vision, so that he beheld for the first time those he loved so well. His heart rejoiced greatly, as did also the heart of Gandhari as she welcomed her children who had fallen in battle. With wonder and fear the people on the river banks gazed at the risen dead. It seemed a high carnival of happy men and women. Like a picture painted on canvas the wondrous scene opened before all eyes.

The dead looked joyful; they seemed like gods moving in Heaven. They greeted the living and the living greeted the dead. Some met with sires and mothers; wives met with husbands, and friends with friends. With great joy the Pandava brothers greeted Karna and the slaughtered children of Draupadi. They became reconciled with Karna, their own brother, against whom they had fought, their own brother who had fought against them; love and peace was established between them. All kinsmen who had been enemies became friends; all who had been friends renewed their friendship. It was indeed a night of gladness: that holy place seemed a very Heaven. No longer was there grief or fear, no longer was there suspicion or discontent, no longer was there any reproach when all met

together. The women forgot their sorrows, meeting sires and husbands, brothers and sons, with kisses and embraces in the night.

But at length, after the brief hours of happiness went past and the time of parting came, sad farewells had to be spoken. All the dead returned to their places. Suddenly as they had come, so did they vanish. The dead passed from sight in the twinkling of an eye; they plunged into the Ganges with all their horses and cars and fluttering standards. Each went to his own place—some to the Paradise of Varuna (god of ocean), some to the realm of Kubera (god of treasure), and some to the Paradise of Surya (god of the sun), and certain of them passed to the country of the Uttara-Kurus.[1] Others went away in company of their deities.

And after all had gone, Vyasa, standing waist-deep in the Ganges, spoke to the widows of slain warriors, saying: "Let those who wish to reach the realms in which their husbands dwell now plunge into the sacred waters."

The chief ladies, hearing these words, and putting faith in them, thereupon leapt into the Ganges, so that they might join their loved ones, and thus be freed from mortal bonds. Clad in celestial garments, their souls immediately passed to those realms in which their husbands were and partook of the joys that were their due. They were seen riding on cars to the celestial home of happiness.

Then Vyasa granted to the men here and hereafter the fulfilment of the wishes that were nearest to their hearts.

Great was the joy of the people of all regions when they heard of this meeting between the living and the hallowed dead.

The highest goal hereafter will be reached by those hearing this narrative who are of goodly conduct, who have practised self-restraint, have been cleansed of sin by giving alms, who are sincere, who are free from falsehood and of all desire to injure others, who have faith and believe in the Scriptures, and listen with intelligence to this wonderful *parvan*.

[1] The Indian homeland of the Kurus. Similarly the northern Welsh people, who had migrated from Strathclyde, believed that their dead went to the forests of Caledonia.

Hearing this account of the return of the dead, a king once asked: "How can those whose bodies have been destroyed reappear in the same forms they had aforetime?"

A sage answered him, saying: "Works are never destroyed. The body is the product of works. The soul united to this product of works knows both pleasure and pain. It is like a mirror that reflects things, but is not changed or destroyed by what it reflects. As long as works endure the soul-reflection of works will also endure. . . ."

IX. The Pandavas in Hades

Two years went past. Then one day a great fire broke out in the forest in which Dhrita-rashtra, Gandhari, and Pritha practised austerities, and they perished in the flames. They saw the fire sweeping towards them on every side, and were unable to escape. Facing the east, they sat down and met death while they prayed.

Yudhish-thira sorrowed, weeping like a child for his mother, and his brothers wept with him. All the people in the kingdom were stricken with grief.

After this Yudhish-thira became more and more cheerless. He felt oppressed by the burden of the crown.

His cup of grief was filled to the brim when he came to know that a terrible disaster had befallen the kingdom of Krishna. The Vrishni warriors, his subjects, fought against one another, and many were slain. Krishna and Balarama retired to the forest, and there they both died. The soul of Balarama crept out of his mouth in the form of a white snake with red eyes, and went towards the ocean. Krishna, clad in yellow robes, lay down rapt in Yoga (meditation). A hunter, mistaking him for a deer, shot an arrow and wounded him in the heel,[1] and Krishna died. His soul ascended to heaven in splendour.

Afterwards Krishna's city, Dwaraka, was swallowed by the ocean, and those who escaped looked back, saying: "How strange are the workings of Fate!"

The remnant was led away by Arjuna, who had come to visit Krishna, and arrived just in time to perform his funeral rites.

Arjuna returned to Hastina-pura, and told Yudhish-thira

[1] As Achilles was wounded. The hunter's name was Jara, which means "Old Age".

of the slaughter of the Vrishnis, the death of Krishna and Balarama, and the swallowing of Dwaraka by the ocean.

Said Yudhish-thira: "Time cooks every man in his cauldron. What has happened is due to Time. This you must realize."

Arjuna assented, and said: "Time! Time! Time!" and no more.

Thereafter the brothers, having taken counsel together, resolved to retire from the world. Yudhish-thira made over the kingdom to his cousin Yuyutsa, son of Dhrita-rashtra, who had fought with him against the Kauravas. Then, having performed religious ceremonies for the advancement of Krishna and Balarama in the Otherworld, he called his subjects together and made known his intention to leave the kingdom and go hence. The people would fain have made him change his mind, but the king and his brothers cast off their royal robes and jewels and put on garments made of the bark of trees. Draupadi did likewise, and the women all wept to see her.

Then the five brothers and the princess went away together, followed by a dog. The citizens accompanied them for some distance, and then returned sorrowfully to the city.

After they had observed a fast, the king and his followers turned towards the east, Yudhish-thira going in front. Behind the king was Bhima, next came Arjuna, the twins were behind Arjuna, the eldest being first, and behind the twins walked Draupadi. They went on until they reached the sea of red waters, on the shore of which Agni met them. The god of fire prevailed upon Arjuna to cast his celestial bow Gandiva and the inexhaustible quiver into the sea, so that these might be returned to Varuna, who had gifted them. The sons of Pandu then turned their faces southward until they reached the northern coast of the salt sea. Thereafter they went towards the south-west. They beheld the city of Dwaraka covered by the sea. Turning northward, they continued their pilgrimage until they came to the mountain Himavat, which they crossed, Beyond the Himavat they beheld a vast sandy desert, and they walked on until they saw Mount Meru, the foremost of peaks, which supports the Paradise of Indra, called Swarga.[1]

[1] Pronounced swar'ga.

As they walked quickly towards Mount Meru, Draupadi fell. Bhima spoke to the king, saying: "Draupadi never did a sinful act. Why has she fallen?"

Said the king: "She loved Arjuna most of all, and because of that she has fallen."

They walked on. Then the learned Sahadeva fell, and Bhima asked: "Why has he who has served us all with humility now fallen?"

Said the king: "He thought he had no equal in wisdom, and for that fault he has fallen."

Brave and handsome Nakula fell next, and when Bhima asked why he had fallen Yudhish-thira said: "He thought no one equalled him in beauty."

Next Arjuna fell, and, addressing Bhima, the king said: "Arjuna, proud of his valour, said he would overcome all our enemies in a single day. He did not do so. Therefore he has fallen down."

Soon afterwards Bhima fell. He called out: "O King, look. I, your favourite, have fallen down. Tell me why, if you know."

Said King Yudhish-thira: "You were a great eater and boasted of your bodily strength. You never attended to the needs of others when you were eating. Because of that you have fallen down, O Bhima."

Having spoken thus, the king walked on, never looking back, and the dog followed him. Indra, making the heavens resound, came down to meet him, and the king of men, addressing the king of the gods, spake, saying: "My brothers have all fallen on the way. They must go hence without me. I do not wish to go to Paradise without them and without Draupadi."

Said Indra: "You shall see them all in Paradise with Krishna. As for yourself, it has been ordained that you will enter Paradise in your human body."

Yudhish-thira said: "O Lord of Yesterday and To-day, the dog is greatly devoted to me and my heart is moved towards him. Let him enter Paradise with me."

Said Indra: "Send the dog away. There is no cruelty in doing so."

Yudhish-thira said: "A righteous man cannot commit an unrighteous act. I have no wish to obtain bliss by casting off one devoted to me."

Said Indra: "There is no place in Paradise for men accompanied by dogs. Send the dog away."

Yudhish-thira said: "It is sinful to abandon a devoted friend. I cannot send the dog away to secure bliss for myself."

Said Indra: "Will you renounce everything you have won for the sake of a dog?"

Yudhish-thira said: "I did not abandon my brothers until they were dead. There can be no friendship between the dead and the living. I cannot abandon this, my living companion."

When he had spoken thus the dog was transformed into Dharma, the god of righteousness, who spoke, saying: "I followed you as a dog. Because you were devoted to me you renounced Paradise instead of renouncing your companion. Because of that you have won celestial bliss."

Then Yudhish-thira entered the car of Indra with Dharma and went to Paradise.

When they had entered the realm of bliss, Indra spake to Yudhish-thira, saying: "Live here, O King. Why do you still cherish human affections? This is Paradise. Think not of your brothers who are destined to live in happiness."

Said Yudhish-thira: "O conqueror of demons, I cannot dwell anywhere except with them. I wish to go to the realm in which my brothers are, and where Draupadi is."

Then Indra said: "O King of kings, live in this place which you have won for yourself by your good deeds. Why do you keep alive your human affections? This is Paradise. Behold the saints who have reached the realm of the gods!"

Said Yudhish-thira: "O subduer of demons, I cannot dwell anywhere separated from those I love. It is my wish to go whither my brothers have gone. It is my wish to go whither dark Draupadi has gone."

So he spoke. Then he looked round about him. He beheld Duryodhana sitting on a throne, richly adorned, and honoured as a hero amidst the saints. Beholding him, Yudhish-thira turned his back, his heart burning with anger; he spoke loudly,

saying: "I do not wish to live in a realm of happiness with jealous Duryodhana. It was on his account that friends and kinsmen were slain by us. It was by him we were persecuted in the forest. It was he who caused Draupadi to be put to shame. I have no desire even to see Duryodhana. Let me go to the place where my brothers are."

The Rishi Narada smiled and answered him, saying: "O King of kings, this should not be. All enmity comes to an end in Paradise. Speak not again as you have spoken regarding Duryodhana. He is foremost among the kings who dwell now in Paradise. By causing his body to be poured as a libation on the flames of battle he has been enabled to reach the realm for heroes. Although you and your brothers were persecuted by him, yet by performance of warrior (Kshatriya) rites he has attained bliss. . . . Forget all that has happened and meet Duryodhana as a friend. This is Paradise, O King of men. There can be no enmities here."

Said Yudhish-thira: "If this realm of heroes is Duryodhana's, that sinful one who caused strife and slaughter, and for whose sake we suffered grief and wrong, it is my desire to go to the regions in which dwell those high-souled heroes, my truthful brothers. Where are Karna and the other goodly warriors? I do not see them here. And where is Draupadi and her sons, and Abhimanyu irresistible in war? . . . At my mother's command I offered oblations of water unto Karna. . . . Wherever Karna may be, I wish to see him. I knew not he was my brother, and I caused him to be slain by Arjuna. . . . I desire also to behold mighty Bhima, who was dearer to me than life, and Arjuna, who resembled Indra himself. I desire to behold Draupadi of righteous conduct. I cannot stay here. Truly I say it. O Lord of the gods, what is Paradise to me if I am not with my brothers? Where my brothers are, there is Paradise. This, for me, is not Paradise."

To Yudhish-thira the gods spake, saying: "If you long to go yonder, then go without delay. It is the will of the lord of the gods to grant your wish."

Forthwith a celestial guide was commanded to lead Yudhish-thira to the abode of his brothers and kinsmen, even to

Hell. The messenger walked in front, along that doleful and difficult path which has been trodden and torn by men of evil deeds. It leads to a dark and dismal region, and is fringed by flames of fire. Here it is covered by hairs and moss, and there it is miry with flesh and blood, or heaped with bones. Clouds of stinging insects hover in the air, and under foot are noisome insects and worms. Parts of the path are strewn with rotting corpses. The whole region stinks horribly. Fierce grisly bears prowl about devouring offal; there are also many crows, vultures, and other birds, with iron beaks, and evil spirits with protruding mouths, sharp as needles, that tear and sever bodies. The path twines narrowly round and under vast cliffs and skirts dark and yawning chasms.

Yudhish-thira's mind was greatly afflicted as he walked along this evil-smelling path of horror, beholding things that cannot be told. At length he reached a boiling river which was difficult to cross; then he passed through a deep forest where the trees have leaves sharp as swords and razors. Numerous, too, are the Kuta-shalmalika trees.[1] He saw deserts of hot burning sand and iron cliffs and boulders of iron, and iron pots full of boiling oil.

To his grief Yudhish-thira beheld sinful men enduring terrible tortures.

Horrified by the sights and the overpowering stench, he spoke to the celestial guide saying: "Must we still go on? Oh! where are my brothers? Tell me what realm of the gods is this that we have entered?"

The celestial messenger paused and made answer: "The gods have commanded me to lead you thus far into Hell but no farther. If you are weary, O King, you may now go back with me."

Sad of soul and half stupefied by the stench, Yudhish-thira decided to turn back; his heart was afflicted with grief and horror. Then he heard piteous moans, and voices called to him: "O son of Dharma, O kingly saint, O son of the gods, O son of Pandu, tarry yet a little time. A gracious scent comes from you; it is like a cool sweet breeze, and is affording us

[1] A species of the *Bombax Malabaricum* ("Monkey's puzzle").

relief from our sufferings. Oh, the sight of you brings joy to us! Let our joy last a little longer. Tarry yet a little time, for when you are near us we are not afflicted by our tortures."

The voices came from all sides; they touched the heart of the compassionate king, who exclaimed: "Ah me, how agonizing!" and halted. It seemed to him that he had never heard those voices before, and, wondering who made piteous moan, he spoke, saying: "Who are you and why are you here?"

The voices answered him dolefully, one after another, saying: "I am Karna." . . . "I am Bhima." . . . "I am Arjuna." . . . "I am Nakula." . . . "I am Sahadeva." . . . "I am Dhrista-dyumna." . . . "I am Draupadi." . . . "We are the sons of Draupadi." . . .

Thus did the voices call out, husky with suffering. "Oh, what perverse fate is this?" lamented Yudhish-thira. "Oh, what wicked sins were ever done by the high-souled ones, Karna and my other brothers, by the children of Draupadi and by Draupadi, the slender-waisted Princess of Panchala, that they should be tortured in this foul place? I cannot tell; I know not of any evils that can be attributed to such righteous beings. What has Duryodhana ever done, and what have his brothers ever done, to deserve joy and honour in Heaven? What have those whom I love ever done to deserve the tortures of Hell? . . . Oh, do I dream, or am I still awake? . . . Is this a vision of a fevered brain?"

Yudhish-thira was overcome with grief and trembling sympathy. For a time he was unable to speak. Then suddenly he became fiercely angry; he censured the gods and even Dharma, his celestial sire.

Still tortured by the foul stench, he spoke sternly and sharply to the celestial guide, saying: "Go back to those who sent you hither! Tell them I shall never return, for I shall stay here because I can give relief to those I love."

The celestial guide returned speedily to Paradise and informed Indra what Yudhish-thira had said.

In the twinkling of an eye the gods, with Indra leading them, came to the place where Yudhish-thira was. Dharma, god of righteousness, came with them.

The thick darkness passed away before the brightness of the gods. Tortures ceased; the boiling river, the burning desert, the thorny forest, the pots of boiling oil, the iron rocks, and the cliffs and chasms, and the nameless horrors all vanished from sight. The air grew sweet; a cool, scented breeze began to blow because the gods were there, and with them many heavenly beings and holy saints.

Then Indra, lord of the gods, spoke to Yudhish-thira and said: "Come, come, O chief of men, ended now are these illusions. You have proved yourself worthy of Paradise. Be not angry but listen to me. Know now Hell should be seen by every kind of man. Many are good and many are wicked. He who first goes to Paradise must afterwards go down to Hell, but he who first suffers in Hell must afterwards enjoy Paradise. The greatest sinners are the first to enter Paradise. I, therefore, desirous of doing you good, sent you to behold Hell first. . . . Now all your brothers and Draupadi and her children have been cleansed of their sins. All your royal allies have now gone to Paradise. You shall soon see them. Karna, for whom you sorrow, is there. Be no longer sorrowful, O lord among men; let your heart be comforted. Having first suffered misery, come and be happy beyond belief, come and enjoy the rewards of the righteous; you have won Paradise by good deeds, by penances, by offering up sacrifices. Your realm is high above the realms of kings. Where Bharata is, there will you ever be."

Then Indra bade Yudhish-thira plunge into the celestial Ganges, so that he might be divested of all that is human and mortal and so that his mind might be cleansed of enmity.

Dharma spoke next and said: "O King, I am well pleased with you, because of your devotion to me and your truthfulness, forgiveness, and self-restraint. Thrice have I tested you. First I questioned you in the Dwaita forest, when you followed the stag that carried off the holy fire-sticks. You answered well. Next I took the form of a dog, and I tested you when your brothers and Draupadi had fallen by the way. Then, last of all, I have tested you in Hell. It was your desire to remain in Hell for the sake of those you love. You are cleansed and purified, O son of Pritha; now you shall enjoy great bliss. . . .

Come now, behold the celestial Ganges, O greatest of the Bharatas."

Yudhish-thira went towards the sacred river and plunged into it. He cast off his human body and assumed a celestial form. Sanctified and made sacred, he went with the gods to Paradise. The spirits of the celestial weapons met him and adored him in Paradise. There he saw Karna shining in greater splendour than the sun-god, and all his other brothers effulgent and stately. Draupadi was adorned with lotus garlands, and had exceeding great beauty, and Indra told him that she was the goddess Sri, who had for a period assumed human form.

Thereafter Indra led Yudhish-thira to all those who had fought on his side and had won Paradise by word and by thought and by deed.

Drona was reborn as a great warrior; Dhrita-rashtra and his wife Gandhari went to the Paradise of the lord of treasures; Pandu and his wives went to the Paradise of Indra; Karna entered the sun, and other children of deities entered these deities; Balarama entered the Naga (dragon-snake) Ananta which supports the earth on its head.

Krishna entered into Narayana, and his wives became Apsaras (angels). Those who fought on the side of Duryodhana became Rakshasas (demons), but gradually (by re-birth) they all at length reached the regions of bliss, some entering Indra's Paradise, some the Paradise of Kubera, and some the Paradise of Varuna.

Now all has been told that can be told regarding the Kurus and Pandavas.

THE RAMÁYANA

Introductory: The Epic and its Message

The *Ramáyana* relates the adventures and wanderings of the Indian Odysseus, Prince Rama Chandra, son of King Dasa-ratha, and of his wife, Sita, the Indian Penelope. To the Hindu it is as sacred a work as the *Mahábhárata*; indeed, it is, in a sense, the New Testament of Hinduism. Rama is an avatara or incarnation of the god Vishnu, who achieved ascendancy in the post-Vedic period, when the Aryo-Indians, having extended their conquests and cultural influence eastward and southward, from the Punjab towards "the coasts of the salt sea", came into touch with the communities of settlers who had been strongly influenced by Western Asian and Nilotic cultures. During the post-Vedic period the religious beliefs of the mingled peoples underwent a profound change. Indra and Varuna were overshadowed by Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, and goddesses who had been but shadowy figures in the Vedic literature rose into prominence. Evidently a compromise had been effected between the religious beliefs of rival cults, and it may be that the pantheons reflected the political conditions of different areas at different periods. The doctrine of the World's Ages, of which the Babylonian system of calculation is a marked feature, and the Babylonian story of the Flood were incorporated in the religious literature of the ruling classes in India. Imported beliefs are traceable in systems developed locally and coloured by Indian experiences.

The god Vishnu, whose sacred colour was blue, had associations with the sea, and carried the sacred sea-shell. It is possible that, like the blue-haired Poseidon of the Mediterranean,

he was originally a god of a sea-faring people, and that he was identified with the younger brother of the Vedic Indra. He is represented in the Epics as the god of Creation who at the beginning mused on the primordial waters, resting on the world-supporting serpent or Naga, the supreme Dragon of India. The Naga was a form of the god. Vishnu had several avataras. Krishna, whose sacred colour was dark-blue,[1] was an incarnation of the god, while his brother Balarama was an incarnation of the Naga. In the *Mahábhárata* Krishna's soul ascends to heaven, while that of Balarama issues from his mouth as a white serpent with red eyes, and goes towards the ocean.

Rama was another incarnation of Vishnu, and blue was also his sacred colour. At birth he was compared to the "blue lotus", and Indian artists have been wont to depict him as a blue man. As a sea-god, Vishnu, like Varuna, was a controller of the waters above, as well as below, the firmament, and had therefore associations with the sky and the sun and moon. One of his weapons was the gleaming discus, which is, no doubt, the sun. He was reported to have traversed the universe by taking three steps. His highest step is "fixed like an eye in the heavens". Like the sun-god Ra, of Egypt, whose hair was "pure lapis lazuli", i.e. blue, the blue god Vishnu became a universal deity. All things, having arisen from the sea, were under control of Vishnu. In the myth of "The Churning of the Ocean", Vishnu takes the shape of the tortoise that supports the mountain Mandara, the "churning-stick", and from the ocean arises, among other things, the moon and the goddess Lakshmi (or Sri), the beautiful wife of Vishnu, who was called "Daughter of the Milky Sea". She is an Indian Aphrodite. Sita, wife of Rama, is an incarnation of Lakshmi, as Rama is of Vishnu.

"Vishnu", says Monier Williams, "is the most human and humane god of the Hindu pantheon—a kind of protest in favour of a personal deity, as opposed to the impersonal pantheism of Brahma." Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva were united in a trinity, and have consequently attributes in common. But they were originally distinct deities. Shiva, the chief rival of

[1] Professor Wilson's *Essays on Sanskrit Literature*, Vol. II, p. 328.

Vishnu, was also known as Hara as Vishnu was as Hari.[1] The compound name Harihara was the result of a doctrinal attempt to fuse the two gods. The name Narayana is a mystical one, and represents Harihara as the divine father of mankind. To modern Hindus of the cult of Vishnu, the Mediator between Narayana and mankind is Rama-Krishna—Rama of the *Ramáyana* combined with Krishna of the *Mahábhárata*.

In the *Ramáyana* we meet with a different stage of Indian civilization from that found in the *Mahábhárata*. The Aryo-Indian modes of life had passed through a period of Indian development. Brahmanism, which exalted the clergy above the warriors and traders, had been overshadowed for a period by Buddhism. Then followed the Brahmanic revival. The *Ramáyana* of the poet Valmiki is an allegory closely connected with the revival of Brahmanism. In the form that the epic survives to us it is undoubtedly of later origin than the *Mahábhárata*. Valmiki appears to have utilized an ancient legend of the hero Rama, who invaded southern India and reached Ceylon. No doubt he also utilized ancient hero-songs that had gathered round the hero to whose memory were attached the traditions of the southward drift of the northern peoples, the mingled descendants of the Aryan invaders of the Punjab, of the settlers on the sea-coast, and the various Dravidian tribes that had absorbed the complex culture of Brahmanized India.

There are two other *Ramáyanas*, but Valmiki's is not only the greatest in bulk but also in literary merit.

The two prominent tribes in the *Ramáyana* are the Kosalas and the Videhas. Rama was a son of the King of the Kosalas, whose capital was Ayodhya, the modern Oude. Sita was a daughter of the King of the Videhas, identified with the modern Tirhut. The Kosalas, Videhas, and their neighbours, "the people of Kasi (Benares)", appear to have been allies who, for a prolonged period, remained hostile to the Kuru-Panchalas of the "Middle Country". In early Sanskrit literature they are referred to as "Easterners". It is undoubted that they were influenced to a certain extent by Aryan culture, but it is uncertain whether there was much Aryan blood in their veins.

[1] Odin has a similar name, which survives in the now meaningless expression "Old Harry".

Possibly they had been influenced also by the imported beliefs of the seafarers on the coast. There are indications that a fusion of cultures took place in the east. Vishnu's many forms suggest as much. As a sea-god he was depicted as half a man and half a fish—a form reminiscent of the Babylonia Ea (Oannes), or Dagan of the Euphrates, who was probably the same god as Dagon of the Philistines. It may be that the fish-man deity was imported by the sea traders who are referred to in the *Mahábhárata* version of the *Ramáyana*. Another form of Vishnu is a lion-headed man—a form which is characteristically Egyptian. The Easterners buried their dead in graves lined with brick or stone, like the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, and, like the Egyptians, they were renowned as musicians. There can be no doubt that Brahmanic culture was slight all over the eastern area in pre-Buddhistic times, although it was recorded that Janaka, a king of Videha, became a patron of Brahmanism. There are significant references to the defeat of a King Dhritarasthra of Kasi by a Bharata monarch which resulted in the Kasi (Benares) people ceasing to light the holy fire. Evidently the Easterners were not originally worshippers of the fire-god Agni of the Aryan invaders.

In the cultural period reflected by the *Ramáyana*, however, the Easterners had absorbed the Brahmanic doctrines of the Middle Country. It may be that a compromise had been effected, and that their sea-god had been identified with Vishnu. The Brahman priests are found, in the poem, to be supreme. They are the mediators between God and mankind, and no one can offer sacrifices without their aid; kings and commoners must submit to their sway even in family affairs.

As in the *Mahábhárata*, the father is the head of the family. The position of women, as defined in the laws of Manu, is reflected in the *Ramáyana*.

In childhood a female must be dependent upon her father; in youth, on her husband; her lord being dead, on her sons; if she has no sons, on the near kinsmen of her husband; if he has left no kinsman, on those of her father; if she has no kinsmen, on the sovereign. A woman must never seek independence. She must always live with a cheerful temper, with good management in the affairs of the house, with great care of the household furniture, and with a frugal hand in all her expenses. Though a husband

should be unobservant of approved usages, or devoid of good qualities, he must constantly be revered as a god by a virtuous wife. . . . As far only as a wife honours her husband, so far is she exalted in heaven. . . . A husband must never eat with his wife, nor look at her while she is eating. . . . The names of women should be agreeable, soft, clear, captivating the fancy, auspicious, ending in long vowels, resembling words of benediction.

Sita, the heroine of the *Ramáyana*, observed so strictly the laws of Manu that she is regarded as an ideal type of womanhood by the Hindus.

Rama, the hero, was a faithful and obedient son, and a strict elder brother, who had to be obeyed by the younger members of the family. He honoured Brahmans in accordance with the laws of Manu, which set forth:

A Brahman, whether learned or unlearned, is a mighty divinity, just as fire is a mighty divinity, whether consecrated or unconsecrated. . . . The superiority of the Brahman is by birth and Divine right. . . . Although kings rule by Divine right, they are expected to be fathers to their people. Determination not to retreat in battle, protection of the people, and obedience to Brahmans, are the best duties of kings, and secure their felicity in heaven.

A high moral tone pervades the *Ramáyana*. Rama observes strictly his moral and religious duties. Says Manu, in this connection:

Let mankind give no false testimony. The soul is its own witness; offend not thy conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of men.

The sinful have said in their heart "None sees us"; yes, the gods distinctly see them, and so does the spirit within their breasts.

Vows are sacred to Rama; the necessity of obeying his father remains even after his father's death; no matter how severe a religious law may be, he observes it faithfully. He is sent into exile, but exile, in such a case, entails no disgrace. It entails the performance of religious duties that make a man more worthy of eternal bliss. Indeed, it resembles the exile of the aged who retire to a forest to engage in religious meditation, so that their minds and souls may be purified and they may achieve eternal union with the Universal Soul—Brahma, God.

The *Ramáyana*, as has been indicated, is an allegorical narrative based on the legends of an ancient tribal hero. Rama

is an incarnation of Vishnu, and the reason for his exile, sufferings, and achievements as a warrior is explained as follows.

A powerful demon, named Ravana,[1] who ruled in Lanka (which became identified with Ceylon), had performed such severe penances that Brahma rendered him invulnerable to gods and demons. The gods appealed to Brahma, "the grandsire", and ascertained that Ravana could not be killed by any being except a man. To accomplish the overthrow of the demon king, Vishnu consented to be born among men, and chose Rama as his chief incarnation. When Rama grew into manhood his father, Dasa-ratha, wished to appoint him heir apparent, but was prevailed upon to send him into exile instead, in compliance with a promise made to one of his wives to grant her boons. This wife's son, who was named Bharata,[2] then became heir apparent; but when Dasa-ratha died Bharata refused to accept the throne, and asked Rama to return home and reign as king. Rama, however, declined to disobey his dead father's command, and decided to remain in the forest until the period of exile had run out. One day his wife, Sita, who shared his hardships, was carried away by the demon Ravana. Rama then made an alliance with the apes—the chief of whom was the ape god Hanuman—invaded Ceylon, and, after waging a fierce battle, slew the demon and recovered Sita.

Hanuman is in modern India a village guardian, and is believed to be the spirit of the monsoon. His celestial father is Vayu, the wind-god. The apes resemble the fairies and elves of western Europe. It is probable that Hanuman is the god of a non-Aryan people in India. He is usually represented as a monkey-headed man. In Egypt the monkey was associated with Thoth.

Sita, wife of Rama, bears the same name as a Vedic goddess of ploughed fields, who was the wife of Parjanya, who was either a seasonal form of Indra in his character as a rain-god or a god who was merged in Indra. In one phase of his development,

[1] Pronounced rah'vana. Like the classic Hecatoncheires (the giants Briareus, Cottys, and Gyes), Ravana had numerous arms and heads. Æneas saw Briareus in Hades (Book VI).

[2] Pronounced bhār'a-ta.

Vishnu, of whom Rama was an incarnation, was a younger brother of Indra.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard the *Ramáyana* as an elaborate Indra myth. The romance was not likely to have grown out of a nature-myth; no romance ever did. What seems clear is that mythical elements were attached to the hero and heroine of an ancient legend which was utilized, like the legend that forms the framework of the *Mahábhárata*, to point a moral and promote the doctrines of a religious cult. The great English epic, *Beowulf*, bears traces of a similar process, although it was not carried to so great an extreme. Valmiki's *Ramáyana* is, in a sense, an attack upon Buddhism, Ravana being an incarnation of Buddha.

Like the *Mahábhárata*, the *Ramáyana* developed from a comparatively short hero epic of pre-Buddhistic origin. It appears to have assumed its final form in the fourth or fifth centuries before the Christian era. The poem comprises six books, to which a supplementary book was added, the number of lines being 48,000.

"As a heroic poem," wrote the late Romesh C. Dutt, the distinguished native Indian Sanskrit scholar, "the *Mahábhárata* stands on a higher level; as a poem delineating the softer emotions of our everyday life, the *Ramáyana* sends its roots deeper into the hearts and minds of the million in India." Withal, "it teaches", as Sir Monier Williams has said, "the hopelessness of victory without purity of soul and abnegation of self".

Ramáyana

"Noble children!" uttered Rama, "dear to me the words you say.
Tell me who composed this Epic—father of this deathless lay?"

"Saint Valmiki," spake the minstrels, "framed the great immortal song,
Four and twenty thousand verses to this noble Lay belong,

"Untold tales of deathless virtue sanctify his sacred line,
And five hundred glorious cantos in this glorious Epic shine,

"In six books of mighty splendour was the poet's task begun,
With a seventh book, supplemental, is the poet's labour done.

"All thy matchless deeds, O monarch, in this Lay will brighter shine,
List to us from first to ending, if thy royal heart incline."[1]

I. Rama and Sita

In the happy days of old, the pious King Dasa-ratha, of the ancient Solar race, ruled in beautiful Ayodhya[2] (Oude), the capital of Kosala. He was as valiant as Indra and as rich as Kubera (god of treasure), and, like Manu, the sire of the human race, he was a father to his people, and his people loved him greatly because his actions were swayed by truth and justice and a high sense of kingly duty.

Ayodhya was as beautiful as Indra's celestial city. It was strongly fortified, and a deep moat surrounded the walls, which were lofty and adorned with jewels. The streets were wide and long, and lined with stately mansions; the temples were richly decorated, and the royal palaces had domes resembling mountains, and were surrounded by gardens full of flowers and birds and adorned by shady groves of fruit trees. Throughout the city were many cool ponds agleam with white bee-loved lotus blooms. The perfume of flowers and of incense pervaded the

[1] Romesh C. Dutt's translation.

[2] Pronounced ă-yŏd'hya (*ă* like *u* in *cut* and *ŏ* as in *shore*).

streets, which were decked with gorgeous banners, and the air thrilled with the sound of music, the twanging of bow-strings, and the chanting of Vedic hymns. There were no poor in the city. Everyone had clean and comely garments and used perfumes. The people loved peace and righteousness, and never ate unclean food, and never neglected religious rites, and never gave Brahmans less than a thousand rupees. All were learned, and all practised callings according to their castes, and no adult was without children and kinsmen. No cheats or vain boasters dwelt in Ayodhya; none was given to lying, and all men were faithful to their vows and faithful to their wives, and had clean minds. The troops that guarded the city were valiant and powerful, and as fierce in battle as flames of consuming fire. In the whole kingdom the spies of the monarch could not find a man of hostile mind.

Eight sage counsellors and two family priests, named Vasishtha and Vamadeva, served the pious King of Ayodhya.

King Dasa-ratha had three wives, Kausalya, Kaikeya, and Sumitra,[1] but no children were born to him until a horse sacrifice was offered to the gods. It was then that Vishnu consented to be born among men, while other gods assumed the forms of apes and bears.

Said Vishnu: "I will divide myself into four parts and be born as the four sons of Dasa-ratha. When I wage war against Ravana, the other gods, in ape and bear forms, will hasten to my aid."

Thus it came about that Kausalya became the mother of Rama, Kaikeya of Bharata, and Sumitra of the twins Lakshmana and Satrughna.[2]

Of the four children, Rama was the most beautiful. As he lay asleep in his white cradle he was like to a blue lotus afloat on the breast of the Ganges. He grew up to be a comely boy, and his parents took great delight in him.

One evening, when the full moon rose through the heavens in radiant beauty, Rama had a great desire to have it for a toy. He stretched out his hands to grasp it, but his mother could not

[1] Pronounced kow'săl-yā, ky-kay-yee', and sum-it'rā.

[2] Pronounced laksh'man-a and săt-roog'nă (*ă* like *u* in *cut*).

understand what he wanted. Many times she asked him what he wished for, and he kept pointing at the moon. At length she realized what was in the child's mind, and she spoke softly, saying: "O my child, do not expect to get the moon. It is thousands of miles away from us; it is not a toy, and no child ever obtained it. I shall give you jewels that are more beautiful than the moon, and you can amuse yourself with them."

She brought Rama many jewels, but he cast them aside in anger, and wept until his eyes were red and swollen. Hand-maidens gathered round the cot, and one by one endeavoured, in vain, to comfort the child. "Mayhap," said one, "he is hungry;" but when food was brought Rama refused to eat. "He is sleepy," another suggested. She lifted the child from the cot and, fondling him, sung a lullaby, but Rama continued to weep bitterly. Then one said: "The goddess Susti is unpropitious; let offerings be made to her;" another said: "A ghost haunts the child; send for the magician who can repeat a charm and drive the ghost away." Offerings were made to Susti and a magician repeated the ghost-expelling charm, but still Rama cried and wept. Greatly alarmed, his queen-mother sent for King Dasa-ratha, and when the king was told that the child was ill he hastened to the nursery and made efforts to soothe Rama, but without success. The child refused to be comforted. Then King Dasa-ratha summoned his chief counsellor, and told him all that had taken place. When this wise old man heard that Rama cried for the moon, he asked for a mirror. A mirror was brought, and the counsellor placed it in the child's hands. No sooner did Rama see the moon reflected in the mirror than he felt satisfied. His cries were stilled; he ceased to weep, and he became glad at heart. Then all who were near him were at ease again.

The king was greatly devoted to Rama, and when the child could say "pa" and "ma" for "peeta" and "mata",[1] he often sat on his father's knee when he discussed affairs of state with his counsellors.

The education of the young princes began when they were five years old, their instructor being Vasishtha, the family

[1] Father and mother.

priest. From time to time the king examined his sons in the presence of his counsellors. When they became young men they were trained to wield arms, and of all the princes Rama proved to be the most accomplished.

No sooner did the brothers reach the age of sixteen than the king began to consider what brides should be selected for them. It chanced that one day, as he discussed this matter with his counsellors, a Brahman entered and informed Dasa-ratha that the Rakshasas[1] were destroying the sacrificial offerings. "I pray you," he said, addressing the king, "to allow Rama to accompany me to my hermitage, because he is mighty and brave, and able to overcome the Rakshasas, and let Lakshmana accompany him."

Reluctantly the king gave his consent, and Rama and Lakshmana went away with the Brahman to the forest. There Rama slew a fierce female Rakshasa, named Taraka. In reward the Brahman chanted powerful charms, which caused the spirits of celestial weapons to appear before Rama and promise to serve him. Said Rama: "When I have need of you, I will think of you, and then you will wait upon me."

On the day that followed, the Brahman informed Rama and his brother that he must needs attend a great sacrifice which was to be offered up by Janaka,[2] King of Videha. "Come with me," he said, "and mayhap the king will show you Shiva's bow which neither god nor man can break."

Now King Janaka had sent messengers to the kings and princes of the world (India), who, in accordance with his instructions, proclaimed to all: "He who will bend the war-bow shall win my daughter, the peerless Sita."

Many suitors hastened to the city of Mithila.[3] They strove in vain, one after another, to bend the mighty bow of Shiva, and departed in sorrow and shame.

When the Brahman reached Mithila with Rama and Lakshmana, King Janaka spoke, saying: "Who are these comely and valiant youths?"

Said the Brahman: "These are sons of King Dasa-ratha; they desire greatly to behold the great bow."

[1] Demons. [2] Pronounced jăn'ă-kă (*ă* like *u* in *cut*). [3] Pronounced mit'hilă.

The monarch addressed his nobles, saying: "Bring forth the bow."

This command was obeyed. The bow was brought forth in an eight-wheeled chariot, and King Janaka, addressing the princes, said: "Behold the mighty bow which princes and demons have endeavoured in vain to bend. The gods themselves quail before it. . . . To the prince who can bend this bow I shall give in marriage my daughter, the beauteous Sita."[1]

Rama gazed at the weapon with wonder. Then he said: "Permit me, O king, to raise and bend your bow."

The monarch marvelled to hear these bold words, as did also the nobles and warriors who were gathered about him.

Janaka nodded assent, and Rama, with a smile on his face, lifted the bow. Deftly he strung it, and all were amazed at his skill and strength. Then, seizing the bow-string, the prince put forth all his power; he bent the bow with resistless force, so that it snapped in the middle and gave forth a noise like to a thunder peal. As he accomplished this mighty feat the earth shook and the mountains echoed the sound of the breaking bow, so that it seemed as if Indra had thrown his thunderbolt. All were stunned and terrified by the thunderous crash save Janaka, the Brahman, and the two sons of Dasa-ratha. Then the king spoke, saying:

"Now my ancient eyes have witnessed wondrous deed by Rama done,
Deed surpassing thought or fancy wrought by Dasa-ratha's son.

"And the proud and peerless princess, Sita, glory of my house,
Sheds on me an added lustre as she weds a god-like spouse.

"True shall be my plighted promise, Sita, dearer than my life,
Won by worth and wond'rous valour shall be Rama's faithful wife.

"Grant us leave, O royal *rishi*[2], grant us blessings kind and fair,
Envoys mounted on my chariot to Ayodhya shall repair,

"They shall speak to Rama's father of the feat by Rama done,
They shall say to Dasa-ratha, 'Sita is by valour won'.

"They shall say 'the noble princes safely live within our walls',
They shall ask him by his presence to adorn our palace halls."

[1] Here again we meet with the bow test of the *Odyssey*. Sita pronounced see'tā.
[2] The Brahman.

The Brahman gave his assent, and Janaka sent envoys to Dasa-ratha, who heard with pride of the great feat performed by his favourite son. He hastened to the royal city of Mithila, and when he arrived there Rama and Sita were wed. His other sons were also married to princesses who dwelt in Janaka's palace.

Thereafter the young princes brought their peerless brides to Ayodhya, where the people welcomed them.

Rama and Sita loved each other very dearly.[1] It was a great joy to them to wander about together in the moonlight when the air was warm and the world was clad in beauty.

One night they went to a pool which sparkled with lotus blooms. Rama spoke softly, saying: "Sita, my beloved, you are graceful as the lotus; your hair is soft as silken moss; your eyes are like beautiful bees; fair is your face as the moon's soft image on the clear pool; shapely your arms as lotus stalks; and beautiful your bosom as buds of sweet lotus. O, my beloved and peerless bride, who is like to you?"

They plunged together into the cool moon-swept pool, and Rama flung lotus blooms at his bride. Sita retreated from him, and when she got beyond her depth she clasped her arms round Rama's neck; nor did he hasten to draw her back, so sweet was it to be embraced by her.

They played hide-and-seek among the water-flowers. Once Rama sank down until naught but his face was seen, and Sita, bending over the waters as she searched for him, could not tell whether she saw the face of Rama or a beautiful blue lotus bloom on the breast of the pool. She stooped to smell the lotus, and when she touched her lover's lips he kissed her sweetly. Thereafter Sita hid herself, and she seemed to be a lotus among the lotuses. . . . That night the heart of Sita was intoxicated with love, and she babbled words of love and tender sweetness. Happy were the lovers together as are Vishnu and Lakshmi in Paradise.

[1] We are not informed regarding the other princes and princesses.

II. The Banishment of Rama

Rama was greatly beloved by the people. Even his enemies admired him. He was well versed in holy writ; he had great wisdom and was skilled in every science. Withal, he had all his senses under control, and was valiant and strong and incapable of being baffled. In his father's kingdom he was ever the terror of the wicked and the protector of the good.

King Dasa-ratha was well pleased with his son. Old age was creeping upon him, and he and his counsellors began to consider who should be appointed Yuva-rajah (young Rajah),[1] to take over the duties of sovereignty and allow the monarch to spend his closing years preparing for the next life. The counsellors and Brahmans favoured the choice of Rama, and Dasa-ratha rejoiced greatly, as did also the people of the kingdom. The spokesman of the people, addressing the king, said:

"We would see him Heir and Regent, Dasa-ratha, ancient lord,
For his heart is blessed with valour, virtue marks his deed and word.

"Lives not man in all the wide earth who excels the stainless youth
In his loyalty to Duty, in his love of righteous Truth. . . .

"As a father to his children to his loving men he came,
Blessed our homes and maids and matrons till our infants lisped his name.

"For our humble woes and troubles Rama hath the ready tear,
To our humble tales of suffering Rama lends his willing ear.

"Happy is the royal father who hath such a righteous son,
For in town and mart and hamlet every heart hath Rama won. . . .

"Great in gifts and great in glory, Rama doth our homage own.
We would see the princely Rama seated on his father's throne."[2]

Rama was sent for, and his father, having blessed him, bade him spend the night in the temple of Vishnu, with his wife Sita,

[1] Prince Regent. [2] Romesh C. Dutt's translation.

so that he might prepare for the ceremony of investment on the morrow, when he would ride a lordly elephant below the white umbrella.

Meanwhile the citizens decorated Ayodhya with gay banners and streamers and garlands of flowers. The streets were swept and sprinkled with water, and when darkness fell, coloured lamps were hung on trees and masts. Young and old made merry. Dancers and musicians and acrobats pleased the crowds that gathered in square and hall, and everyone praised Rama, and rejoiced because he was to become Prince Regent of the kingdom.

There was one, however, who did not feel glad. This was the aged woman Manthará,[1] who waited upon the king's wife Kaikeyi, and had nursed her son Bharata. She spoke to her mistress, saying: "This is indeed a day of ill luck for you, but Kausalya is fortunate and well-favoured because her son is to be installed as Prince Regent. Yet Bharata is greater than Rama, and has the first claim on the throne. When Rama reigns, you, O Kaikeyi, will become the bond-slave of your rival Kausalya. Will your son become the servant of her son, and will his wife have to obey the command of Rama's wife? . . . Haste ye, heedless one, and save your son from disgrace and dishonour ere it is yet too late. Now is your opportunity to make Dasa-ratha grant you the boons he has promised. Say that you wish Bharata to become Prince Regent, and that you wish Rama to go into exile in the jungle. Well you know that Dasa-ratha is enchanted by your beauty, and that Kausalya is jealous on that account. Do not permit her son to reign, because Kausalya would then revenge herself on you.

> Mark my word, my child Kaikeyi, much these ancient eyes have seen,
> Rama's rule is death to Bharat, insult to my honoured queen.

The old woman's words reached the heart of her mistress; they stung her like a virulent snake. Burning with rage and jealousy, Kaikeyi rose up, put on all her ornaments, and went to "mourning chamber", so that her husband might find her there when he came to look for her.

[1] Pronounced mant'ha-rā.

Now Dasa-ratha had promised to grant Kaikeyi two boons. In times past he went to assist the god Indra in waging war against the demons. He was grievously wounded, and would have died, but Kaikeyi gave him healing. That was why he vowed to grant her the boons, and she had said: "I have naught to ask meantime, but when I have need of favours I shall remind you of your promise."

The people were rejoicing in the brightly-lit streets, and Rama and Sita, in the temple of Vishnu, engaged in religious exercises, as the beautiful and slender-waisted Kaikeyi went to the "mourning chamber", her heart full of jealousy and hatred. There the old king found her. Like a broken creeper, like a fallen angel, she lay moaning on the stone slabs; tears fell from her lotus-like eyes.

"Why are you sorrowful?" he asked, in great distress. "Speak and tell what you desire, so that your desire may be fulfilled."

Said Kaikeyi: "Grant me the two boons you pledged yourself to grant when I gave you healing, or else I shall die tonight."

Dasa-ratha said: "Speak your wishes that they may be realized. May I never win bliss hereafter if my promise is not kept. Tell me quickly, O royal lady, what your heart seeks after."

Said Kaikeyi: "Let royal deeds redeem royal words. My first boon is that my son Bharata be installed as Prince Regent, the second is that Rama be sent into exile for fourteen years, to live as an ascetic with matted hair and clad in rags and deerskin."

Dasa-ratha swooned when he heard these words; he fell prone like a tree cast down by a tempest. . . . After a time he recovered his senses and spoke huskily, saying: "Have I dreamed a fearsome dream? Do demons afflict me? Is my mind clouded by madness?"

He gazed at Kaikeyi as a dazed and trembling deer gazes at a tigress. Lying on the stone slabs he heaved choking sighs. He was as helpless as a serpent that has been charmed. Then suddenly he sobbed convulsively; a faintness dimmed his eyes

and overshadowed his soul. For a time he lay like one who has been stunned.

Gradually he collected his thoughts, and fierce wrath burned within him. Red fire flamed in his eyes, and in a loud voice he reproached Kaikeyi, saying: "O traitress to your king and husband, would you bring ruin to my race? Wherefore would you persecute the righteous Rama? He has never wronged you; why do you seek thus ruthlessly to accomplish his ruin? Have I wooed you, Kaikeyi, have I enthroned you in my heart, have I loved you, only to find that you have crept into my house like a poisonous snake? Have I showered favours on you so that Rama, who is loved by me and loved by my people, should be banished and deprived of his own? Oh, banish Kausalya and Sumitra, take my kingdom from me, take my life, but do not ask me to part with noble Rama until I die. . . . O Kaikeyi, Kaikeyi, take pity for my sake and ask other boons."

Coldly and bitterly Kaikeyi made answer: "If you will not fulfil your promise now to one who has saved your life, you will be despised by your peers, and I shall drink poison to-night—I, your cheated wife."

Said Dasa-ratha: "You are comely, O Kaikeyi; beautiful is your face. You have taken captive my heart. How can this evil wish dwell in your bosom and blacken your soul? You have been a faithful wife. How can you defile your soul with such cruel intent? . . . Oh, you have snared me with your beauty! . . . Can I dishonour my beloved son Rama? Oh, I would rather enter hell than send him into exile! How can I ever look in his face again? How can I see him parting with Sita? . . . Oh, I have drunk sweet wine mixed with poison! . . . Have pity on me, Kaikeyi! I fall at your feet. . . . I would that the god of death would snatch me off in this hour."

Coldly spake Kaikeyi, saying: "If you honour truth you will grant the boons, but if you refuse to fulfil your promise, let it be made known to the whole world that the righteous Dasaratha is a liar, and that he has broken the heart of his wife. Yes, I shall drink poison."

Said Dasa-ratha, the grief-stricken, heart-broken king, looking towards the midnight sky: "O shadow-robed night, decked

with stars! arrest the hours that pass by or else give my heart release from life. Cover with your dark mantle my sorrow and my shame, and hide this evil deed from the knowledge of mankind. Let me die ere the dawn! May the morning sun never rise to shine on my sin-polluted life!"[1]

Thus did the king make moan all night long. To Kaikeyi he said: "I grant the boons, having vowed so to do, but I reject you and your son Bharata forever from this hour."

Morning came. The city was robed in splendour. Banners fluttered over it, and the scent of garlands was in the air. A golden throne had been set up for Rama; before it lay a tiger-skin; the royal white umbrella was ready to be lifted over his head. Horses were yoked in chariots, elephants were decorated, Brahmans prepared to offer up the sacrifice, and crowds of people were collecting in the streets.

From Vishnu's temple came Rama. He went towards the royal palace. Accompanied by Sita and the chief royal counsellor, he went towards Dasa-ratha's room. Kaikeyi came forth and spoke to the counsellor, saying: "His Majesty would converse with Rama alone."

Rama addressed the gentle Sita, saying: "My sire desires to speak to me alone. Tarry here until I return."

Sita prayed to the gods to bless her husband.

Rama entered the room, and saluted the king. With wonder he beheld his aged sire sitting dejectedly with Kaikeyi at his side.

"Rama! Oh, Rama!" cried Dasa-ratha. He could say no more. Tears streamed down his cheeks; his voice was choked with sighs. The noble king was like to the sun involved in eclipse.

Rama was terror-stricken. He spoke to Kaikeyi, saying: "What ails my father? Oh! have I offended him? Speak and tell, O queen-mother! Why does my father weep? Why is his face clouded with sorrow? Oh, I would rather die than wound his heart by word or deed!"

[1] Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come.
Marlowe's *Dortor Faustus*, Act V, Scene 4.

Kaikeyi was unmoved by love or pity. Coldly she spoke and said: "The king is neither angry nor sorrow-stricken, but he fears to make known his will until you promise to obey him faithfully."

Said Rama: "I will obey my father even if he asks me to drink poison and die before my time. My promise is given from lips that never lied."

Coldly, clearly, and as sharp as a hunter's knife, fell the words from the mouth of Kaikeyi: "The king vowed, when I healed his wounds and saved his life, to grant me two boons, although he now repents having made his promise as if he were a man of low caste. The boons I ask are that Bharata may become Prince Regent and that you may be banished to the jungle for fourteen years. . . . The king is tender-hearted; sorrow and old age dim his eyes. He loves you so well, Rama, that he cannot make known his will. . . . If you are ready to obey your father's command, prepare now to depart from the city and permit Bharata to govern the kingdom."

Dasa-ratha's heart was pierced by these words; but Rama heard them unmoved; they fell on his ears like sparks of fire that drop into the sea. Calmly he heard and calmly he made answer, saying: "I shall depart from Ayodhya this day in fulfilment of my father's vow. Cheerfully I obey his command. Let Bharata be summoned without delay."

Rama bowed before his sire; he bowed to Kaikeyi. Then he went and informed his mother, Kausalya, of the king's command. Kausalya was amazed and angry. She urged Rama to seize the throne by force. "Your father is in his dotage," she said. "Do not obey him. He has become a woman's slave, and all men will hold him in contempt."

Lakshmana urged Rama in like manner to disobey the harsh decree, but he answered: "I have promised to obey my father. Do not ask me to break my plighted word."

He left the broken-hearted Kausalya and went to Sita and spoke to her, saying: "Comfort my mother, O Sita; she has need of you to soothe her grief. O my beloved wife, be ever obedient to Bharata, and do not praise me in his hearing, for no prince cares to hear another prince praised above him."

Said Sita: "A wife must follow her husband and share his sufferings. If you must depart to the jungle, it is my duty to go before you and smooth the thorns in your path. So long as I am with you I shall be happy, even in the jungle. I will lighten your burden of sorrow, O Rama. Let me go with you. If you leave me here I shall surely die."

Rama said: "O Sita, you are dearer to me than life. How can I allow you to share my sufferings? Wait here until I return again. My love will grow greater when I am separated from you."

Said Sita: "I would rather lie on the cold earth if you are beside me than here alone on a bed of down. Sweeter to me will be the jungle beside you than the empty palace when you are gone."

Rama could not prevail upon Sita to remain behind. Then Lakshmana vowed to accompany his brother. All three walked barefooted in the sight of the people, who were horror-stricken and angry, and said: "Dasa-ratha is possessed by demons."

Rama entered the palace and bade farewell to his father, who said: "Oh, I have been deceived by a woman! She concealed her wicked designs from me. . . . Tarry here a little longer, O my son! Do not make haste to leave me."

Said Rama: "Kaikeyi commanded me to depart without delay, and I promised to obey. . . . When the period of exile is over, I shall return, O my father!"

Everyone save Kaikeyi lamented when Rama and Sita and Lakshmana, clad in rough garments, left the city and made their way towards the jungle.

Many citizens followed Rama; they desired to share his exile. The night was spent on the banks of the River Tamasa. All slept except Rama. He kept watch until dawn, when he awoke Sita and Lakshmana. It was necessary that they should escape from the pious multitude; so they stole away, and walked on until they reached the Ganges. On the fourth day they crossed the Jumna and reached the hermitage of Valmiki, the saintly poet. On the sixth day the exiles arrived in the woods of Chitra-kuta, where they abode for a time.[1]

[1] The route taken by Rama is still traversed annually by pious Hindu pilgrims.

III. A Faithful Brother

After Rama had departed from Ayodhya, Kausalya, his mother, reproached Dasa-ratha, saying: "You could not break your promise to Kaikeyi, but you broke the promise you made to your counsellors that Rama should become Prince Regent."

"Oh, forgive me!" cried the grief-stricken monarch. "My heart is broken lamenting for my beloved son. Do not wound me again, O Kausalya!"

Kausalya wept. "My grief", she said, "makes me speak cruelly to you."

On the second night, Dasa-ratha awoke from sleep and cried to Kausalya, saying: "I am dying of sorrow. Mine eyes are blind with weeping. Take my hand in yours and speak to me. Alas! bitterly I grieve because I cannot see Rama before I die. Happy are they whose eyes behold him now. . . . My heart beats feebly."

These were the last words spoken by the king. He fell back in a swoon, and ere day dawned his spirit had fled.

Now, Prince Bharata was sojourning at this time in the country of the Kaikeyas, his mother's people, and he knew naught of what had taken place. When he reached the palace, a few days after Dasa-ratha had died, he was overwhelmed with grief. "If my father were alive," he moaned, "he would have embraced and kissed me. . . . Where is Rama, who is now as a father unto me?"

Said Kaikeyi, his mother: "My son, for your sake I have caused Rama to be banished. Cease to sorrow, because you will be installed as King of the Kosalas."

Bharata was amazed and angry. "Alas!" he exclaimed; "I have lost my father and my elder brother. Of what good is the kingdom to me now? O, evil-hearted woman, you have

robbed this house of joy; you have killed my father and banished my dear brother, Rama. . . . I vow before the gods that I will bring my brother back from exile and have him seated on the throne of his father."

Prince Satrughna spoke in like manner, and went and seized the old nurse, Manthará, who had poisoned the mind of Kaikeyi. "This hateful hag", he cried fiercely, "is the cause of all our calamities. Let her be put to death."

Kaikeyi fled in terror and hid herself. "Spare the wretch," said Bharata; "if she were to be slain, Rama would be angry with us."

Then Kausalya, mother of Rama, entered the room. She addressed Bharata, saying: "The kingdom is now yours, O ambitious one. It has been secured for you by your mother."

Bharata knelt before her, and vowed that he would never sit on the throne, and that he would go forth to find Rama and prevail upon him to return.

Kausalya wept. She embraced and kissed Bharata because he was loyal to his elder brother, her dear son, Rama, the pious and saintly prince.

As soon as the funeral rites of Dasa-ratha were performed, Bharata set out for the woods of Chitra-kuta, and Satrughna went with him.

They found Rama living in a little house thatched with branches and leaves, which was situated in the midst of the darksome forest. As soon as he saw his elder brother, Bharata knelt before him and said: "Our journey is ended. Here we meet, O saint, O king, O my dear and honoured elder brother. I honour you, O righteous Rama, and I honour your wife, Sita. The crown of Kosala is yours. This kingdom which has been given to me against my will I gift to you. Accept it now, and, by so doing, remove the stain of my mother's sin."

As he spoke, Satrughna remained kneeling by his side.

Rama embraced his brothers, and spoke to Bharata, saying: "I cannot sit on the throne of my ancestors, O Bharata; my royal father banished me in accordance with his vow, and appointed you to the kingdom. My gentle brother, a faithful son cannot recall the mandate of his sire or break the promise

he has given to one who is now a saint in Paradise. No fault lies on you nor on your mother. My father sent me here. You shall rule as king, O Bharata. Be a shield to our loyal people while I dwell here in solitude and exile, obedient to my father's command."

Said Bharata: "If my father's command must be obeyed, let me remain in the forest with you, so that when the period of exile is past I may return to Ayodhya as your subject."

Said Rama: "Neither you nor I can recall the mandate of King Dasa-ratha, our father."

In vain did Bharata, weeping tears of sorrow, plead with his brother. Said Rama: "The moon may cease to shine, the snow may be taken from the Himalayan mountains, the swelling ocean may break its boundaries and flood the land, but I shall never break my vow and disobey my father. So help me, God in heaven!"

Then Bharata said: "O Rama, give me as a token of your love the sandals from off your feet."

Rama gave his sandals to Bharata, who thus spoke, saying: "These sandals I shall place on the throne that I must hold sacred for you alone. They shall proclaim to a loyal nation that you are their king. If at the end of fourteen years, O my brother, you do not return to Ayodhya, I shall perish on the pyre."

The brothers took affectionate leave of one another. Bharata returned to Ayodhya. He placed Rama's sandals on the throne, and held over them the white umbrella. Then he addressed the royal counsellors, saying: "I shall dwell outside the city until Rama, my elder brother, who is your rightful king and mine, returns from exile in the darksome forest."

Bharata clad himself in the garments of an ascetic and retired to the jungle, where he conducted the affairs of the State as Prince Regent. Rama's sandals remained on the throne. They were the symbol of royal authority at Ayodhya.

Meanwhile Rama went to a deeper forest with his wife and Lakshmana, and reached the hermitage of the saintly Rishi, Atri, whose wife was named Anasuya. Old Anasuya embraced and kissed the faithful Sita, who said: "My preceptor taught

me to reverence my earth-mother, and to endeavour to be pure and true and brave as she ever is. He named me Sita because I came to life out of a furrow of the ground."

Said Anasuya, who blessed the fair exile: "Courageous are you as the earth-mother. You have not feared to face burning heat and biting winds and angry storms. O noble one, you have lavished your beauty on your sorrowful husband; you have endeavoured to make smooth the path of exile for your beloved Rama."

She gave Sita beautiful garments, and decked her brow and bosom with dazzling gems, saying: "As the moon is encircled by stars, so are you now adorned with jewels. My eyes are dimmed with age and my hair is white, and it is a great joy to me to behold youth and beauty adorned as you are now adorned."

Then Sita, pleased at heart, sought her husband.

Robed and jewelled, bright and beauteous, sweet-eyed Sita softly came,
Where with anxious heart awaited Rama, prince of righteous fame.

With a wifely love and longing Sita met her hero bold,
Anasuya's love and kindness in her grateful accents told.

Rama and his brother listened of the grace by Sita gained,
Favours of the ancient priestess, pious blessings she had rained.

That night Rama and Sita and Lakshmana abode in the hermitage of Atri. On the next morning they took leave of the saintly couple, and continued their wanderings until they reached the banks of the Godavri in the Deccan, across the Vindhya Mountains. Rama built his hermitage in Panchavati[1] woods, and there abode with wife and brother for a time.

[1] Nasik, at a distance of about 100 miles from Bombay.

IV. The Rape of Sita

As the moon with starry Chitra dwells in azure skies above,
In his lonesome leafy cottage Rama dwelt in Sita's love.

And with Lakshman strong and valiant, quick to labour and obey,
Tales of bygone times recounting, Rama passed the livelong day.

When thirteen and a half years of Rama's exile had gone past there came one day to the quiet and lonely hermitage the Rakshasa[1] woman named Surpa-nakha, sister of Ravana, demon king of Lanka (Ceylon). Ugly was she indeed; her body was gross and misshapen and her voice both loud and harsh. When her eyes fell on Rama she was smitten with love. His kingly bearing captivated her; he seemed to her to be comely as a lotus. It was in her power to change her shape, and she immediately assumed the form of a young and beautiful woman. Desiring to lure Rama away from Sita, she approached him and conversed with him: "I am the sister of Ravana, King of Lanka," she said, "and I have come hither because I love you. Be my husband and you will rule over a great kingdom. Sita is unworthy of you. She is pale and ugly, and I can assume any form at will. Rakshasas feast on human flesh, and I shall devour Sita. I shall also devour that stripling, your brother, so that we may range the hills and deep forests together."

Said Rama: "Sita is my dearly-beloved wife, and I shall never leave her."

Thereafter the Rakshasa tried to woo Lakshmana, and when she found that he jested with her, she sprang towards Sita in jealous anger. Rama protected his wife, and Surpa-nakha quailed before him. Then Lakshmana drew his sword and cut off her ears and nose. The Rakshasa shrieked in anguish, and fled away like a storm-wind, while the rocks echoed her cries.

[1] Demon.

Hearing her cries her brother Khara came to her aid, and when he beheld how she had been mutilated he went against Rama and Lakshmana with an army of Rakshasas. Rama sent his brother and wife to a secret cave. Then he summoned the spirits of his celestial weapons, and clad himself in celestial armour of gold. To the Rakshasas he seemed like the golden sun, and they rushed against him like black tremendous clouds.

Rama shot flaming arrows that swept through the demon army like fire in a sun-dried forest. He slew Khara and his brother Dushan,[1] and all the Rakshasas in their army. None escaped save Surpa-nakha alone, and she fled to Lanka and informed King Ravana of what had taken place.

Ravana's heart was agitated with wrath and shame because a mortal had power to slaughter his brothers and his fierce warriors. He resolved to set out at once to combat with Rama, but Marichi,[2] his brother and wise counsellor, spoke and said: "Do not provoke Rama. I know his strength and the power of his arrows."

Said Surpa-nakha: "Rama has a beautiful spouse named Sita, whom he loves dearly. Indeed, she is dearer to him than life. If you will take her captive, O Ravana, Rama can be slain, because he cannot exist without her."

Ravana made answer, saying: "I will bring Sita hither in my chariot."

Having spoken thus, he ordered Marichi to assume the shape of a deer having golden horns tipped with sapphire, eyes blue as lotus blooms, and a golden hide. "When Sita will behold you as this deer," he said, "she will send Rama to hunt you. Then Sita will come under my power."

As he commanded, so did Marichi do. He assumed the form of a gentle and beautiful deer, and when Sita beheld it she called upon Rama to slay it for her. Greatly she desired to have the hide of the animal to sit upon.

Rama hastened in pursuit of the deer, and, after going a long distance, pierced its heart with an arrow. In his agony Marichi sprang out of the deer, and imitating Rama's voice called out: "*Sita, Sita, save me! Oh, save me, Lakshmana!*"

[1] Pronounced doo'shan. [2] Pronounced ma'reech-ee (*ch* as in *each*).

Then he died, and Rama perceived that he had slain a Rakshasa prince.

Lakshmana heard the cries, and ran in the direction whence they came.

Ravana, who kept watch nigh to the hermitage, assumed the guise of a Brahman, and approached Sita as soon as Lakshmana had left her. The pious princess, believing he was a saintly hermit, honoured him and reverenced him. He addressed her in flattering terms, saying: "O shy and beautiful one, are you the goddess Sri or the goddess Gauri?[1] Wherefore, O fair one, with long shining tresses, do you linger here in the lonesome forest? More seemly were it if you lived in a stately palace as the bride of a king."

Sita then told Ravana the story of Rama's exile and said: "Rest here until Rama and Lakshmana return."

Ravana made answer: "I am no Brahman, but Ravana, King of the Rakshasas. My palace is in the city of Lanka, across the ocean. O beautiful Sita, be my wife. Forsake Rama, O lady of beautiful lips, O most comely of women, and share my empire and fame."

Said Sita: "Faithful am I to Rama. I am his wedded wife. The vault of heaven with all its stars may fall down, the earth may be broken into fragments, and fire may become cold, but I shall never forsake Rama. Snatch the calf from a lion's jaws, touch the fang of a cobra when it strikes a victim, tear up a mountain by the roots, or seize the sun in heaven, before you attempt to take captive the wife of Rama the avenger."

Ravana laughed scornfully. "I have power to slay even Yama,"[2] he said. "I can torture the sun and the earth with mine arrows. Little do you know of my glory and power."

Then he resumed his wonted shape, and, seizing Sita, soared through the air with her in his winged chariot, which went swifter than the wind towards Lanka.

Clad in yellow silk, Sita passed through the air. As she crossed a high mountain, on which stood five apes, she flung down a piece of her robe, and it fell on the summit like a flash of lightning.

[1] Sri, wife of Vishnu; Gauri, wife of Shiva. Pronounced sree and gow'ree. [2] God of Death.

Ravana set Sita down in his palace at Lanka, and thereafter spoke to her saying: "It is foolish of you to dream of being rescued. Consent to be my chief queen."

He had no power to make her his wife against her will. She was protected by her virtue and by a dread decree pronounced by Brahma, who, when the Rakshasa king had once carried off a celestial nymph, and made her his bride, said: "If ever Ravana acts in like manner towards another female, in heaven or on earth, his head will be rent asunder."

Sita rejected Ravana with scorn, and answered him angrily, saying: "O wicked king, the day is not far distant when your golden city will be a heap of ashes, and your great army will be destroyed by the arrows of Rama. Boast not of your bravery. If you were brave, as you pretend to be, you would never have carried me away by stealth. The difference between Rama and you is as great as the difference between a lion and a mouse, an elephant and a hedgehog, a hawk and a mosquito, the noonday sun and a glow-worm, a jewel and a grain of sand, a full moon and a pale star, a mountain and a small brick, the Ganges and the Carannasa. Boast when Rama is not near you, but when he comes nigh you may think of yourself as one who is under the shadow of death."

When Rama returned to the hermitage, and found that Sita had vanished, his heart was filled with grief. He knew that she had been carried away by guile, but whither he was unable to discover.

He wept tears of sorrow. He searched through the forest; he called on every mountain and on every bird and beast, asking where Sita was. In the midst of the forest he found a tattered garland that Sita had worn that day, and he fell down in a swoon. Lakshmana sprinkled water on his face, and when Rama had revived he spoke to him saying: "Alas! my brother, do not sorrow so deeply lest you should die."

Said Rama: "I cannot live without Sita. Now that she is gone the moments seem long as years."

Then he rose up and continued his vain search. He saw a beautiful lotus in a clear pool, and deemed it was the face of Sita. "Oh, my beloved, are you hiding among the water

blooms?" he cried. "Arise and come with me, my sweet-voiced Sita."

The lotus bloom moved not, and Lakshmana led his brother away. "Let us haste to the hermitage," Rama said; "mayhap she has returned now."

They found the hermitage empty, and Rama wept. Night came on in the midst of his sorrow, and when the moon rose he cried out: "O moon, mankind welcomes your cool rays, but to me you bring naught but grief and tears. You look over the whole world, beholding all living creatures. Where, oh! tell me where is my beloved one, my lost Sita?"

Now, when Ravana was carrying Sita away, the eagle-god Jatayus[1] attacked him in mid-air, but the Rakshasa king smote the celestial bird with his sword and disabled him.

On the next day, when Rama continued his search for Sita, he reached the place where Jatayus lay dying. He spoke to the eagle-god, saying: "Have you seen my Sita?"

Jatayus told him that Ravana had carried her away southward. Then he died; his soul ascended to the Paradise of Vishnu in a fiery chariot.

The brothers turned their faces southward. In a deep forest they met a huge headless monster, dark as a storm-cloud and big as a mountain; his shoulders were broad as a Sála tree, his arms were like masts, and he had a pair of big eyes on his chest, and beneath them gaped a gigantic mouth. The monster stretched out his arms, and the brethren began to hack the arms with their swords.

"Who are you that dare to combat with me?" asked the demon.

Said Rama: "We are Dasa-ratha's sons who have been banished from Ayodhya and live in the jungle."

Then the monster told that he was Kabandha, a Gandharva,[2] who, having been cursed by a Brahman, had to assume the form and nature of a Rakshasa.

"Have you seen my Sita?" Rama asked, his voice trembling with deep emotion.

Said Kabandha: "Dig a pit and burn my body, so that I

[1] Pronounced jă-taw'yus (*ă* like *u* in *cut*). [2] Celestial elf.

may be released from my present state, and I shall reveal what I know regarding Sita."

The brothers fulfilled this wish, and from the fire arose the beautiful Gandharva form of Kabandha, who spoke, saying: "O Rama, know now that Sita has been carried away by Ravana. You have need of help so that you may rescue her. Go to Sugriva,[1] the Ape king, and win his friendship, and you will, without doubt, be able to find the daughter of Janaka."

The Gandarva then vanished from sight, and Rama and Lakshmana marvelled greatly. They went on their way until they reached the mountain on the summit of which were the five apes who had seen Ravana carrying Sita through the air. Sugriva beheld the princes coming, and sent Hanuman,[2] his wise brother, to meet them. That son of the wind-god conducted Rama and Lakshmana to Sugriva. And when the Ape king heard all they had to say, he brought forth a piece of the yellow robe that Sita had flung down and also her jewels. Rama wept profusely.

Sugriva, who was a son of Surya, god of the sun,[3] desired to aid Rama, but told that his bride and kingdom had been seized by his half-brother Bali,[4] who was a son of Indra. Then Rama promised to slay Bali and restore the kingdom to Sugriva.[5] And as he promised so did he do.

Sugriva challenged his brother to single combat and they fought on the ground with stones and trees. Then, leaping into the air, they struck each other with their fists. Long they struggled, until Rama drew his bow and shot a celestial arrow that pierced the heart of Bali and slew him. Then Sugriva recovered his kingdom and his wife Tārā, whose face was beautiful as the moon.

After Bali had been slain, the rainy season came on, and Rama and Lakshmana went to dwell in a cave on a hill slope of the Nilgiri Mountains. The time went slowly past. When the

[1] Pronounced sug're-va. [2] Pronounced hăn'oo-man (*ă* like *u* in *cut*).

[3] Or an incarnation, as Rama was of Vishnu. The gods who were to aid Vishnu in human form had been re-born as apes and bears. [4] Pronounced bā'lee.

[5] The reference here may be to the triumph of the sun-cult over the Indra cult with the aid of Vishnu. The poem abounds with doctrinal references that were incorporated from time to time.

thunder roared and lightning flashed from great black clouds, resembling battling elephants, Rama was wont to say: "The golden lustre of the lightning reminds me of my lost Sita. . . . Now the wind blows softly and the earth is bright with rain tears, and I hear my Sita sighing as she weeps in pain and solitude. . . . Look! the rainbow has come forth; beautiful is the rainbow as is Sita when arrayed with her jewels and ornaments."

The rainy season went past, and Rama said: "Now the earth is refreshed; trees are budding and flowers bloom in beauty, but I cannot be happy because my Sita is lost; she writhes in the palace of the Rakshasa king as writhes the lightning amidst black clouds. Joyful was my heart, even when I abandoned my throne, because Sita was with me, but she has been snatched away and my heart is breaking. . . . Oh, I mourn by night and by day! Nor do I mourn for myself alone. I mourn chiefly because she whom I love endures suffering in an alien land."

Sugriva, King of the Vanars, sent out four armies to search for Sita after the rains had ceased. One went northward and another went eastward; one went southward and another went westward. The army that went southward was led by Hanuman, and when it returned, after two months had gone past, Hanuman told that he had seen and spoken to Sita. Addressing Rama, that son of the wind-god said:

"We searched the southern region, with its forests and plains and mountains, and became very weary. Then we beheld a mighty cave. We entered this cave, which ran through a mountain, and the passage was dark and dismal and infested by reptiles. We walked on for a great distance, until we reached a beautiful palace, which was the abode of Maya, the Daitya,[1] and there we beheld a female ascetic named Prabhávati, who gave us food and drink, and pointed out the way we should go.

"We went on until we left the long passage and found ourselves on the seashore and saw the Sahya, the Malaya, and the Dardura mountains. We climbed the Malaya ridge, and gazed

[1] Demon.

on the ocean realm of Varuna, which abounds with whales and sharks and other water monsters. Grief and fear possessed our hearts, and we sat down resolved to die of starvation.[1] We spoke together, and, as it chanced, made mention of Jatayus. Then we saw a gigantic bird drawing nigh. We were terrified lest it should devour us, but the bird spoke, saying: 'Who are you that speak of my brother Jatayus? I am his elder brother, Sampati, son of Garuda, king of birds.[2] Once we flew towards the sun, with desire to outstrip each other in flight, and my wings were scorched, and I fell down on the summit of this mountain. Nor have I seen my brother since that day.'

"We told the great bird-god that his brother was dead, having been mortally wounded by Ravana as he carried off Sita, wife of Rama.

"The bird-god sorrowed greatly, and then said: 'I know this Ravana. His dwelling is Lanka, across the ocean. Sita must be there. I have no doubt you will find her in the palace of Ravana.'

"When I, Hanuman, heard these words, I was possessed with a desire to cross the ocean. I invoked the aid of my sire, the wind-god, and flew through the air. Out of the waters rose Surasa,[3] mother of the Nagas, but she could not hold me back. I contrived to pass her. The dragon Sinhika[4] rose next. She seized my shadow and prevented me passing over her, but I leapt into her mouth and slew her, and then sprang from her body and went swiftly again through the air until I reached Lanka."

Hanuman then related how he reached Sita. Night came on, but the moon rose and shone brightly. He assumed the form of a cat, and crept through Ravana's capital until he

[1] This account seems to be a dim memory of the adventures of Gilgamesh in the Babylonian epic.

[2] Garuda resembles the Zu bird of Babylonia and also the Babylonian eagle which soared towards the highest heaven bearing the hero Etana on its back. Something happened—the tablet containing the story is broken—which caused the eagle to fall to the ground. In Indian mythology the god Vishnu rides on the back of Garuda.

[3] Pronounced soor-ā-sa. [4] Pronounced sin'he-ka.

reached the palace, which he entered. It had floors of crystal and stairways of silver and gold.

'T were long to tell each marvel there,
The crystal floor, the jewelled stair,
The gold, the silver, and the shine
Of crysolite and almandine. . . .

"'T is Indra's heaven," the Vanar cried,
Gazing in joy from side to side,
"The home of all the gods is this,
The mansion of eternal bliss."[1]

Hanuman crept into the women's quarters. In the perfumed chamber of sleep he beheld women beautiful as lotus blooms or lustrous stars on an autumn night.

That wreath of women lay asleep
Like blossoms in a careless heap.[1]

Sita was not in the chamber. He crept on until he reached an Ashoka grove.[2] There he beheld Sita lying on the ground,

Like Hope when all her dreams are o'er.[1]

Fierce female Rakshasas surrounded her, and they were terrible to look upon. Some had dogs' heads, some had pigs' heads, some had the faces of horses and buffaloes; some were of great bulk and some were dwarfs; some had three eyes and some had only one eye on their foreheads; some had blazing eyes; and some had three breasts, and some had three legs, and some had ears that touched the ground.

When morning came, Ravana approached Sita and spoke to her, praising her beauty and beseeching her to return his love; but she rejected him with scorn, and Ravana went away. Then the fierce Rakshasa females spoke with harsh voices one to another, saying: "Come let us tear her to pieces and eat her up because she scorns our king."

Sighing deeply, Sita made answer: "Tear me to pieces and devour me quickly. I have no desire to live without Rama, my dear husband of blue colour, with eyes like the lotus, and wavy hair. Never will I love another. Know this and do as you will."

[1] Griffith's translation. [2] Pronounced a'sho-ka. This is a holy tree.

The female Rakshasas hastened to Ravana and repeated what Sita had said.

Hanuman crouched in cat form on a branch of an ashoka tree, and he spoke to Sita. First he assured her he was not a Rakshasa. Then he told her that Rama was well, and showed his ring to her. Sita's heart was filled with joy.

Hanuman offered to carry her away, but the modest lady refused to touch the body of any male except Rama. From her hair she took a jewel and gave it to Hanuman, bidding him to inform Rama that Ravana had decreed she should die in two months time if she refused to yield to him.

Before leaving Lanka, Hanuman assumed his gigantic form and wrought much destruction by uprooting trees and overthrowing great mansions. He was seized by the Rakshasas, and to punish the ape they bound him and tied to his tail an oil-soaked cloth which was set on fire. Sita prayed that the fire would not injure Hanuman, and her prayer was heard. Contracting his body, Hanuman got rid of his bonds. Then he enlarged himself again, and leapt from mansion to mansion with his tail burning. Many mansions were set on fire and blazed furiously. Having thus avenged himself on Ravana, Hanuman rose high in the air and recrossed the ocean.

Ravana was greatly alarmed by the mighty deeds of Hanuman. He summoned a council of war, and all supported his proposal to wage war against the apes, except his younger brother, Bibhishana,[1] who spoke, saying: "Restore Sita to her rightful lord, or else Rama will sweep down upon Lanka like to a falcon that falls on its prey."

Said Ravana: "Alas! if one should have to depend on the love of near relatives, who sorrow when one is famous and smile when one is in danger; they are jealous and full of guile, and there is hate in their secret hearts. If you were not my brother, I should slay you now, O Bibhishana. Depart from me, false one, and carry your treasonable heart to our enemies."

Bibhishana was thus banished by Ravana, and he departed from Lanka to become the ally of Rama.

[1] Pronounced bib-hish'a-na.

V. War in Lanka

Sugriva assembled a great Vanar army to give aid to Rama by fighting against the forces of the demon king, so that Sita might be rescued from captivity.

Countless numbers of apes and bears assembled on the slopes of the mountain where Rama had passed the rainy season. Some were big as mountains and others had bodies like buffaloes; some were of the hue of autumnal clouds and some had faces red as vermilion, others were yellow as the ears of paddy or white as flax, and some were green, and those that were green were led by Nala. The bears were grey with black faces, or wholly black. This great army was vast as the ocean at full tide.

On an auspicious day Surgriva set forth with Rama and Lakshmana, under a lucky constellation, towards the south, supported by mighty ape chiefs, and followed by the army which looked like a boundless field of ripening corn in the morning sunshine.

Southward they marched until they reached the shore of the great salt sea. Then Rama said: "The army is large and the ocean difficult to cross. How can we reach Lanka?"

Some urged that they should use boats and rafts, but Rama said: "The sea is a full hundred yojanas in width. We have not a sufficient number of boats to carry all the troops. Besides, we cannot seize numerous boats and thus raise obstacles in the way of the merchants.[1] The foe might attack us as we cross, and, finding us weak, make dreadful havoc of our army. I shall invoke the Ocean, and if the Ocean does not answer me, I shall punish him by means of my blazing celestial weapons."

Having spoken thus, Rama touched water, as did also his

[1] This reference to sea-traders is interesting. Probably the ships of Babylonia and Egypt visited the "land of the peacock" long before Solomon's did.

brother, Lakshmana.[1] Together they lay down on a bed of sacred grass and prayed to the Ocean. In due time the lord of Ocean, who is lord of all male and female rivers, appeared to Rama while he slept, and said: "O Rama, I am your kinsman —I the genius of Varuna's realm. No foe of yours am I. In your army there is a skilled artisan named Nala; he is the son of Twashtri, the divine artificer of the Universe. Let him build a bridge over which your army may pass."

Rama awoke, and called for Nala, whom he addressed, saying: "Build a bridge across the sea. You alone are able to do this."

Then the green Nala set to work, with his green Vanar artificers, and constructed a causeway of rocky islands between the mainland and Lanka (Ceylon), which to this day is called Nala's Bridge.[2] The work was completed in five days, and then Bibhishana, brother of Ravana, came from Lanka, accompanied by four counsellors, to give aid to Rama, who welcomed him. It was under the guidance of the banished Rakshasa that the vast army crossed the ocean to the island kingdom of Ravana.

The Vanars encamped on the plain in front of Lanka city, which was defended by high walls with ramparts, and surrounded by seven trenches filled with water, in which were fierce sharks and alligators. On the walls were heaps of stones and great catapults, earthen pots filled with venomous snakes, and pots with oil and resinous powders that could be set on fire. The warriors defending the city were armed with clubs, firebrands, arrows, lances, swords, and battle-axes, and some had maces steeped in wax that burned in battle. The mounted forces of the Rakshasa king rode on camels and asses, on hogs and hyenas and on wolves, and they roared terribly as they swept onward in battle like to long sea rollers assaulting the shore.

[1] Touching water is a ceremony of purification, named Achàmana. It is still practised in India.

[2] Also "Rama's Bridge" and "Adam's Bridge". In like manner the green fairies of Scotland, who served Michael Scott, built jutting promontories that were intended to bridge arms of the sea; the work, however, was in each case interrupted by holy men, who feared that a disaster would result from the fairy scheme.

The gigantic apes of Sugriva's army, coloured white and black, green and blue, and yellow and red, wielded trees for clubs and threw mighty boulders, but some depended on their sword-like nails and their long arrowy teeth. When Ravana's force came out against them they surged forward, shouting "Rama, Rama!" and soon the plain streamed with blood.

Indrajit, son of Ravana, led on the Rakshasa army, which had come forth to battle on the plain because the apes had leapt on the walls of Lanka and begun to pull them down. He drove back the Vanars, riding in a great new chariot. By means of magic he concealed himself in a mist, so that no arrow could be aimed at him. He wielded a great serpent noose, which he flung at Rama and Lakshmana, who were bound by it and unable to move. Vayu, the wind-god, perceiving their peril, sent to their aid Garuda, the serpent-killer, and when that mighty one appeared the snakes fled in terror.

Next Ravana came forth. He had assumed his gigantic form, with ten necks and ten heads, but Rama shot arrows against him, and he was compelled to retreat. Sighing deeply in his shame, the Rakshasa king said: "The time has come for my brother Kumbha-karna[1] to give us aid."

Now Kumbha-karna was the mightest of all Rakshasas. In former days he terrorized the Universe, and devoured many human beings, and many animals tame and wild. At length Brahma decreed that he should sleep for six months and then awaken for a single day to obtain food and drink. Each time he awoke he devoured vast quantities of food and drank rivers of wine. Then he fell into deep slumber again in his subterranean chamber.

Ravana called upon his servants to awaken the sleeping warrior. Thousands of them danced and shouted and blew trumpets, but he did not stir. They drove elephants over his body, but still he slumbered. Then beautiful women caressed him and he suddenly opened his eyes, which were red with anger, as he growled: "Why have I been awakened before my time?"

Said Ravana: "Happy are you, O Kumbha-karna, in being

[1] Pronounced koom'ba-kur"na.

able to enjoy profound sleep while a terrible calamity threatens us. Rama and his vast army of apes and bears have crossed the ocean bridge because I carried off Sita. Many of our kinsmen have already fallen in battle. No one save you, O scourger of our enemies, can slay Rama. Therefore put on your armour and hasten to battle."

Kumbha-karna ate many swine and deer, and drank rivers of wine. He was refreshed, but not satisfied as he arose and roared: "Where are the apes? I am hungry and long to devour them." He girt on his armour, mounted his chariot, and rushed from the city against the foe. Terrified by that monstrous warrior, the apes fled across the plain. He seized many and began to devour one after the other. Among others he seized Sugriva and dragged him into the chariot. Then Lakshmana advanced against the dreaded Rakshasa. He drew his bow and shot a golden-winged arrow that cut through the coat of mail and pierced the breast of Kumbha-karna, who was forced to release Sugriva. The Rakshasa lifted a mighty boulder, but Lakshmana severed the hand that clutched it with two razor-edged shafts. Kumbha-karna assumed at once a gigantic form with many heads and arms, but Rama slew him with a Brahma shaft which smote off his head, and the headless Rakshasa fell like a huge tree suddenly shattered and consumed by a thunderbolt. Then the other Rakshasa warriors fled in terror.

On the next day Indrajit came forth to avenge his uncle's death. Concealed in a magic mist, he poured his arrows on his helpless foemen. He drove back the Vanar warriors; he cast arrows at Rama and Lakshmana that resembled sunbeams breaking through a black cloud. Both were wounded, but Hanuman brought them herbs that gave them speedy healing.

Indrajit came forth for the last time on the day that followed. He fought fiercely, but Lakshmana shot from his bow a mighty arrow that Indra had sent to him. It went through the armour of the Rakshasa and killed him. Indrajit's horses fled with the empty chariot towards the city.

Both Lakshmana and Rama had been enabled to see Indrajit through the magic mist, because the god Kubera had sent from

the White Mountains holy water to anoint their eyes; the water gave their eyes the power to perceive invisible beings.

Ravana lamented aloud when his son was slain. Excited to fury, he vowed vengeance against Sita, and hastened to the Ashoka grove to slay her, but the Rakshasa dames concealed her, and one called out: "Auspicious is the last day of the waning moon. The hour of your vengeance is at hand. Pollute not your fame by slaying a woman, but hasten to the battle-field and great glory will be yours."

Ravana turned away. Mounting his chariot, he rode forth to battle, leading a strong force of warriors. He saw his brother Bibhishana among his foemen, and, in his great wrath, flung a mighty weapon at him, but Lakshmana shattered it with a javelin in mid-air.

Ravana smiled grimly and shouted: "O Lakshmana, slayer of my son, I welcome you. Now protect yourself if you can."

As he spoke he flung a dart which passed through the body of Lakshmana and pinned him to the earth. Then Ravana returned to Lanka well pleased and boasting of his mighty deed.

Night came on, and Rama made moan, lamenting over his brother.

"Art thou fallen," sorrowed Rama, "weary of this endless strife,
Lakshman, if thy days are ended, Rama recks not for his life. . . .

"Thou hast from the far Ayodhya followed me in deepest wood,
In the thickest of the battle thou hast by thy elder stood,

"Love of woman, love of comrade, trite is love of kith and kind,
Love like thine, true-hearted brother, not on earth we often find!

"Best of brothers, best of warriors, wherefore thus unconscious lie,
Mother, wife, and brother wait thee, ope once more thy sleeping eye."[1]

During the night Hanuman went northward in speedy flight and returned with a mountain on which grow healing herbs. A physician found the herbs, and, having pounded them, made a paste which he placed under the nostrils of the fallen warrior. Soon afterwards Lakshmana rose up healed of his wound and full of might.

[1] Dutt's translation.

On the same night Sugriva made an unexpected attack on the city. Ravana was offering up a sacrifice to ensure his success in battle, but the Vanars interrupted it and rendered it of no avail. They overpowered the guards, slew many warriors, and set fire to the city.

> As earth with fervent heat will glow,
> When comes her final overthrow,
> From gate to gate, from court to spire,
> Proud Lanka was one blaze of fire,
> And every headland, rock, and bay
> Shone bright a hundred leagues away.[1]

When day broke, Ravana prepared for battle, and the gods gathered to watch the contest. Rama was mounted on a new car. It was the car of Indra, drawn by celestial steeds which the god had sent to him with a royal bow and quiver, a falchion and armour forged by the divine artisans in celestial fire. These gifts were brought by Matali, Indra's charioteer, who said:

> "I shall be thy chariot-driver and shall speed the thund'ring car,
> Slay the sin-polluted Ravan' in this last and fatal war."

As Ravana went towards his own chariot, his sister, Surpanakha, who had caused the war, stood in his way. Impatiently he pushed her aside, whereat she cursed him, saying: "For this you will never again return to Lanka."

Ravana heeded her not. He speeded his chariot, and when Rama beheld the King of the Rakshasas he rushed wrathfully towards him in the celestial chariot of Indra. A fierce encounter ensued. Ravana hurled a terrible javelin, resembling Indra's thunderbolt, but Rama shattered it with his arrows. Ravana trembled. Then he suddenly grew angrier and fiercer. He cast darts and wounded his opponent, but Rama felt no pain, and Rama's arrows did no injury to Ravana.

> Long the dubious battle lasted, shook the ocean, hill and dale,
> Winds were hushed in voiceless terror, and the livid sun was pale.

At length Rama took from his quiver Brahma's arrow, which

[1] Griffith's translation.

was winged and adorned with golden feathers; it gleamed with celestial fire. When the gods saw this arrow they began to rejoice. Rama drew his bow and shot the Brahma arrow, which slew Ravana and his charioteer and steeds, surrounding them all with terrific fire. Then the gods rejoiced exceedingly because that the demon king had been slain.

> Heavenly flowers in rain descended on the red and gory plain,
> And from unseen harps and timbrels rose a soft celestial strain,
>
> And the ocean heaved in gladness, brighter shone the sunlit sky,
> Soft and cool the gentle zephyrs through the forest murmured by.
>
> Sweetest scent and fragrant odours wafted from celestial trees,
> Fell upon the earth and ocean, rode upon the laden breeze!

A blessed voice came down the wind, saying: "*O victor of truth and righteousness, your task is now ended.*"

VI. Faithful Sita

When Ravana fell, his army scattered in flight, and Rama entered the city in triumph. He caused Bibhishana to be proclaimed King of Lanka.

Sita was brought forth in a litter, carried by Rakshasas, to meet her dear husband; but when she came nigh, Rama commanded that she should leave the litter and walk on foot, saying:

> "At holy rites, in war and woe,
> Her face unveiled a dame may show;
> When at the maiden's choice they meet,
> When marriage troops parade the street.
> And she, my queen, who long has lain
> In prison, racked with care and pain,
> May cease awhile her face to hide,
> For is not Rama by her side?"[1]

With folded hands Janaka's daughter approached her husband, and, kneeling at his feet, wept tears of joy. But Rama's brow was clouded, and he spake, saying: "My enemies are slain, and you are now free, O Sita, but I have no desire to behold you. I cannot receive you as my wife, because you have dwelt in Ravana's house."

Said Sita: "I am innocent, and have not sinned. Oh, if I had dreamed that you doubted my chastity I should have sought death! Better is death than your dark suspicion, O Rama."

Then she asked Lakshmana to build a funeral pyre, so that she might end her sorrow amidst the flames.

The pyre was built and set on fire. Sita invoked Agni, god

[1] Griffith's translation.

of fire, saying: "Prove to Rama and all who are gathered here that I am as chaste and true and bright of soul as you are, O god of purity."

Then she leapt into the fire. Cries of sorrow were raised by all who were assembled there.

Said Rama: "Oh, I have sinned, because she is innocent!"

A great wonder was wrought in that hour. The god Agni appeared and led Sita unhurt from the fire. Addressing Rama, the god said: "*Receive your wife, who is without sin or shame.*"

Then Rama wept and said: "O Sita, it was necessary that your soul should be declared spotless, for your own sake and for the sake of all who are here. It was necessary the world should know that beauty cannot excuse vice, and that where there is no reverence of virtue there is no true love."

Having spoken thus, he embraced Sita, who hid her face in his bosom and wept.

Then Rama and Sita and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya in Indra's car. Bharata welcomed his brother as the rightful king, and, having led him to the throne, showed him his sandals, saying: "These are symbols of your rule, O Rama. I have guarded the throne for you. I give you the kingdom. Take back what is your own."

Rama was crowned king on the day that followed, and the people rejoiced greatly.

As the days went past, however, many whispered against Sita, because that she had lived in the palace of Ravana, and Rama was forced by the Brahmans, against his will, to send her into exile. She was led away, weeping bitterly, by Lakshmana. Sita sought refuge in the hermitage of Valmiki, the saintly poet. In that humble dwelling were born Rama's twin sons, Lava and Küsa

Sixteen years went past and then Rama decided to celebrate the horse sacrifice to cleanse his soul of sin because that he had slain Ravana.

The horse was sent to wander through all lands accompanied

THE PASSING OF RAMA

by armed men, whose duty it was to subdue every ruler who would not submit to Rama.

When the horse reached the hermitage of Valmiki, Rama's sons defeated the royal force and wounded Satrughna. Then Lakshmana went against them to recover the horse, but he was defeated and wounded too. Rama had therefore to lead an army against the rebels. Greatly astonished was he to find that the two young heroes resembled himself. He spoke to them, saying: "Whose children are you?"

Lava and Küsa made answer: "We are the sons of Sita, but we have no knowledge of our father's name."

Then Rama knew that they were his own sons. Valmiki approached him, and Rama bade him bring forth Sita, saying: "The people spoke evil against her. Let her now prove her innocence before all men."

Sita at first refused to come forth, but when Valmiki had pleaded with her she allowed herself to be led before the army. She clasped her hands and shed tears, and, bending her head, spoke, saying: "Never have I thought of another save Rama. O Madhavi, earth-mother, grant me therefore a hiding-place."

Once again a marvel was wrought. The earth was suddenly rent, and there arose out of its depths a divine throne of wondrous beauty. It was supported by four gleaming Nagas (Indian dragons), and on it sat the earth-mother, who addressed Sita, saying: "I welcome you." The goddess raised Sita from the ground on which she had fallen, and placed her on the throne at her side. Then with Rama's wife sitting on the resplendent throne beside her the earth-mother sank slowly and vanished, the earth closing over that great goddess and the sinless and faithful daughter of Janaka. Thus did Sita pass to the Other-world.

Rama returned to Ayodhya with his sons, and the horse sacrifice was performed. He did not, however, find happiness after Sita had passed away. He reigned faithfully and well for many years, until at length an ascetic appeared before him, and told that he had been sent by Brahma and that his name was Time.

Thereafter Rama and all his brothers went to the River Sarayu, and were thence conveyed to Paradise. With Rama went all the spirits of his celestial weapons in human shape, and he ascended on the back of Garuda, the bird of Vishnu. In Paradise he found Sita, who was the goddess Lakshmi (Sri), as he was the great god Vishnu.

Thus ends the *Ramáyana.*

CUCHULLIN[1] EPIC

Introductory

The Cuchullin legends, which have happily been preserved in old Irish Gaelic manuscripts, are related in prose interspersed with ballads and lyrics, yet they have epical unity and reveal the true epical spirit. "Gods and non-gods"[2] play as prominent a part as in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Cuchullin, like Achilles, is a superman and half-divine. He is the son or incarnation of the god Lu';[3] he is assisted by mythical beings who scream, like Discordia, on the morn of battle; he visits the Otherworld like Odysseus and Æneas, and, like Achilles, he is assured of great renown on condition that his life will be of short duration. As "the wrath of Achilles" imparts unity to the *Iliad*, so does "the fate of Cuchullin" to the whole group of Irish epical stories in which he figures. Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu, the demon-slayer, has a purpose to serve in life. Cuchullin, the incarnation of Lu', the slayer of the demon Balor of Mighty Blows, has also a purpose: he delivers Ulster from its enemies and their demoniac allies.

It is evident that Cuchullin is a tribal hero of great antiquity. His Gaelic name, which signifies "Hound of Culann", is believed by some to be of comparatively late origin. He received it because he slew the fierce watch-dog of Culann, the smith,[4] as Hercules slew the dog of Aïdes. His earlier name, Setanta, is not regarded by philologists as a Gaelic word, but one perhaps derived from a name like Setantos, "one of the Setantii", a

[1] Pronounced coo-hool'in or coo'chool-in (*ch* guttural).

[2] In Gaelic *dée* and *andée*. The gods are "the people of power" and the non-gods "the people of ploughing", i.e. agricultural faerie beings.

[3] Gaelic, *Lugh*, pronounced *loo*.

[4] This smith may have been a Celtic Vulcan.

Brythonic people referred to by Ptolemy. On the other hand, it may be a survival from a pre-Celtic language. There are pre-Celtic place-names in Ireland and Scotland.

It must not be assumed, however, that because Cuchullin links with Hercules and Achilles, the Irish legends were based upon the classic myths and legends. "Celtic mythology", as Professor H. d'Arbois de Jubainville[1] has said, "is not copied from Greek mythology. It is based upon conceptions originally identical with those from which Greek mythology is derived, but has developed the fundamental elements of the myth in a manner of its own, which is as independent as it is original." Cuchullin links also with the Indian semi-divine heroes Krishna and Arjuna. Krishna, on one occasion, transformed himself so that his body resembled a blazing fire. Gods appeared like tongues of flame, and "on his forehead shone Brahma", who was "of lightning effulgence". Sparks of fire and smoke issued from him.[2] In the *Iliad* a "blazing flame" springs from the head of Achilles, and he roars so loudly that the Trojans become terror-stricken.[3] Cuchullin transforms himself on various occasions. His roar similarly terrifies his enemies, and the "lon gaile", "hero's light" or "light of valour", issues from his head.[4] In Indian epical narratives the hero's enemies are terrified by the blast of his conch-shell trumpet.[5] It would seem as if the Indian, Greek, and Irish heroes had attached to their memories the attributes of some older semi-divine hero or god—perhaps a thunder-god or his incarnation. When the Babylonian Marduk (Merodach) goes forth to fight the dragon Tiamat, a light burns on his head. He slays Tiamat with the "thunder stone". This is the most ancient reference to the "hero's light"; it dates back till about 2000 B.C.

In the Cuchullin legends there are other links with ancient civilization. The doctrine of Transmigration of Souls, for instance, is quite prominent, especially in the story which explains the origin of the brown and white bulls in the "Kine

[1] *Le Cycle Mythologique Irlandis et la Mythologie Celtique*, XIII, 1.
[2] *Mahâbhârata*, "Udyoga Parva", Section CXXIX.
[3] *Iliad*, XVIII, 188–220.
[4] Dr. Whitley Stokes in *Revue Celtique*, Tome III, &c.
[5] The conch shell of Indra, the thunder-god.

Raid of Cooley".[1] According to Cæsar, the Druids of Gaul believed that souls passed from one individual to another.[2] Diodorus Siculus[3] and Valerius Maximus[4] give evidence confirming this statement. It is still, in our own day, a living belief in India, although it does not seem to have been imported by the Aryan invaders, who believed in a warrior's Paradise resembling the Scandinavian Valhal. About the time the Aryans were settling in the Punjab the doctrine of Transmigration of Souls was professed by a section of the Egyptian people. A papyrus that belonged to Pharaoh Sety II (1209-1205 B.C.) relates the story of Bata, whose soul passed from a flower to a bull, from a bull to a tree, and then from a tree to a child. The queen swallowed a chip from the tree and gave birth to Bata, as the Irish princess swallowed a minute worm or insect and gave birth to Cuchullin. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians were the first to affirm that "when the body decays the soul enters another body upon the point of birth". He believed that the Greeks borrowed the doctrine from the Egyptians; from Greece it passed to Rome. In the *Æneid* we gather that after the souls of the dead had lived for a prolonged period in Elysium they drank the waters of oblivion (Lethe), and were reborn on earth. It may be, too, that the belief in transmigration was introduced into northern Italy by the Gauls. It is possible, as has been suggested, that the Irish doctrine was of Gaulish origin. When the Romans swept through Gaul, many of its warriors and teachers fled to Ireland. On the other hand, the Danann gods of Ireland may have been imported by earlier settlers during the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, some centuries before the Roman invasion of Britain. The name of the god Lu' (Lugh), father of Cuchullin, lingers in place-names like Lyons (Lug-dunum), Laon, and Leyden, Lug-mag, "field of Lu'", the name of an old Irish abbey; Luguvallum, the name of an ancient British town near Adrian's wall, and the River Luggie in Scotland. The "Lud" of London (Lud's dun) is not the same god, but the one known in Ireland as Nuada, whose name also lingers in Lidney.

[1] *Táin bó Cuailgne.*
[2] *De Bello Gallica*, VI, xiv, 4.
[3] V, xxviii.
[4] II, vi, 10.

The chief of the Tua' de Danann (the tribe of the goddess Danu) was Dagda, father of Lu', the young Irish god who resembles somewhat Hermes and Apollo, but has yet distinctive features. Opposed to the Danann group of gods and goddesses were the Fomorians—dark, ferocious monsters who are simply hill giants in Scotland, and, indeed, the only gods Scotland possesses. The Danann gods are associated with the faerie-folk, and Paradise is a Faerieland under the earth or on an island called "Land of Youth",[1] "Plains of Gladness",[2] &c. The Danann spirit-folk are the "gods" (dée) and the faeries are the "non-gods" (andée). Irish gods and faeries, like the Greek deities and enchantresses of the Circe and Calypso type, make love to mortals, obtain their aid to fight against demons, and assist warriors to win battles. The Irish Gaels, like the Homeric Achæans, had intimate acquaintance with supernatural beings.

The stories of Cuchullin and the Kine Raid of Cooley are found in many old Irish manuscripts, dating back to the eleventh, twelfth, and fourteenth centuries. In certain of them the language and literary style are older than the periods at which the copies were made. The text of the "Yellow Book of Lecan", which is late fourteenth century, is evidently a version of the early eighth or seventh century. As much is gathered from the evidence of language. This view accords with a legend about the recovery of the Kine Raid epic by Shencan,[3] the chief bard of Erin, who was a contemporary of St. Kieran[4] in the sixth century. He convened a meeting of the Irish bards and professional reciters to ascertain if any knew the ancient tale, but found that only fragments of it were remembered. His son, Múrgen, afterwards visited the grave of Fergus, a contemporary of Cuchullin. He recited a lay over the gravestone in honour of Fergus. Then a mist arose and enveloped the bard's son, who was himself a bard, and in the mist appeared Fergus wearing a green cloak, a gold-ribbed shirt, a gold-hilted sword, and sandals of bronze. He was clad in green and gold, because he came from the Faerieland Paradise. Fergus recited the complete tale to Múrgen, so that

[1] Tir na n-Og. [2] Mag Mell. [3] Gaelic, Senchan. [4] Gaelic, Ciaran.

it was not necessary for him to go to "the East",[1] as he intended, to obtain it.

There are other indications that the tale was already an ancient one in the sixth century. Cuchullin is able to read Ogham writings and to inscribe the characters. Ogham writing is of pre-Christian origin, and was abolished by the early Christian missionaries because of its association with Pagan beliefs. The archæological evidence of the poem takes us back to the Chalko-Sideric period—the interval between the Bronze and Iron Ages,[2] that is between 1000 and 500 B.C. for the Continental Celts, and slightly later for the Celts of Britain and Ireland. Conor Mac Nessa,[3] King of Ulster and uncle of Cuchullin, is believed to have lived in the first century of our era. In the Christian versions of the Kine Raid stories he is said to have been born on the same day as Christ. Heroic ballads and prose accounts of the great war may have been composed shortly after Cuchullin's death, otherwise the references to bronze weapons could not have been preserved. As will be seen in the description of Fergus, bronze had passed to Faerieland in the sixth century. He wears bronze sandals. Cuchullin goes to the Happy Isle in a boat of bronze. In like manner the flint arrow-heads of the Stone Age became "elf bolts". Stone and bronze artifacts remained in the Otherworld long after men had ceased to use them.

Although much has been written of late years about "Celtic gloom" and "Celtic mysticism", it will be found that the cycle of epical tales summarized in the pages that follow are not more gloomy than the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, or the *Mahábhárata* and *Ramáyana*. "Mysticism" is a misleading term to apply to the Irish Faerieland conceptions and beliefs. There is no haziness but much intimate and exhaustive detail.

In the original Gaelic versions the style is sometimes as colloquial as in a modern novel; withal it is invariably direct and clear and vigorous. In what are evidently the most

[1] In one version of this legend the eastern country is Alba (Scotland).

[2] This is also the archæological period of the *Iliad* and of the Aryan invasion of India.

[3] Conchobar (Conacher) Mac Nessa (son of Ness, a goddess whose name lingers in Loch Ness and the River Ness. Dr. Macbain compared Ness to Nestos in Thrace and Neda in Greece.)

archaic narratives the diction is distinguished by its simplicity. Humour, rather than pathos, relieves the tragic episode, but it is not possible to render the humour effectively in an English version. The character of Cuchullin does not accord with the conception of the gloomy mystical Celt. His days are numbered. Like Achilles, he has made choice of a brief life for the sake of glory and honour and because he is a patriot. There is natural grief in his heart when the day of doom dawns with evil omens, but he goes forth to fight his last fight bravely and even cheerfully, and is chivalrous till the end. When mortally wounded, he ties himself to a pillar stone so that he may die standing and facing the foe. In accounting for British heroism one must not overlook the Celtic spirit.

Death may be a sorrowful thing to the Gael of the epic, because it parts comrades and brothers, husband and wife, parent and child, but the Otherworld is beautiful and bright. In the Celtic Paradise, which resembles the garden entered by Gilgamesh, after passing through the mountain tunnel,

> Splendours of every colour glisten
> Throughout the gentle-voiced plains.
> Joy is known, ranked around music
> In the southern Silver-cloud Plain.
> Unknown is wailing or treachery . . .
> There is nothing rough or hoarse . . .
> Without grief, without sorrow, without death,
> Without sickness, without debility . . .
> A lovely land
> On which the many blossoms drop.[1]

There is no Tartarus (Hell) in Celtic Mythology, and consequently no gloom in the Otherworld. Nothing reflects a people's temperament more faithfully than their ideals, and the bright Celtic Paradise suggests a people of cheerful temperament.

Much has also been written regarding the evidence about race types in the Irish tales. The good gods and fairies are invariably blue-eyed and golden-haired; but here, as in the case of the blue-haired Poseidon, the grey-eyed Athene, and

[1] *The Voyage of Bran* (to the Otherworld).

the green-haired Indian god of the west, we may be confronted by colour symbolism. Deities and sons of deities betrayed their attributes by their colours. Cuchullin, son of the god Lu', has, for instance, moles that are coloured blue, green, purple, and yellow. His hair is described sometimes as being "yellow as a honeycomb", or reddish-gold, like the hair of mermaids, fairies, nereids, &c.; it is also stated that it had three colours—brown, crimson (or purple-red) and gold. Then there are references to him as a "small, dark man" with black hair and black eyebrows. If a Cuchullin of dark, short Iberian type actually lived at one time in Ireland, it may be that the mythical deeds and attributes of a traditional yellow-haired Setanta were attached to his memory. This theory is supported by the evidence regarding his age. According to the bards and story-tellers, he fought his great ford combats during the Kine Raid when only seventeen, and died shortly afterwards. The internal evidence of the tales, however, indicates that he must have been at least fifty when he fell in battle.[1] The original Setanta may have been a youthful god of the Adonis type, and, being a god, had hair and eyes coloured differently from the people who revered him. In New Zealand the fairies were white-skinned and fair-haired, and a Maori albino was, according to ancient New Zealand stories, regarded as a son or daughter of one of the fairy-folk (Patu-paiarehe). It is possible that Achilles was fair-haired because he was the son of a goddess.

At the same time, the fact cannot be ignored that there was a mixture of race types in Ireland. Leinster, for instance, is said to have been named after foreign mercenaries called "Laigen". Franks, Saxons, Britons, and Albanians took part in a battle fought in Ireland about A.D. 195 between MacCon and Art, son of "Con of a Hundred Battles". The Gaelic poets' ideal of beauty is the fair man or woman, and according to classic evidence the Celts were a fair people—that is, they were fairer than southern Europeans. It must not be assumed, however, that all fair types are of Teutonic origin. There

[1] In one old manuscript, translated by O'Curry, he is said to have been fifty-nine when he fell.

are fair folks in North Africa, on the island of Gozo in the Mediterranean, and on the borders of China. When the short, dark Iberians entered Britain they may have met fair people among the remnants of the Palæolithic races. The British Isles were habitable and inhabited when the ice belt was shrinking in northern Europe, and therefore before Scandinavia received, or could maintain, a large population.

Cuchullin

I sing of love and war, of faerie gods,
Of Erin's Golden Age when bards proclaimed
The chivalry and glory of the Gael;
Of beauteous women and of dauntless men—
The Red Branch warrior lords. But chiefly I
Of great Cuchullin sing. He never shrank
From fateful combat. As a bridegroom goes
His bride to meet on his sweet marriage morn,
So to meet Death went he; and as a bride
A dowry bringeth, Death him brought renown.
Oh! he was comely, noble-hearted, strong,
Fearless and faithful, this belovèd man,
Unmatched in war, resplendent as a god
In battle ecstasy. His mighty deeds,
Still echoing like his rumbling phantom car,
At midnight, on a blast from Faerieland,
Are sung, though bards be mute and harps unstrung,
In these dimmed days of alien speech, lest he
Should be forgotten in the land he loved,
By every stream in every valley fair;
By every ford he reddened and renamed;
By every river yearning for the sea,
As he for glory yearned and boundless fame;
By every cascade, green-embower'd and hush'd
In shadow cool; and every clamorous, white,
Unspending torrent surging from the hills;
By every moorland wind that harps of doons,
And lustrous star-lit lakes, and lone, blue bens,
And forests in which faerie legions throng
Dim, never-ending ways; by every wave
That breaks on broad white sands and bluff brown cliffs,
Storm-loud, or muttering magic to the stars,
Round Erin's sea-charmed isle.[1]

[1] D. A. Mackenzie.

I. The Incarnation of a God

Now be it known that the god Lu' of the Tua' de Danann,[1] the slayer of Balor of Mighty Blows,[2] was born among men as the hero who was first named Setanta and then Cuchullin. In this manner it befell: One day, as the Ultonian warriors of the Red Branch sat at feast in Emania, there came to the green plain fronting the capital a flock of beautiful birds that began to devour every blade of grass. Nine chariots were made ready with speed, and the warriors went forth to hunt them. In the royal chariot rode King Conor, and with him went Dechtire, his fair young sister.

The birds took flight before the chariots, rising high in the air and singing as they flew. Eastward they turned and eastward the Red Branch warriors followed them, hurling spears as they rode and stones from slings, but no bird was struck.

Nine flocks there were, and in each flock was counted twenty birds. Two by two they were linked by silver chains, and each flock had for leaders two birds united by a yoke of silver. Sweetly they sang as they flew.

The warriors pursued them eagerly and far, until night came on and thick large snowflakes began to fall. Then the birds vanished. It was perilous to return to Emania through the darkness, so King Conor sent Fergus to search for a house. That hero soon reached a humble dwelling. A noble young warrior stood at the door and spoke words of welcome, bidding him and his friends to enter and spend the night. Fergus turned back and led the others to the house. Dechtire thought it beneath her to enter, but she followed her brother, King Conor, and his warriors. No sooner were they all within the house than it seemed to be suddenly enlarged, for they found

[1] Gaelic, *Tuatha de Danann.* A Tuath (pronounced Too'a) was a tribe or people of a certain district. The name is derived from the Celtic root *tu,* to grow or multiply as a family multiplies. A Gaulish name for Apollo was *Toutio Rex.* "De Danann" signifies "of Danu", the mother goddess, also called "Anu", as in "Paps of Anu". The root *an* signifies "mother", as in *Nana, Anna, Annis,* &c. Lu' (Lugh) pronounced "Loo".

[2] Gaelic, *Balc-beimnech.* Identified with Belleros (the Chimæra), slain by Bellero-phontes, and with the Gaulish god Sucellos (*su,* good, *cello,* striker), depicted with a mallet in his hand on a bas-relief found near Sarrebourg (Meurthe).

themselves in a spacious hall in which were numerous fair maidens, while on the board were spread all kinds of food in abundance and cups and goblets of wine.

Dechtire was athirst, and wished to drink water from a vessel of brass. She raised it to her lips. As she drank, her eyes caught sight of a minute, many-coloured creature of worm-like shape, but, ere she could put down the vessel, she found that she had swallowed it. In the merriment of the feast in the brilliantly-lit hall she soon forgot what had happened when she drank the cool, refreshing water.

The king and his warriors and fair Dechtire, having feasted well with the noble young host and the beauteous, sweet-voiced girls, who, although they knew it not, were the birds they had followed, passed the night in the house enjoying sweet slumber. When morning came, they awoke to find that the house had vanished, because it was a house of enchantment. The young warrior and the fair maidens had vanished too. The Red Branch heroes marvelled greatly and returned to Emania.

Months went past and fair Dechtire, who had swallowed with water the creature that was in the vessel of brass, became the mother of a son. She then dreamed a dream and saw before her the youthful and comely god Lu', and recognized him as the noble young host of the enchanted house. He spoke to her, saying that the newly-born child was his own son, and bade her name him Setanta; he also told her that he had sent the magic birds to Emania so as to lure her to the enchanted house in which she had feasted and slept.

Now Dechtire was the wife of Sualtam, who came to love the faerie child as his own son. Tenderly he watched over him, as did also the invisible god Lu'. All the Red Branch heroes had expressed the wish to become foster-father of Dechtire's son, for, when the child was born, a soothsayer declared: "All men will praise this boy; bards will sing of him right nobly; he will be beloved by everyone. O Red Branch warriors this child will become your avenger; he will wage fierce combats at the boundary fords; he will turn disasters into victories."

Setanta was reared at the seaside house of Sualtam. Comely he grew and strong. His locks were yellow as the wax of bees,

he had sparkling grey eyes, and the moles on his face were coloured blue and green and purple-red and yellow.[1] On each foot he had seven toes, and on each hand seven fingers.

When he was but seven years old he heard tell of the boy clan in Emania which had been formed by the sons of the Red Branch warriors. The boys showed great skill with their toy weapons and at sports. Said Setanta to his mother: "Where is Emania? I should like to try my skill against the boys."

"It is a long and weary way from here," Dechtire made answer.

"Is it eastward or westward?" asked the boy.

Seeing he was resolved to go to Emania, his mother gave him full instructions how to reach the town. Then the boy set out with his toy shield on his back, and armed with his toy spear and javelin. He took his hurly and drove a silver ball in front of him, and he amused himself on the way by driving the ball, and throwing his spear and javelin, so that the journey seemed short to him.

When he reached the plain of Emania he saw the Red Branch boys; some were practising with their toy weapons, and some were at the hurly game. He ran among the players, got possession of the ball, played it right through the teams, and drove it into the goal.

King Conor's son cried out: "Now, boys, get at this bold stranger and smite him for taking part in the game without first asking our protection."

They threw their hurlies at Setanta, but he parried them; they ran at him to smite him, but he laid them low, one after another, as fast as they came. He had the fist of a warrior and the arm of a man.

King Conor came nigh: "Stop, stop, youngster!" he called; "rough is the game you play."

"And no wonder," answered the boy. "I am a stranger, but have not been given a hospitable welcome."

"But the boy clan have a law, and it is that a stranger should first of all claim their protection."

[1] Because he was the son, or incarnation, of a god. The attributes of supernatural beings were symbolized by colours.

"Of that law I had no knowledge, else would I have observed it."

The king then addressed the boys, saying: "Promise to protect this stranger."

"We promise," they shouted readily.

The game was resumed, but soon Setanta was seen smiting the boys to right and left of him.

"What means this now?" asked the king.

Said Setanta: "By my gods, I swear that they'll have no peace until they claim my protection."

Thereupon the boys claimed his protection, and he became the leader of them all.

After that the king caught the brave boy by the elbow and said: "Who are you?"

"I am Setanta, son of Sualtam and Dechtire," he answered.

"My sister's son," laughed Conor. "You will stay in my house." The Red Branch warriors were proud to foster him.

A year went past and one day the king and his chief warriors were invited to a banquet at the house of Culann, the smith, who dwelt some distance beyond Emania. Conor wished to take his nephew with him, and went down to the plain where he saw the youngster keeping goal against all the other boys. "Come with me Setanta," he called.

"I cannot go yet," answered his nephew; "the boys are still keen to contend against me."

"It seems as if I shall have to wait long for you, and that Culann must wait too."

"Wait not for me, O King. I shall follow you."

"You do not know the way."

"I shall follow in the tracks of the chariots."

The king went away. He reached Culann's house, and sat down to the feast.

"Have all your chosen ones arrived?" asked the smith.

"All of them," Conor answered, forgetting the boy. "But why do you ask?"

Said Culann: "Each night I let loose my fierce black ban-dog. No one will dare come nigh this house when she is on watch—no thief nor enemy, for she has the strength of twenty dogs."

"Set her loose then," the king said; "she shall be our sentinel."

The smith went outside and took the chain off the savage ban-dog.

When the boys had finished their game on Emania's plain, Setanta set out for Culann's house. He took his hurly with him and drove a silver ball before him. The journey seemed wondrously short.

Night was falling as he approached the green in front of the smith's dwelling. On the green he saw the ban-dog. She howled fiercely, and sprang towards him with gaping jaws, but Setanta drove the silver ball right into the dog's mouth. He drove it so swiftly and with such great force that he laid her low. Then he sprang forward, seized the ban-dog by the hind legs, and dashed out her brains against a rock.

The warriors were feasting inside the house when the dog howled. King Conor, suddenly remembering about Setanta, sprang up and declared: "Bad luck has this feast brought me!"

"What mean you?" asked the smith.

Said the king: "Setanta, son of my sister, was to follow me hither, and now the ban-dog will have seized him."

They all hastened to leave the house. Fergus was first to reach the boy, and when he found what Setanta had done, he raised him on his shoulder.

"Unwelcome is Setanta!" cried the smith.

"What have you against the boy?" the king asked.

"He has slain my ban-dog," wailed the smith, "and now there is no security for me against robbers and no security for my flocks and herds."

Said Setanta: "Be neither sorrowful nor angry, for I shall be your hound until a whelp of the ban-dog's breed is reared and trained."

Cathbad, the soothsayer, then spoke, saying: "From this hour forward the boy must be named Cuchullin (Hound of Culann)."

Said the boy: "I am content with my own name of Setanta."

"Be Cuchullin," Cathbad urged. "That name will yet be on every man's tongue."

And that was how the hero-to-be came to be called Cuchullin.

II. How Cuchullin reddened his Hand

When the period of his service with Culann had gone past, Cuchullin was trained with other seven boys to wield men's arms. The preceptor was Cathbad, the soothsayer. When they had acquired skill in every feat, they waited for the day when they would take arms with ceremony. Cathbad read the omens of the air, and looked for auspicious omens.

One morning that cunning soothsayer, having studied the omens, spoke before his pupils, saying:

> "Who taketh arms upon this day of grief,
> His name shall live for ever and his life be brief".

Cuchullin heard the words, and went at once before the king.

"May you prosper!" said he.

"What is your request?" Conor asked.

"It is my wish to take arms this day."

"Who has prompted you, boy?"

"Cathbad, the soothsayer."

"Your wish is granted," Conor said.

Weapons were brought to Cuchullin. He seized one after the other and tested them. Each one he tested he shook to splinters. The king marvelled at the youngster's strength, and gave him his own royal sword and two spears and his shield. Cuchullin tested them and found them strong. "Worthy of me are these weapons, O King," said he. "It is well with the monarch who has a warrior armed as I am now."

As he spoke, Cathbad entered. "Is the youth taking arms to-day?" he asked.

"He is indeed," Conor answered.

Then Cathbad repeated what he had read from the omens:

"Who taketh arms upon this day of grief,
His name shall live for ever and his life be brief".

"Brat, you have lied to me!" Conor exclaimed angrily, addressing Cuchullin.

"No lie have I told," answered the youth, "for I heard Cathbad's words, and my desire is for fame above all others in Erin."

"Fame you shall get," the soothsayer said, "but you shall not live long to enjoy it."

"It matters not," said Cuchullin, "for the glory I ask for will endure longer than the space of a man's life."

"Get you to your chariot," Cathbad then said, "and put your skill and luck to the test, and you shall soon know whether or not I have spoken truly."

Cuchullin went forth in high spirits, and the king spoke to Iver, his charioteer, saying: "Give the youth my chariot and my two horses and obey his commands."

"Let us go to the Look-out Ford," said Cuchullin, "and find Conäll the Victorious, whose turn it is at present to keep watch there, lest any stranger should enter the province for evil purposes."

When the ford was reached, Conall hailed him, and said: "So you have taken arms. May you prosper, and win victory and triumph!"

Said Cuchullin: "Go to Emania now. It is my turn to keep watch."

"You are but a stripling yet," Conall said.

"Come with me to the shore of Loch Echtra," urged Cuchullin.

"Drive on," Conall said. He bade his charioteer follow the youth.

Cuchullin put a stone in his sling, and, hurling it at Conall's chariot, broke the pole.

"Why have you done this, O boy?" asked Conall.

"To test my skill," Cuchullin answered. "Will you return to Emania now and leave me to watch the ford?"

"As you will," said Conall, and turned back.

Cuchullin went on his way, and the charioteer named every spot they passed. At length they saw before them, on a bank of the Boyne, the strong dun[1] (hill fort) of Nechtan's sons, who were enemies of the Red Branch. "Let us go on to the dun," said Cuchullin.

"There is danger there for us," the charioteer warned him.

"It is not to escape danger I have come forth," said the youth. "This is my first adventure."

"If ever I return to Emania," the charioteer said, "may it be my last!"

"Whether you will return or not," answered the youth, "you are going to the dun."

The chariot was driven on to the green below the dun. There Cuchullin saw a standing stone on which was an iron collar inscribed with ogham writing which set forth that the man who should cross the green must needs engage in single combat with one of the sons of Nechtan.

The eldest son came forth. His name was Treachery (Foill). He was invulnerable except on one spot on his forehead. Cuchullin placed an iron ball in his sling, hurled it, smote Nechtan's son on the vital spot, and slew him.

The second son, whose name was Cunning (Tuachall), came forth next. He was charmed not to fall except at the first stroke.

"Are you going to boast that you slew my brother?" he called.

"Doubtless I shall," answered Cuchullin. "Make haste with your weapons."

The cunning one came against him, but, ere he could play a trick, Cuchullin hurled the king's spear, which went through the man's heart.

The youngest son, named Swallow (Fainnle), appeared next. He would fight only in water, which he could skim like a swallow. So down to the ford he went, but there Cuchullin seized him, and, with the king's sword, smote off his head.

Thereafter the youth plundered the dun and set fire to it.

Nechtan, the mother of the three slain warriors, raised a cry,

[1] Pronounced "doon".

and Cuchullin cast the three heads into the chariot, and bade the charioteer drive swiftly. "For," said he, seeing Nechtan coming after him, "we have need of swiftness now because of the strife and pursuit behind us."[1]

On his way back, Cuchullin slew two noble stags, which he had pursued on foot, and twenty-four white swans that had ever escaped the hunter until that day.

The daughter of Ae', the king's messenger, beheld Cuchullin while yet afar off, returning to Emania with great swiftness, and cried to Conor, saying: "A chariot-fighter hastens hither, and terribly he comes."

"The chariot-fighter is known to me," said the king; "he is my sister's son. Surely he has reddened his hand. The fury is on him, and all our young men are in peril."[2]

Women were sent forth to meet Cuchullin, and his battle fury was abated by them, for they bared their bosoms. Being excessively modest, he bent his head and became timid as a fawn.

[1] Evidently this is a giant-slaying story. The hag-mother pursues the hero with desire to avenge the death of her sons.

[2] This recalls, "He came even unto them. . . . The driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously."—2 Kings, ix, 20.

III. The Wooing of Emer

Cuchullin was admired by every woman in Ulster, and the men of the Red Branch took counsel together so that they might seek out a fair maiden who would be a suitable wife for him. They were concerned lest he should die without leaving an heir who would be another like to himself.

King Conor sent out nine men to search the provinces of Ireland for a worthy bride, the daughter of a king or a chief, but they returned after a year had gone past without having found one.

Then Cuchullin went himself to the Garden of Lu'[1] to woo a fair girl whom he knew, named Emer, the daughter of Forgall the Wily. She had the six gifts—the gift of beauty, the gift of sweet voice, the gift of music, the gift of needlework, the gift of wisdom, and the gift of chastity. She was instructing her foster-sisters in needlework and embroidery on a green playing-field when she heard the rumbling of Cuchullin's chariot. "Who comes nigh?" she asked. Her sister Fiall went to look, and answered her, saying: "A dark, small, melancholy man, the comeliest in Erin, approaches in his chariot. Red are his cheeks, and his eyes are bright with love; his charioteer is a tall, freckled, red-haired youth."

Cuchullin soon reached the green. He leapt from his chariot, and Emer, looking up, regarded him tenderly and said: "May the gods make your path smooth!"

"May no harm ever come to you!" said he.

Then they held converse one with another. She asked him regarding his deeds, and was astonished to hear all he told her; and he asked her regarding her womanly accomplishments, and pleased indeed was he to have knowledge of them. "It would

[1] Luglochta Loga. Now Lusk, north of Dublin.

be well if we were wed," said he. "Never before have I met a maiden to compare with you."

Said Emer: "I cannot marry until my sister Fiall is married, for she is older than I am. She has great skill in needlework."

"It is not your sister I have come to woo," he answered, "but you, O Emer, whom I love."

Said Emer: "No one comes hither expecting to win me who is not able to overcome warriors at every ford in the province."

"As you expect of me, so shall I do," said he.

"I accept your love," Emer whispered; "it is taken and mine is granted."

Then Cuchullin went away joyfully, and returned that night to Emania.

It was told to Forgall the Wily that Emer had held converse with Cuchullin, and he spoke, saying: "My daughter has fallen in love with the young madman from Emania, but I shall hinder them both."

Next day he disguised himself as an alien and went to Conor's Court with gifts of wine and gold, declaring himself to be an ambassador from the King of the Gauls. Conor praised his Red Branch warriors before him, and Cuchullin most of all. Forgall saw the young hero performing feats, and said: "If he were to go to the valiant Donall in Scotland he would acquire greater skill, but if he went to Scathach[1] he would learn feats that would make him the greatest warrior in Europe."

Forgall spoke in this manner believing that if the youthful hero went to Scotland (Alba) he would never return again. Greatly he feared lest Cuchullin might slay him so as to win Emer. He promised to grant any wish of the son of Dechtire if he would go to Scotland within a certain time.

Cuchullin decided to go. He crossed the sea accompanied by Conall and Laegh, his charioteer, and went first to Donall the Champion, who taught him the art of the swordsmith. Now Donall had a daughter named Dornolla,[2] a tall, dark-skinned young woman with grey eyes and red hair. She fell in love with Cuchullin, but he refused her, and she vowed to

[1] The Amazonian Queen of Skye. Her name means "shadowy".

[2] I.e. "Big Fist". Donall was probably a Celtic Vulcan and a giant.

avenge the slight. When he left her father's house she raised a vision that caused Conall and Laegh to turn back, and Cuchullin had thus to go and seek out Scathach alone. He mourned the loss of his comrades. Many perils he endured, but after crossing the Plain of Ill-luck, and going through the Glen of Peril, he reached the camp of Scathach's pupils, among whom were Ferdia and the sons of Ushnach, Neesha[1] and his two brothers. He asked them where he would find Scathach, and they said: "In yonder island."

"How can I reach her?" was his next question.

"Across the Bridge of the Cliff," said they, "the bridge that no man can go over until he has achieved skill and valour. Many a king's son has perished attempting to cross it."

Three times did Cuchullin try to cross; but the bridge threw him back, and the pupils laughed at him. Then he gave the hero's salmon leap to the middle of the bridge, and from there to the other side.

Scathach was training her two sons, and Cuchullin was told he would have to get her under his power by placing his sword-point between her breasts before she would consent to grant his wish.[2] This he did, and he made Scathach pledge to give him skill at arms. From her he learned many feats, and he helped her to overcome her enemies, including Aife, the war-woman. After Aife had broken his sword, he seized her, and took her captive, and made her pledge to give hostages to Scathach, and never again to oppose her in battle. Cuchullin had afterwards a narrow escape from being killed by a fierce crone, with one eye blind, whose three sons he had slain. He took off her head on the narrow part of a high cliff.

Thereafter Cuchullin set out for home, and with him went Ferdia and other men of Erin who had been trained by Scathach. They took ship at Cantire[3] and crossed to Rathlin, which was reached on Hallowe'en. On the beach sat a beautiful maiden. She wept bitterly, because she was to be carried away by the Fomorians,[4] who came every year for a victim. Cuchullin waited

[1] Naoise. Ushnach pronounced oosh'nach (*ch* guttural).
[2] Odysseus obtained power over Circe in like manner.
[3] Gaelic, Ceann Tiré, i.e. Land's End. [4] Mythical beings of the giant order.

and slew three Fomorians when they reached the shore. He thus delivered the maiden, who was the daughter of Rua', King of Rathlin. At the king's Court he met Conall the Victorious, who was collecting tribute for Ulster. When King Rua' came to know who was his daughter's rescuer, he made offer of her in marriage to Cuchullin, but he refused her, remembering Emer.

No sooner did Cuchullin reach Emania than he set out for the Garden of Lu'; but he had to remain a whole year waiting to see Emer, so strongly was she guarded. At length he forced his way into Forgall's dun and carried off his loved one. He slew several great warriors as he did so, and Forgall, who fled before him, met his death as he leapt from the wall of the court. Placing Emer in his scythe-chariot, Cuchullin drove away with her.

Forgall's warriors followed in pursuit, and he fought combats at every ford, and each one he reddened with blood. Fords and streams and hills and plains, between Forgall's dun and the Ulster border, are to this day named after the feats he performed.

When Emer reached the royal house of Emania she was given a great welcome by King Conor and the Red Branch warriors. Cuchullin then took her as his wife, and she loved him until the day of his death, nor did she live long after him.

Once was Cuchullin lured away from her by a faerie woman whose name was Fand.

IV. Cuchullin in Faerieland

The November Fair[1] was being celebrated with sports and feasting on the plain of Drogheda[2] when a flock of beautiful birds appeared on the Boyne. Greatly did the women desire to possess their plumage, and King Conor's wife sent Cuchullin to hunt them. He caught them all, and each woman received two except Ethne, who loved him. She made sweet complaint, but he promised that when the next flock of birds came she would get the two that were fairest.

Soon afterwards he saw two fair birds linked together by a chain of gold.[3] They chanted a melody which brought sleep on all, but Cuchullin resisted the spell. He put a stone in his sling and cast it, but missed the birds. He tried again and the stone went wide. "Alas!" said he; "never since I took arms have I used my sling so badly." Next he flung his spear, which passed through the wing of one of the birds, but the pair dived and escaped him.

Greatly cast down, Cuchullin walked away and laid him down on a green bank with his head against a rock. Soon he slept, and in a vision he saw two women coming towards him, the one in a green and the other in a crimson cloak of five folds.[4] The woman in the green cloak smiled to him, and then smote him with her wand; then the woman in the crimson cloak smote him also. Thus did they smite him in turn, again and again. Then they went away, leaving him half dead.

Soon afterwards Cuchullin awoke and sprang up like to a man who walks in his sleep. "What has happened to you?" asked the Ultonians.

"Take me to the painted court at Emania," he moaned.

[1] Samhain (summer-end), i.e. Hallowe'en. [2] Muirtheimné.
[3] Faerie birds. [4] The faerie birds in human form.

Nor could he say another word. To Emania Cuchullin was taken, and he lay on a sick-bed there for a whole year without uttering a word.

The truth was kept from Emer, who thought he had gone afar on some warrior quest.

One day, before the next November Fair, a stranger entered the sick-chamber. He sang a verse-charm, and offered to give strength and healing to Cuchullin. His name was Angus, son of Ae' Avra', from the Plains of Gladness.[1] He asked that Cuchullin should visit his country on Hallowe'en, and take Fand in marriage. Now Fand was the daughter of Ae', a faerie woman of peerless beauty.

When Angus went away, Cuchullin spoke freely, and told all that had happened to him on the last Hallowe'en. "What shall I do now?" he asked.

Said Conor: "Go to the same rock again."

Cuchullin went to Drogheda Plain and lay down with his head against the rock. He saw the woman in the green cloak coming towards him.

"Why came you last year?" he asked.

"It was not to harm you," said she, "but to seek your friendship."

"'Tis well," he said.

"I have come now," said she, "from Fand. Her husband, Manannan Mac Lir,[2] has deserted her. She has been stricken with love for you. Come and help my husband, Lavrai, to fight against his enemies, the Unearthly Ones. Your strength will be more than fully restored, and you will get Fand."

Cuchullin was unwilling to go to Fand, but he sent Laegh with the faerie woman to see what was to be seen. The charioteer found that Lavrai's dwelling was on an island, and he crossed the sea to it in a bronze boat. Wonderful were the tales he told Cuchullin on his return. He said the Plain of Gladness was of great beauty, and that Lavrai had a mighty army, and was himself a wolf in battle. "His house," said

[1] Magh Mell, i.e. the Faerie Paradise.

[2] The sea-god who gave his name to the Isle of Man. His father, Lir, is the original of Shakespeare's Lear.

Laegh, "is built of silver and crystal, and round it is a fair garden in which grows a tree with silver branches. This isle is a land of truth, where no one does evil. . . . If Ireland were mine," he said, "I should give it freely to dwell there for ever." Of Fand he spoke eloquently, praising her greatly. "The hearts of all men," said he, "are breaking for her love."

Cuchullin went away with Laegh to the wonderful land. There he overthrew the Unearthly Ones, and Lavrai gave him his sister, Fand, in marriage. A month went past. Then Cuchullin made Fand promise to come to him at a certain yew tree. Having done so, he returned to Emania.

Emer was pining in her home at Dun-delca,[1] and when it was told to her that Cuchullin had wooed Fand in the Land of Faerie she hastened to Emania. There she found that her husband was on the sea-strand beside the yew tree with the faerie woman. Emer was roused to fierce wrath. She gave sharp grey knives to fifty girls, and, taking a spear in her hand, led them towards the place where Cuchullin conversed with Fand. They all rode in chariots.

Cuchullin spoke scornfully when Emer drew nigh, saying: "I have no fear of your spear, or of the little knives, or of your fierce wrath. It would be a pity if my strength were put against that of a female warrior."

Said Emer: "I ask you, Cuchullin, why you have dishonoured me before all women? I came to this province trusting you, believing in you, and under your care. Would you now quarrel with me? You cannot put me away."

"O Emer," he said, "you will never find my equal among men."

Said Emer: "I used to be very dear to you. Would I were so again!" She wept in her deep sorrow.

"Dear you are to me," Cuchullin said, "and dear you will be as long as I live."

Then Fand spoke, saying: "It is sorrowful to love one if he does not take notice of it. Better is it to be cast off unless one is loved as dearly as one loves. I should therefore go away."

Said Emer: "No, I should go away."

[1] Dundalk.

"Ah, no!" Fand made answer. "I can see that I must be sent away in time. This I have feared all along."

Her heart was stricken with sorrow and shame because of her love for Cuchullin, and because it was Emer he loved most. "He is yours," Fand said, "and although he is taken from me I wish him all good, all prosperity. It was wrong of you, O Emer, to come hither to kill miserable me."

While she spoke, Manannan came to her side, but no one saw him save Fand alone. "Lord of the Fair World,[1]" she said, "there was a time when you were dear to me. We thought then that no one could ever part us, O rider of sea-horses."

Then Fand addressed Cuchullin, saying: "Farewell! I leave you with the warm heart in me. It is my time to depart. I shall never return again. I go away in shame, but there is one here[2] who is not sorrowful on that account."

Fand then departed with Manannan, to whom she spoke, saying: "There is one I would rather follow than the other, but I will go with you. Cuchullin has deserted me. You have not a queen who is worthy of you, but Cuchullin has."

When Fand had vanished, Cuchullin was seized with madness. He fled to the hills, and remained a long time without food or drink,[3] but he could not follow Fand because Manannan had shaken his cloak between him and her so that they might never see one another again.

Emer hastened to Conor and told him of Cuchullin's madness. Druids came to the hill and gave to Cuchullin a drink of forgetfulness, and the memory of Fand passed from his mind. They gave Emer the same drink, because the madness of jealousy had seized her.

Then both were as they had been before, remembering naught of Fand who had come between them.

The time drew nigh when Cuchullin had to fulfil his purpose in life by fighting in the war waged by Queen Méave of Connaught for possession of the Brown Bull of Cooley.

[1] I.e. the ocean. [2] Emer.

[3] The madness of a deserted lover of a faerie woman is common in Gaelic folk-tales.

V. The Kine Raid of Cooley

Now Méave was the daughter of Yohee,[1] High King of Erin, and her first husband was Conor Mac Nessa, King of Ulster, but she quarrelled with him and returned home. Her three brothers had revolted against their sire. They were overcome and slain in battle, however, and, as Connaught was then in need of a strong hand to curb it, Yohee made Méave queen of that province. Well did she rule it. She took in marriage Prince Ailell, son of Conrach, a former King of Connaught; but his days were numbered, and death took him soon afterwards. Then Méave selected, as her consort, his namesake Ailell, the younger son of the King of Leinster, and they lived happily and prospered.

One night Méave and Ailell held a bolster dispute at the royal house in Cruachan.[2] "You are better off to-day than you were the day I married you," Ailell says.

Said Méave: "I was well off before ever I saw you."

"How well off you were," Ailell says, "none ever knew. You lived a woman's life at home while your enemies plundered on your boundaries."

Said Méave: "No, no; you are mistaken. Was not my father the high king? Of his six daughters I was the noblest and most admired. As a wage-giver I was the best of them, and I was the best in war, for I had fifteen hundred mercenaries, and among them were the sons of adventurers and the sons of Connaught chiefs. So strong was I that my sire had me called 'Queen Méave of Connaught'. Now, it is no reproach to me if you and I are equally strong and powerful. If my husband were not a valorous man I could not live with him; he would

[1] Gaelic, Eochaid.

[2] The ruins of the Rath of Cruachan are near Carrick-on-Shannon, County Roscommon.

be a disgrace to me. If he were mean or jealous he should not remain here. But remember, Ailell, that before I took you in marriage you had little or naught; you came hither, indeed, as a 'petticoat pensioner'."

Ailell denied that he owed all he had to Méave.

Next day the queen and her consort, continuing their dispute, set themselves to take stock of their possessions—their jewels, their raiment, their flocks and their herds—and it was found that they were equals in all things until they came to the kine. In Ailell's herd there was a peerless young bull named White-horned. It had been calved by one of Méave's cows, but, deeming it not honourable to be under "petticoat rule", it had deserted the queen's herd.

Méave was disheartened because she had not a bull that was the equal of White-horned. Indeed, she felt as if she were as poor as a beggar. She spoke to Mac Ro', the chief herald of the high king, and asked him if there was such another bull as White-horned in any province of Erin, and he answered, saying: "There is a greater and better bull in Ulster, and its name is the Brown One of Cooley,[1] because it is possessed by Daire, son of Fachta, in the Cooley country."

Said Méave: "Get you to Daire and borrow the Brown One for me, and I shall return it in a year's time with the loan fee and fifty heifers."

Then Mac Ro' set out for Ulster and the house of Daire, son of Fachta.

Now, be it known that the White Bull of Connaught and the Brown Bull of Cooley had been rivals of old.

Once there were two swineherds; the one served the faerie King of Munster and the other the faerie King of Connaught. They fell to disputing and fighting over the feeding-place of their swine, and they had to be sent away by their masters. Then they became ravens and fought fiercely for two years, a year in the north and a year in the south. Next they became water-beasts, and fought for a year in the Shannon and for a year in the Suir. After that they were champions of rival kings, and each slew the other, so that both died. Once again they

[1] Donn Cuailgne.

became water-beasts, but no bigger than worms, and each had many colours.[1] One was in a Connaught spring and the other in a river in Ulster. Then there came a day when one of Daire's cows in Cooley drank water and swallowed the many-coloured worm of Ulster, while a cow of Queen Méave's swallowed the Connaught one. The rival swineherds were then reborn as two bulls, the White Bull of Connaught and the Brown Bull of Cooley. These were the grandest bulls ever seen in Erin. In Connaught no bull dared bellow before the White One, the Bull of the West, and in Ulster no bull dared bellow before the Brown One, the Bull of the East.

Now on the day before the many-coloured, beautiful worm in the Ulster river was swallowed by the cow it was seen by Daire, to whom it spoke, saying: "On the morrow I shall be in the water drunk by one of your cows, and my rival will be in the water drunk by one of Méave's cows. Two bulls will be born, and there will be a great war in Erin on our account."

And what the worm said came to pass.

Mac Ro', the chief herald of Erin, was well received by Daire, who promised to lend the Brown One to Queen Méave; but Daire came to know that one of the herds from Connaught boasted that if the bull could not be obtained by fair means it could be by foul. "By my gods," vowed Daire, "unless the bull is taken by foul means he shall never be Méave's!"

That was the answer Mac Ro' had to carry back to Connaught's queen. Said Méave, who was greatly angered: "Then by foul means shall it be obtained."

The queen prepared for war, and summoned her warriors and her allies. Three troops assembled, and in each troop were a thousand men. The first troop were black-haired men, wearing many-coloured cloaks folded round them and clasped with brooches of silver, and shirts of gold adorned with patterns of red gold; they had silver-hilted swords in white scabbards, long shields, and grey-headed spears. The second troop had closely-cropped hair, and all wore dark-grey cloaks, red tunics, and swan-white shirts; their swords had knobbed hilts of gold

[1] In a Chinese work it is stated: "The dragon in the water put on many colours. *Therefore* it was a god."

and silver sheaths, and their spears had five prongs. The men of the third troop had yellow flowing hair, shining like gold, and cast loose like manes; they wore cloaks of purple-red, cunningly adorned, which came down to their insteps, and were clasped with golden brooches set with gems; they marched in step, lifting and putting down their feet like one man; their shields were round with engraved edges, and each had a spear like a palace pillar.

The warriors feasted and drank deep at Cruachan, and, ere they set out for Ulster, Méave consulted a soothsayer to learn whether all would return safely or not, and his answer was: "Whosoever shall return or not return, you yourself shall return."

Méave was in her chariot, and as it was being turned she saw a faerie girl[1] sitting on the shaft. Her hair was golden, her skin snow-white, her cheeks rich-blooded, her lips like coral, her teeth like pearls; she had blue laughing eyes and dark eyebrows, and a voice sweet as harp music. Her cloak of many colours was clasped with a golden pin. As she sat, she wove a web on a silver beam with seven gold rings on it.

"Who are you?" the queen asked.

"I am Feidelm, the prophetess of Cruachan's fairy hill," said she. "I have come from Scotland after acquiring the art of prophecy."

"Then tell me how you see our army."

"I see all your men crimsoned; I see them all reddened.... I see a small dark man who will perform mighty feats at the cost of many wounds. Like to Cuchullin is he, with the hero's light on his forehead. If he is not guarded against, he will be your bane. Blood will flow in battle, and the memory of it will endure. I hear the lamentations of many women."

Having spoken thus, the faerie girl vanished.

Now Méave had little fear of the Red Branch warriors, because it was the time of their debility. Macha had cursed them aforetime, because, when she was the wife of an Ultonian farmer, she was forced to save her husband's life by racing with the fastest pair of the king's horses. She won the race, but gave

[1] A Banshee.

premature birth to a child. "Ever after this," said she, "when the men of Ulster are in sorest need of their strength to oppose their enemies, they shall lie down for five days and four nights overcome with the weakness of a woman in childbirth."

Méave went north with her army on the Monday after Hallowe'en, when the Ultonians were curse-stricken, and there was none to guard the frontier save Cuchullin, son of Lu', who had been shielded against all spells by visiting the Plain of Gladness, where he wooed Fand.

The army drew nigh to the ford at which Cuchullin kept ward. He was asleep when a terrible cry caused him to awaken. Forth went he, and soon he saw a woman in a chariot.[1] She was red-haired and wore a purple mantle. The chariot-horse had but one leg. Beside the chariot was a big man with a hazel switch, driving a cow before him. Cuchullin challenged them, and the woman answered. She was asked her name, and gave a long mocking one. "Keep back," said Cuchullin. Still she mocked him, and he sprang to attack her; but woman, chariot, man, and cow vanished suddenly. Then he saw the woman in the form of a dark bird sitting on a branch. "You are a dangerous woman of enchantments," said Cuchullin. "I bring you ill luck," said she. "You cannot harm me," he answered. "When a mighty warrior, who is your own equal, will engage you in single combat," said she, "I will help him. I will be an eel, and twine round your feet in the ford. I will be a wolf, and seize your right arm. I will be a red-eared cow that will rush at you."

Said Cuchullin: "The eel I will bruise against a green stone; I will take an eye from the wolf with my spear; I will break a leg of the cow with a stone from my sling."

Morrigu vanished, and Cuchullin returned to his dun. When the army from Connaught reached the ford, he demanded single combat according to the war laws of Erin, and a promise not to advance farther until he was overcome. The demand was granted, and then the combats began.

"He is but a beardless boy," said Méave.

Then Fergus told her of Cuchullin's exploits from childhood

[1] This is the Morrigu.

until he took arms and reddened his hand, and the queen marvelled greatly.

Warrior after warrior fell at the ford. Then Méave, chafing at the delay, resolved to break her pledged word and move northward with a third of her army, so that she might seize the Brown Bull. The Morrigu warned the bull, perching herself on a pillar-stone in bird form, and the Brown One went off to the "Harper's Glen" in Slievegullion.

Cuchullin was wroth when he came to know of Méave's treachery. He fell on the rear of her force, and slew many of her men.

When evening came on, one of the queen's handmaidens put on the royal coronet and went to draw water from the river. Cuchullin thought it was Méave. He put a stone in his sling, cast it, and killed the maiden, shattering the coronet.

The Brown Bull was found and seized by the Connaught men, and it was a deep affront to Cuchullin when it was driven into Méave's camp.

He had slain a hundred men in combat. Then the Queen of Connaught sent Big Loch against him. A mighty warrior was Loch, and when he began to fight with the youthful hero, forth from the faerie hill came Morrigu to help him. First she took the form of a red-eared cow. Cuchullin cast a stone from his sling and broke a leg of the cow. Then Morrigu became an eel in the river, and twined herself round the hero's ankles as he fought. As he struggled with the eel, Loch wounded him, but Cuchullin bruised the eel against a green stone. Morrigu next became a grey wolf, and again Loch wounded Cuchullin as he struggled with his faerie enemy. Cuchullin hurled his spear and took an eye from the wolf. Morrigu fled away to the faerie hill. Then Cuchullin turned fiercely on Big Loch and gave him his death wound.

"I ask a warrior's boon," cried Loch.

"Name it," Cuchullin answered.

"Let me not lie backward towards the men of Erin," said he, "but facing you in death as I have faced you in combat."

His wish was granted. When the life-breath went from him, Cuchullin laid him out as he had desired.

After that three wizards and three witches were sent against Cuchullin, but he baffled them, despite their enchantments, and took off their heads.

Wearied indeed was the hero and greatly dejected, thinking of the odds against him. For many nights he had not slept, except when standing at the ford, leaning on his spear. Then came an evening when, looking towards the glittering ranks of his enemies, Cuchullin was roused to fierce anger. He gave forth a fierce hero's shout that struck terror into the hearts of his enemies. The goblins and demons of earth and air answered his shout, and the glen rang with their howling.

Soon afterwards there came from the north-east a lone warrior, clad in a green mantle and a silken shirt of red gold. He carried a black silver-rimmed shield, a five-pronged spear, and a pronged javelin. Said Cuchullin to his charioteer: "Here comes one of my faerie kin to help and comfort me."

The warrior was Lu', father of the hero. He addressed Cuchullin, saying: "O Cuchullin, lie down in deep slumber, and I shall guard the ford for you."

Cuchullin laid himself down with a will, and slept for three days and three nights.

It was while he slept that the boy clan from Emania came to the boundary and attacked the army of Méave. Many warriors they slew, but they fell one by one until they all perished.

Laegh awoke Cuchullin and told him of the slaughter of the boys. His wrath was terrible. Transforming himself into giant shape, he leapt into his chariot, and made a fierce night attack upon the enemy. Round the host he rode three times, and left behind him a bulwark of dead men.

Warrior after warrior came against him in single combat after that, but they all fell. Then Méave sent Calatin and his twenty-seven sons to overcome him. Now Calatin was an enchanter, and his sons assisted him in working magic spells. Fiacha, one of Méave's men, took pity on Cuchullin, knowing the perils that threatened him, and went secretly to his aid, he helped him to baffle the allies of demons. Then Cuchullin was able to slay Calatin and his sons.

Soon afterwards Méave prevailed upon Ferdia, a warrior of great renown, to go against Cuchullin. Now Ferdia had been Cuchullin's fellow-pupil at the dun of Scathach in Scotland, and greatly cast down was he because he had to combat with a dear friend, and because he knew well that one of them would have to die.

When Cuchullin came forth to fight next morning, the gods and demons of the Tua' de Danann raised shouts around him, for it was their wish that the terror he inspired might be greater in each succeeding battle. Cuchullin reached the north side of the ford. On the south side stood Ferdia, who said: "With joy I welcome you."

Said Cuchullin: "The welcome would have been sweet at any other time; here and now I do not find it pleasant. Ah! Ferdia, it were better if I had been the one to say 'welcome', for you have entered my own country. You come to combat with me, too. It is not proper for you to have come because of Méave's plottings. By none that was before you has victory been won. All my opponents fell, and you shall fall too."

Ferdia boasted of his prowess and great skill, and Cuchullin, having answered him, said: "You should not have come. We were both with Scathach in Scotland."

> We were heart companions,
> We were comrades in assemblies,
> We were fellows of the same bed,
> Where we used to sleep the deep sleep. . . .
>
> To hard battles,
> In countries many and far distant
> Together we used to practise and go
> Through each forest, learning with Scathach.[1]

Ferdia made answer, saying: "O Cuchullin of the beautiful feats, do not recall our companionship. It shall not avail you. O Cu', it shall not avail you. . . . Now make choice of arms."

Cuchullin and Ferdia displayed their skill that day with various light weapons, observing every rule of chivalry. Each wounded the other, for the throwing was better than the warding

[1] O'Curry's translation.

off with the shield. When evening came on they cast their weapons to the charioteers. Then they embraced one another. Each put his arms round the neck of the other, and each gave the other three kisses. Their wounds were dressed by the same physicians; they ate and drank together, and slept side by side all night.

Next day they fought with broad grey spears, and fierce was the combat, but when evening came they embraced and kissed each other, and ate, drank, and slept together as on the previous night.

On the third day Ferdia made choice of weapons, and they fought with heavy, hard-smiting swords. Both got many wounds. When evening came on they parted mournfully; they did not embrace or kiss; each went to his own camp.

On the fourth day Ferdia came forth clad in armour. When Cuchullin saw this he sent for his own battle-suit, donned it, and went to the ford. Then the two greatest heroes of the Gaels, who had been made enemies by Méave, began to wage their last combat. Until midday they fought by hurling javelins. Then they grew furious. Cuchullin sprang suddenly across the ford at Ferdia, but Ferdia cast him back with his shield so that he fell into the river. Then Cuchullin increased his strength and height until he became like a giant.[1] He rushed at Ferdia, and they fought with shield against shield, fiercely, madly. The demons and goblins screamed around them as they fought.

Neither prevailed for a time, but at length Ferdia inflicted a deep wound with his sword. Then Cuchullin called for his *gae bulga*,[2] and Laegh brought it. It was Cuchullin's custom to put this weapon into the stream, and cast it from between his toes. No other warrior could perform the feat.

When Ferdia heard Cuchullin calling for *gae bulga*, he lowered his shield. Then Cuchullin thrust a spear towards his breast and wounded him. At this Ferdia raised his shield, exposing the lower part of his body. Cuchullin immediately

[1] A Fomorian.

[2] "Belly dart", a light spear. Roman writers called the Gaulish spear a *gæsum*. According to Virgil, the Gauls each carried two *gæsa*. See *Æneid*, VIII, 657 *et seq.*

caught the *gae bulga* between his toes, cast it, and mortally wounded Ferdia, who cried out: "That is enough now. I fall. My end has come. Cu', it is not like you to kill me."

Cuchullin ran forward and clasped Ferdia in his arms; thus did he hold his friend until death came. Then Cuchullin made lament, saying: "Unhappy is your fate, O Ferdia! You are dead and I live. Sorrowfully are we separated by death. O Ferdia of the dear grey eyes, O sweet-voiced Ferdia, your equal has never come against me! Oh, it is not right that you should have been slain by me! This is not a worthy consummation of our friendship. I loved you, but when you came to me I gave to you a drink of red blood. . . . If we had fought together against enemies I would not be living after you. We should have both died together. . . . Sad the deed that laid you low, O Ferdia! The dark memory of it shall hang over me forever."

Soon after Ferdia fell, Sualtam, Cuchullin's earthly father, came to the ford. He heard the hero's battle-shout, and said: "Is heaven falling, has the sea burst through its boundaries, or do I hear the battle-shout of my son?"

Cuchullin was displeased to see him, knowing well that Sualtam was no hero, although not a coward, but just an ordinary fighting man.

"Mourn not for me," said the young warrior. "Hasten to Emania and rouse the Ultonians to battle, seeing that I am now no longer able to defend the province because of my numerous and sore wounds."

Sualtam went speedily to Emania and shouted to the Red Branch heroes, saying: "Ulster is in peril, men are being slain, women carried off, and kine driven away."

Said King Conor: "The fallen will be avenged, every woman will be restored to her own dwelling-house, and every cow to her own byre."

As he spoke the spell passed away, and the Ultonians rose up, their strength having returned to them, and were mustered for battle.

Cuchullin was laid on a bed of pain, when Conor came with his host against the enemy.

The wounded hero spoke to Laegh, saying: "Look out for me, O friend, and tell me what you see."

Said Laegh: "O Cu', the army of Conor is denser than a deep forest. If you were to go out in your chariot, and Conall Cernach were to go with you in his chariot, you could never break through."

"There will be a great battle," Cuchullin said. "Keep watch for me. You must tell me all that takes place."

The battle waged furiously, and ere long Laegh spoke, saying: "The Connaught men have broken through on the east."

"Alas," groaned Cuchullin, "and I am lying here! There would be no breach if I were on the east."

Ailell was in his chariot in the thick of the fray, but Méave dragged him back. She wished to save him, for it was her desire that he should slay Conor when victory was won. She urged Fergus to attack the Ultonians, and he made a breach to the north. He slew a hundred of Conor's warriors. It was told to Cuchullin that Fergus had come forth.

"Untie my bandages," cried Cuchullin. This request was refused him, but he sprang up and burst the bandages apart. He hastened to his chariot, and went against Fergus, and called to him, saying: "Come hither and I shall drench you as if you were cast into a pool; I shall drench you in your own blood."

"Who calls so boldly?" asked Fergus.

"Cuchullin, son of the sister of King Conor," answered the hero.

Then Fergus fled, and the men of Connaught and the men of Leinster fled also. Cuchullin and his men pressed closely behind them.

Queen Méave was wroth. Having sent the Brown Bull to Cruachan by a roundabout road, she armed herself and went into battle to cover the retreat of her army. Cuchullin soon reached her, and soon he had her in his power.

"Oh, spare me!" cried Méave.

Said Cuchullin: "Although I were to slay you, even you, it would be lawful."

She was at his mercy, and he spared her, for it was not pleasant to Cuchullin to slay a woman.

Méave went back to her people. "O Fergus," said she, "blunders and faults have been numerous to-day."

Said Fergus: "Thus it ever happens to a herd that is led by a mare."

Now when the Brown Bull found himself in a woman's country at Cruachan, and among strange herds, he raised a loud bellowing, and never was there heard such a bellowing in Connaught. The White Bull, who would not permit another bull to bellow before him, reared his head and came against the intruder. Then began the battle of the bulls. Their eyes flamed like balls of wild fire, their panting was like wind rushing from a smith's bellows; they crashed together, butting one another, trying to gore one another, and tossing up clods of earth that darkened the air; foam was scattered from their mouths like snowflakes. Women and children, hearing the noise of the bull conflict, fled away and hid themselves in caves. Men looked down from hill-tops as the bulls butted one another.

At length the Brown One drove back the White, which turned and fled towards the pass in which the warriors were fighting. The Brown One followed. As White-horned fled he careered through Méave's army, and one of Méave's warriors tried to turn back the Ulster bull following hard behind; but he was trodden down by it. Then Cormac struck at the Brown Bull with his spear, saying: "May we not possess this prize for long, or boast of it, because it cannot overcome White-horned."

The bull heard the taunt and understood it, having human understanding. He caught up White-horned, and the combat was resumed; the bulls butted and pushed and gored one another, and all the warriors ceased fighting to look on. The Brown One became the victor. He gored White-horned, and then, raising him on his horns, raced away with him towards the north, tossing and shaking his brown head as he went. The body of the White Bull was broken in pieces, and wherever a piece fell the place was named after it. The loin fell in the Great Ford (Ath Mor) of the Shannon, and it was named after

that Loin Ford (Ath Luain)[1]. The liver fell into Liver Ford (Ath Truim)[2].

Northward raced the Brown One, until from a hill-top he beheld green Cooley[3]. Then he bellowed fiercely, for the madness of battle had seized him. The people of the township (bailé) fled when they saw the Brown One charging furiously towards them. They all hid behind a rock. In his red madness the Brown One thought this rock was a rival bull. He bellowed like thunder, went swiftly against the rock, charged it, and dashed out his brains. So ended the battle of the bulls that had once been the rival swineherds of faerie kings.

Queen Méave and Ailell made peace with the Ulster men, and for seven years there was no fighting or raiding. But Méave longed to be avenged on Cuchullin.

[1] Now Athlone. [2] Trim, County Meath. [3] Gaelic, Cuailgne.

VI. The Death of Cuchullin

Now of all the deeds performed by Cuchullin none was greater than the slaying of Calatin and his twenty-seven sons. Yet this mighty feat was doomed to bring about his undoing. There survived Calatin three sons and three young daughters, and Queen Méave reared them for seven years. Then she sent them to Alba (Scotland) to learn magic arts, and from there to the land of demons.[1] They returned with magic weapons, including a spear that would kill three kings, and this spear was given, with an evil motive, to Cuchullin.

Thereafter Queen Méave made an alliance with Munster and Leinster to wage war against Ulster. She stirred up the sons of the warriors who had been slain by Cuchullin, so that they might thirst for his blood.

Méave waited until the time when the Ultonians were under Macha's curse. Then she set out with her army, so that Cuchullin might be overcome as he fought alone.

Cathbad, the soothsayer, warned Conor that if Cuchullin went forth to fight alone he would be slain. There was no one to go into battle with him, for Conall the Victorious at that time sojourned in Pictland. Said Conor: "Take Cuchullin to the 'Glen of the Deaf', where no one hears aught, not even a battle-cry."[2]

Emer and all the women pleaded with Cuchullin, and made him consent to go to the Glen of the Deaf, and then Néave, wife of Conall the Victorious, made him promise not to go forth to battle until she called upon him to do so.

The three daughters of Calatin—Morrigu, Macha, and Bove[3]

[1] In the Christian versions the places visited are Scotland, Babylon, and "Hell's fearful realm".

[2] This glen may have been a Celtic sanctuary.

[3] Incarnations of the Three Furies.

—transformed themselves into birds, and went in search of Cuchullin. When they found where he was they raised loud cries—the wailing of women and the shouting of warriors. Cuchullin heard the cries. "Alas," he moaned, "the enemy is harrying Ulster!"

Said Cathbad: "These are only faerie cries; heed them not. Let the banquet be spread and make merry."

The hag daughters of Calatin then transformed grass stems into warriors, and filled the whole landscape with magic fire and smoke, so that it seemed as if the enemy were laying Ulster waste. Cuchullin fought against the faerie hosts, and was greatly wearied, on the day before the day of his last battle.

Now when the last hour of his life drew nigh
Cuchullin woke from dreams forewarning death;
And cold and awesome came the night-bird's cry—
"An evil omen", the magician saith—
A low gust panted like a man's last breath,
As morning crept into the chamber black;
Then all his weapons clashed and tumbled from the rack.

For the last time his evil foèmen came;
The sons of Calatin by Lugaid led.
The land lay smouldering with smoke and flame;
The duns[1] were fallen and the fords ran red;
And widows fled, lamenting for their dead,
To fair Emania on that fateful day,
While all forworn with fighting great Cuchullin lay.

On the morning of his day of doom, a morning of evil omens, tidings were brought to Cuchullin that the enemy were laying waste the province. When he had arisen from bed he saw coming towards him Néave, wife of Conall the Victorious. It was not, however, Néave herself who came, but the Fury (Bove), one of Calatin's daughters. She had assumed the form of Néave so as to work evil against him because he had slain Calatin and his sons. Well she knew that it would go ill with Cuchullin if he went forth to battle except at the call of Conall's wife, so she addressed Cuchullin, saying: "O my strong one, O my warrior, O my loved one, Delgan fort has fallen, and

[1] Hill forts. Pronounced doons.

the province is swept by flame and smoke. I who have held you back now urge you to go forth against the enemy. Well I know that I must die by Conor's hand, because I have prevented you from wreaking vengeance on the men of Erin."

Said Cuchullin: "Alas! who can now put his faith in a woman? I never dreamed that for all the riches on earth you would send me to my doom. Yet, since it is your will that I should combat alone against the army of Erin, I shall go forth at once."

He spoke with heavy grief in his heart. Hastily he flung his mantle round his broad shoulders, but when he was about to pin it down the brooch slipped from his fingers, and, falling, pierced his foot. "Ah," said he, "the mantle is a friend, but the brooch is an enemy, and it forewarns me!" Ill indeed was the omen.

He did not tarry. Forth from the royal house he strode, and bade his charioteer yoke his steeds. Women followed him; they laid hands on him as if to hold him back; they gave him their good wishes, assuring him of safety and good fortune in battle; but Cathbad, the soothsayer, drew him aside, and spoke, saying: "My dear son, take advice from me and from no other on this day. . . . Do not, I beseech you, attack the men of Erin, and I shall protect you from the spells of Calatin's brood."

Said Cuchullin: "My dear preceptor, there is no need now to protect me. My doom is at hand, because Néave has commanded me to combat against the men of Erin."

Néave, coming behind them, heard these words. "Alas," she sighed, "my dear Cuchullin, not for all the world's riches would I ever send you forth! Not from me came such a command, but from the Fury who assumed my form to beguile you. O my friend, O my precious one, stay here and go not to battle."

Cuchullin heeded her not, believing she was a deceiver. No answer did he make, but urged his charioteer to make haste with his task. Laegh seized the bridle of the grey steed, and the animal shrank from him. "Ah," said he, "this forebodes ill for me! You were wont, grey steed, to come readily to me when I sought to harness you."

CUCHULLIN AND CATHBAD MEET THE BANSHEE AT THE FORD

Cuchullin went forward to hold the grey, but from him it leapt aside also, and began to weep tears of blood. He chided the animal, saying: "O grey steed, it behoves you on this day of doom to show your worth."

Then the grey steed submitted quietly to be yoked, as did also the black steed.

Cuchullin sprang into the chariot, and directed it to be turned southward. Women issued forth to meet him. They made loud lament, calling on him to tarry with them; they smote their hands. Doleful were their cries of grief. Cuchullin refused to turn back, and Cathbad, the soothsayer, bade him pause, and said: "Await the coming of Conall the Victorious."

Said Cuchullin: "Why should I wait? My days are numbered, my triumphs are counted out. Not for all the vain things of this world would I sully my fair name as a warrior. Since the day when I first took arms I have not shirked from battle. As I have been accustomed to do, so will I do now, and win the fame that endures longer than human life."

Knowing well he never would return again, Cuchullin went forth to battle. Cathbad went with him until the ford was reached, and there they beheld in the water a slim white-skinned fairy maiden with yellow hair washing blood-stained garments.[1]

Said Cathbad: "Look, little Cu', there is the Fury's daughter moaning in distress as she washes your garments and foretells your fall by Méave's great army and the spells of Calatin's brood. Hold back; go not farther."

Cuchullin made answer, saying: "Dear preceptor, so be it! Turn homeward now. I will not falter nor hold back when the men of Erin are ravaging the province. What matters it although the banshee washes my spoils? Oh, I shall take great spoils which will be drenched in pools of frothing blood! Know you, that although it is painful for you to part with me in the hour of my peril, I go cheerfully forth to meet death, knowing full well, as you also do, that death awaits me. Do not attempt to hold me back. Whether I linger here or go to battle, my days are numbered. . . . To the Ultonians all, to Conor and to Emer, carry my last message—'Health to you!' I go forth

[1] The Banshee, who thus foretells a speedy and tragic death.

now to return, oh! never more. Oh! sad is this last parting; it is sorrowful to us both to tear ourselves away. . . ." Then he addressed Laegh, his charioteer, saying: "As now, in sorrow and in gloom, we leave Emer forever, so in gladness and pride have we ofttimes returned to her from distant realms."

As he spoke thus, Cuchullin looked back towards Emania; he listened to the wailing of the women. He pondered a time, and then, saying: "Welcome, Death!" he took leave of Cathbad, and went on his way, forgetting his sorrow and casting off his gloom as he might his mantle. His chariot

thundered o'er the plain
Full well he knew that he would ne'er return again.

Cuchullin stood, impatient for the fray;
His golden-hilted bronze sword on his thigh;
A sharp and venomous dart beside him lay;
He clasp'd his ashen spear, bronze-tipped and high;
As flames the sun upon the western sky,
His round shield from afar was flashing bright,
Figured with radiant gold and rimm'd with silver white.

Stern-lipp'd he stood: his great broad head thrown back,
The white pearls sprayed upon his thick, dark hair;
Deep set, his eyes, beneath his eyebrows black,
Were swift and grey, and fix'd his fearless stare;
Red-edg'd his white hood flam'd; his tunic rare
Of purple gleamed with gold; his cloak behind
His shoulders shone with silver, floating in the wind.

On the road before him he saw three old women who had each one eye blind. They were the daughters of Calatin, enchantresses in disguise, and had cooked a hound for him on spits of rowan, although the hound was *geis* (taboo) to him, for he dared not eat the flesh of a namesake.[1] On the hound they had poured poison, and they had pronounced spells over it. Cuchullin knew that these women did not wish him well, and he fain would have passed them; but one hailed him, saying: "Tarry with us if only a brief space, O Cuchullin."

"Not I," said he in lofty wise.

"If our fare," she sneered, "were not so poor—'tis only a

[1] Because he was named Cu-chullin, i.e. "Hound of Culann", hound's flesh was taboo.

hound—you would have tarried. Unseemly is the mighty one who cannot endure the poor."

His pride was stung, so he tarried and accepted their hospitality. An old evil-looking woman handed him a portion of the hound. He took it in his left hand, and the strength of that hand declined because of the spells.

For, O Cuchullin! couldst thou e'er forget,
When fast by Culann's fort on yon black night,
Thou fought'st to death the ban-dog dark as jet,
Which scared the thief and put the foe to flight!
A tender youth thou wert of warrior might,
And all the land did with thy fame resound,
As Cathbad, the magician, named thee "Culann's hound".

Loudly along the Mid Luachair road went the chariot until Erc beheld the Red Branch hero hastening to sweep his foemen from the land.

His sword flashed red and radiant in his hand,
In sunny splendour was his spear upraised,
While, hovering o'er his head, the light of heroes blazed.

"He comes! he comes," cried Erc as he drew near,
"Await him, Men of Erin, and be strong!"
Their faces blanched, their bodies shook with fear—
"Now link your shields and close together throng,
And shout the war-cry loudly fierce and long."
Then Erc, with cunning of his evil heart,
Set heroes forth in pairs to feign to fight apart.

With each of the pairs that pretended to fight against one another Erc placed a satirist.[1] Said he to the satirists: "Shout to Cuchullin for his spear, because it has been foretold that no king will be slain by it if it is not given when asked for."

Fiercely did Cuchullin attack the Men of Erin, breaking through their wall of shields. With sword and spear he made mighty slaughter, scattering heads and limbs on Drogheda plain as thickly as sand on the seashore, stars in the sky, or drops of dew on the flowers of May; thickly as flakes of falling snow, as leaves in a woodland, as buttercups on Bregia plain, or as grass under the feet of herdsmen.

[1] Or Druid.

Then Cuchullin came to two warriors who pretended to fight in single combat as if they were enemies. A satirist called: "Compel them to cease fighting." Cuchullin slew them both.

Said the satirist: "Now give me your spear."

Cuchullin made answer, saying: "By the oath of my folk, you do not need it so much as I do now with all the men of Erin against me and I against them."

Said the satirist: "If you refuse your spear I shall revile you."[1]

"Never for greed or rudeness have I been reviled," Cuchullin answered nobly, and then flung his spear, handle first. It smote the satirist and killed him, and killed others also.

Meanwhile Cuchullin swept through the thick ranks of his enemies doing mighty deeds.

Lugaid obtained possession of the death-dealing spear, and he called to the soothsayers and said: "Who will be slain with this spear?"

"A king will be slain," they answered him.

Lugaid hurled the spear towards the chariot of Cuchullin, that king of heroes, and it smote Laegh, the charioteer, who fell mortally wounded.

Cuchullin drew out the spear, bidding Laegh a long farewell, and saying: "Now I shall be warrior and charioteer in one."

He drove against the foe, slaughtering as he went, until he reached other two men pretending to fight in single combat. Again a satirist shouted to him to make them cease fighting, and he slew them both. Again a satirist demanded his spear, threatening to revile him if he refused it.

"But a small portion of my life remains," Cuchullin said, "yet I shall not be satirized in Ulster by any man."

Handle foremost he flung the spear, slaying the satirist and others nigh to him.

Then Erc got possession of the spear. To the soothsayers he spake, saying: "Who will be slain by this spear?"

"A king will be slain," they answered him.

[1] A poetic satire would not only injure his name and fame, but would also injure him physically, as it was believed.

Erc hurled the spear towards Cuchullin's chariot. It struck the grey steed, and the noble animal fell on the plain.

Cuchullin pulled out the spear and cut the harness. "Farewell, my grey steed," said he, and drove once more against the foe.

A third time he reached two men in single combat; again a satirist shouted to him to make them cease fighting, whereupon he slew the pair. The satirist demanded the hero's spear, threatening, if he refused, to revile him.

"No ill word regarding me," said Cuchullin, "shall go back to the place from which I came and to which I shall return never more."

Handle foremost he flung the spear, killing the satirist and others nigh to him.

"What Cuchullin gives freely he gives angrily," called a satirist, as the hero drove against his enemies.

Lugaid seized the spear. Stealthily he took it, and, raising it aloft, paused for a space.

> "What falleth by this weapon?" he doth call.
> "A King will fall," they answer him again.
> "But twice before ye said, 'A King will fall'." . . .
> They cried, "The King of Steeds hath fled the plain,
> And, lo! the King of Charioteers is slain!"
> For the last time he hurled the spear full well
> And smote the great Cuchullin, and, ye gods! he fell.

The black steed snapped the yoke and fled away, leaving Cuchullin alone on the plain. His enemies crowded round him.

"I fain would drink from yonder loch," said he.

"You may go," they answered him, "if you promise to return here."

Said Cuchullin: "If I cannot return, I shall call upon you to come to me."

He went to the loch, and there he bound his wound and drank cool water, and washed the blood from his arms and his face. Then he came back to die, calling to his enemies: "Come now and meet me." He walked slowly towards a pillar-stone in the midst of the field, making his spear a staff, and grasping

his sword in his right hand. When he reached the stone he leaned against it.

A vision swept upon his fading brain—
A passing vision, glorious and sweet,
That hour of youth returned to him again
When he took arms with fearless heart a-beat,
As Cathbad, the magician, did repeat,
"Who taketh arms upon this day of grief,
His name shall live for ever and his life be brief."

Fronting his foes, he stood with fearless eye,
His body to the pillar-stone he bound,
Nor sitting nor down-lying would he die. . . .
He would die standing. . . . So they gathered round
In silent wonder on the blood-drench'd ground,
And watched the hero who with Death could strive,
But no man dared approach. . . . *He seemed to be alive.*[1]

The three birds of evil omen[2] came and perched on his shoulder. Lugaid, knowing then that the hero was dead, stepped forward and took off his head. As he did so, Cuchullin's sword fell and smote off Lugaid's right hand. The men of Erin marched away with the head of Cuchullin.

Meanwhile Conall the Victorious was hastening in his chariot to the plain of battle, having been summoned from Pictland. He came to the pillar-stone and saw the hero's headless body. "Before darkness falls," said he, "I shall avenge Cuchullin."

He pursued Lugaid and took off his head at a ford. Then he returned to Emania with the head and body of Cuchullin. The women made loud lament, and Emer said: "Let his grave be made."

The body was washed and wrapped in silk, and Emer made sorrowful moan. "Alas!" said she; "this day I shall not bind up my tresses. I have naught to say but 'alas!'" She addressed her dead husband tenderly: "Never," said she, "did I bring the blush of shame to your face. My heart's love, we were happy together. Your equal is not to be found in the wide world."

[1] Quotations from the author's rendering of "The Death of Cuchullin" in *Elves and Heroes* (1909).

[2] Calatin's daughters.

She went into the grave and laid herself beside her husband. "My white love, O pulse of my heart," said she, "I was envied by many a woman because you were mine. Now I will stay with you, for it is not in my heart to leave my love."

Her heart broke within her, and Cuchullin and Emer lie in the one grave. A stone was raised over the grave, and Oghams were inscribed on it.

There were those who beheld Cuchullin in his phantom chariot at summer-end in the years that followed. He rode in the darkness of night in mid-air, and with him came a fierce biting wind, a blast from Faerieland.[1] He was seen performing feats with sword and spear. In the chariot was a charioteer, a tall, thin, stooping young man with freckled face and red hair, and that was Laegh.

[1] "A blast from Hell" is the Christian version.

DANTE'S DIVINE COMEDY

Introductory

"An unimportant, wandering, sorrow-stricken man, not much note was taken of him while he lived; and the most of that has vanished," wrote Thomas Carlyle of Dante. "It is five centuries since he ceased writing and living here." A single portrait of the great Italian poet survives. It is attributed to Giotto. "I think", Carlyle has commented, "it is the mournfulest face that ever was painted from reality; an altogether tragic, heart-affecting face. There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud, hopeless pain. A soft, ethereal soul looking out so stern, implacable. . . . Withal it is a silent pain too, a silent scornful one: the lip is curled in a kind of godlike disdain of the thing that is eating out his heart. . . . The face of one wholly in protest, and lifelong, unsurrendering battle, against the world. Affection all converted into indignation; an implacable indignation; slow, equable, silent, like that of a god! The eye, too, it looks out as in a kind of *surprise*, a kind of enquiry. Why the world was of such a sort? This is Dante: so he looks, this 'voice of ten silent centuries', and sings us 'his mystic, unfathomable song'."[1]

Like Shelley, Dante was an idealist with a message for humanity, a reformer and a man of obstinate courage; in his early manhood he fought as a cavalryman in the battle of Campaldino. His life was overshadowed by his broodings over wrongs and misfortunes partly due to his having come

[1] *Heroes and Hero Worship.* "The Hero as Poet."

into conflict with the established order of things and partly to his own particular attitude towards life. "He was a man", says Macaulay, "of turbid and melancholy spirit." In no age and in no environment could Dante have been happy like an ordinary mortal. His temperament haunted him like a shadow. Intensely sensitive, he was as readily moved to tears as to indignation, and he sorrowed even when he scourged what was hateful to him. We find him weeping over the sinners he consigned to Inferno. The lash he wielded inflicted wounds on himself. If he had not wielded the lash, his sorrow would have been even greater.

Dante lived mainly in the world of his own imagination. We often find him looking out on the world of men with sad and wondering eyes, as if he were a visitor from another planet. Even when suffering from misfortune, his experiences, at times, were scarcely a reality to him. A glimpse of this moody man's mind is afforded in his own strange, sad words written in the midst of affliction:

"I was as he is who dreameth his own harm—who, dreaming, wishes that it may be all a dream, so that he desires that which is as though it were not."

So did he hover on the borderland of Reality and Vision. His passion for Beatrice was "such stuff as dreams are made on". There was no wooing in the ordinary sense; he seems scarcely to have known the lady whom he has immortalized. All we are told about her is that she met Dante once when a child, bowed to him once in the street when a girl, and laughed at him once during her womanhood. There is no evidence that he ever attempted to win her heart, and no ordinary woman could possibly have read the secret of a heart like his, hidden for ever, as it was, in a mist of dreams. Beatrice became the poet's ideal of womanhood, beauty, and goodness—an ideal unattainable in life, and to be reached only in Paradise. Yet, because she eluded him and did not drift into his arms, his heart was filled with bitterness—in part that "sweet sorrow" which inspires song and beautiful dreams, and in part something real enough.

Dante Alighieri[1] was born in Florence in May, 1265. His father, who belonged to the lower ranks of the nobility, died when the poet was still a child, and his mother influenced him profoundly. His chief preceptor was Brunetto Latini, himself a poet of no mean attainment, but yet a man who fell so far short of Dante's ideal of perfection that he figures in the "Inferno". Apparently Dante studied at various seats of learning. He was endowed with the temperament of the scholar, and appears to have acquitted himself with distinction.

During his early manhood he became involved in Florentine politics, and espoused the cause of a faction with disastrous results. Being a prominent citizen, and the owner of property, he suffered loss and persecution on account of his political fanaticism. His opponents, during his absence from Florence on a political mission to the Pope, obtained against him, as against others of his party, a decree of banishment and the imposition of a heavy fine. This sentence was afterwards changed to one of death by burning on account of his alleged malversation and peculation—unjust and trumped-up charges.

His enemies thus triumphed over him. They seized his property, and the poet was compelled to live the remainder of his life in exile. Thus, like Shelley, he became a melancholy wanderer, oppressed with a sense of wrong. Less fortunate than Shelley, he had to depend on the charity of friends and strangers. In his own words, he knew what it was "to climb the stairs and eat the bitter bread of strangers". Referring to his penalty of exile and poverty, he lamented in the *Convito*:

"It pleased the citizens of the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome—Florence—to cast me out of her most sweet bosom, where I was born, and bred, and passed half of the life of man, and in which, with her good leave, I still desire with all my heart to repose my weary spirit and finish the days allotted me; and so I have wandered in almost every place to which our language extends, a stranger, almost a beggar, exposing against my will the wounds given me by fortune, too often unjustly imputed to the sufferer's fault. Truly I have been a vessel without sail and without rudder, driven about upon different ports and shores by the dry wind that springs out of dolorous poverty; and hence have I appeared vile in the eyes

[1] Dante is believed to be a contraction of Durante or Durando. Pronounced dan'tā a-lē-gē-ā're.

of many, who, perhaps, by some better report had conceived of me a different impression, and in whose sight not only has my person become thus debased, but an unworthy opinion created of everything which I did, or which I had to do."[1]

During his wanderings Dante is believed to have visited Arezzo and Sienna, and even Paris. For four years (1314–8) he was the guest of a sympathizer at Verona. He was residing at Ravenna in 1320 in the house of Guido da Polenta, a true friend, and he died in that city in 1322 when in his fifty-seventh year.

According to Boccaccio, the poet had begun his "Inferno" before he was banished from Florence. The story runs that Dante's wife, Madonna Gemma, had taken from her husband's house, before it was plundered, some chests containing manuscripts. Five years later one of the poet's nephews found in one of them the first seven cantos of the "Inferno", which he showed to friends. It was so highly thought of that copies were made of it. The original manuscript was afterwards sent to the exiled poet. Dante was astonished to receive it. "I really supposed", he said, "that these, along with many of my other writings and effects, were lost when my house was plundered, and therefore I had given up all thoughts of them. But since it has pleased God that they should not be lost, and He has thus restored them to me, I shall endeavour, as far as I am able, to proceed with them according to my first design."

Boccaccio referred to the poet's nephew, whose name was Andrew, as a man "who wonderfully resembled Dante in the outline of his features and in his height and figure; he also walked rather stooping, as Dante is said to have done. He was a weak man, but with naturally good feelings, and his language and conduct were regular and praiseworthy. And I having become intimate with him, he often spoke to me of Dante's habits and ways."[2]

According to the stories told regarding him, the poet was a man of extremely temperate habits, a constant student, much given to wandering about alone, grave, melancholy, and proud. He seldom spoke to anyone. It is told that during his residence

[1] Leigh Hunt's translation. [2] Mrs. Bunbury's translation.

in Verona, one woman, seeing him going past, remarked to another: "That is the man who visits hell whenever he pleases, and brings back news of the people there." Her friend said: "Very likely; don't you see what a curly beard he has and what a dark face?—dark, no doubt, owing to the heat and smoke."

"The laudable minuteness of a biographer", says Leigh Hunt, "has informed us that his handwriting, besides being neat and precise, was of a long and particularly thin character —'meagre' is the word."

Like Milton, he was a great lover of music; he also felt the influence of painting and sculpture. Some of his own word-pictures are like intensive etchings. Although hardly a picture, his little story of the woman, Pia, he met with in Purgatory impresses one as does a great picture, for it conveys a whole life's tragedy in a few lines. Pia, who fell a victim to the unfounded jealousy of her morbid husband, addresses the poet:

> Ah! when thou findest thee again on earth—
> (Said then a female soul), remember me,—
> Pia. . . . Sienna was my place of birth,
> The Marshes of my death. This knoweth he,
> Who placed upon my hand the wedding ring.

Ruskin has written in his own characteristic way about Dante's landscape-painting in verse, and remarks on its "formality". He says: "Milton's effort, in all he tells us of his Inferno, is to make it indefinite; Dante's to make it definite. Both, indeed, describe it as entered through gates; but within the gate all is wild and fenceless with Milton. . . . But Dante's Inferno . . . is mapped and properly surveyed in every direction. . . . Throughout the poem (*The Divine Comedy*) I conceive that the first striking character of its scenery is intense definition, precisely the reflection of that definiteness which we have already traced in pictorial art. But the second point which seems noteworthy is that the flat ground and embanked trenches are reserved for the Inferno; and that the entire territory of the Purgatory is a mountain, thus marking the sense of that purifying and perfecting influence in mountains

which we saw the mediæval mind was so ready to suggest." Commenting on Dante's "dread and dislike of woods", Ruskin says: "It is quite true that this is partly a characteristic, not merely of Dante or of mediæval writers, but of *Southern* writers; for the simple reason that the forest, being with them higher upon the hills, and more out of the way, than in the north, was generally a type of lonely and savage places; while in England the 'greenwood' coming up to the very walls of the towns, it was possible to be 'merry in the good greenwood' in a sense which an Italian could not have understood."[1]

Dante begins his *Divine Comedy* by telling that he entered a dark and savage wood, in which he lost his way. His heart is filled with terror and dismay. Wild beasts appear; he turns back, and then meets Virgil, who had been sent to him by Beatrice so that he might have a protector and guide.

Virgil, who was reputed to have foretold the coming of Christ in his Eclogue dealing with the return of the Golden Age, had in Dante's day acquired a certain degree of sanctity in the eyes of churchmen. Dante reverences him, and, although he himself was a greater poet, hails him as "Master". By the poet of the *Æneid* he is led through Inferno and Purgatorio. In the latter region they meet with the poet Statius, who has just been released, and is on his way to Paradise. The three poets keep company until they reach the River Lethe, in Eden; then Virgil departs, while Dante and Statius ascend to the realm of everlasting bliss. Beatrice meets Dante in Eden, and becomes his guide and teacher.

The story of Dante's love for Beatrice is told in the poet's *La Vita Nuova* (The New Life), which has been so finely translated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He tells that he first met Beatrice "at the beginning of her ninth year almost, and I saw her almost at the end of my ninth year". She was attired in "goodly crimson". The poet declares: "From that time forward Love quite governed my soul". Nine years elapse, and then he sees her again. She is dressed in white, and walks "between two gentle ladies elder than she". As Beatrice passes along the street, she smiles and salutes him. "I seemed

[1] Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. III, chap. xiv.

then and there", he relates, "to behold the very limits of blessedness." He retires "to the loneliness of mine own room". There he muses on Beatrice, falls asleep, and sees in a dream "the figure of a lord of terrible aspect" (Love), who says to him: "Ego dominus tuus" ("I am your master"). In his arms Love holds Beatrice, who is asleep, and also a thing wrapped in flames, and says next: "Vide cor tuum" ("Behold thy heart"). Beatrice awakes, and "the lord" makes her eat the flaming heart. Then, weeping bitterly, this symbolic figure ascends with Beatrice to Paradise.

When next the poet meets Beatrice she is in the company of other ladies. His confusion makes them all laugh, and he goes away sorrowfully to lament in a sonnet—

> Even as the others mock, thou mockest me;
> Not dreaming, noble lady, whence it is
> That I am taken with strange semblances,
> Seeing thy face which is so fair to see:
> For else, compassion would not suffer thee
> To grieve my heart. . . .

So he goes on writing of his ideal woman, now rapturously, as in the sonnet beginning:

> My lady carries love within her eyes—

and anon despondently,

> At whiles (yea oftentimes) I muse over
> The quality of anguish that is mine
> Through Love. . . .

Ultimately he sees a vision in his sleep. Beatrice is lying dead.

> Her ladies with a veil were covering her;
> And with her was such very humbleness
> That she appeared to say, "I am at peace".

Led by Love, Dante goes forward to look at her. He wishes to say: "O Beatrice, peace be with thee!" but when he exclaims: "O Beatrice!" he awakes, weeping bitterly, and knows it is a

[1] D. G. Rossetti's picture of this scene is familiar to many. The quotations are from the poet-painter's translations of the sonnets in *The New Life*.

The vision was prophetic. Beatrice died on the first hour of the ninth day of the ninth month of the year 1290. The number 9 had a mystical association with this adored lady, and Dante argues that as 3 is the root of the number 9, Beatrice was a miracle whose mystic number was "rooted in the Holy Trinity".

Most musically the poet makes lament over his dead ideal woman:

> The eyes that weep for pity of the heart
> Have wept so long that their grief languisheth
> And they have no more tears to weep. . .

He comforts himself that—

> Beatrice is gone up into high Heaven.

Death does not bring an end to his love, however:

> Beyond the sphere which spreads to widest space
> Now soars the sigh that my heart sends above:
> A new perception born of grieving Love
> Guideth it upward the untrodden ways.
> When it hath reached unto the end, and stays,
> It sees a lady round whom splendours move
> In homage. . . .

Beatrice in Paradise has become his guardian angel, his Muse, his ideal of perfect womanhood.

Dante's love for Beatrice was like—

> The desire of the moth for the star.

The real Beatrice, who inspired the poet to fashion an angel, of which she was the "earthy model", married a Florentine noble, Simone Bardi, in 1287, and died in 1290. Dante married, in 1291, Gemma dei Donati, who was the mother of his seven children. She is said to have been a faithful and affectionate wife with an uncertain temper, but, perhaps, not without cause.

Dante's fame leapt up like a flame from his tomb, although a cardinal wished to dig up his bones and burn them, because the poet had been, in his opinion, a heretic. Florence begged more than once for his ashes, but Ravenna refused to part with them, and they still lie in the tomb on which Byron knelt

reverently, shedding tears. In 1373 his native city instituted a chair of the *Divina Commedia*, and Boccaccio was the first Professor. Chairs were also founded at Ravenna, Pisa, Venice, Milan, and elsewhere. Numerous manuscript copies of the *Commedia* were made and circulated before the invention of printing.

Dante's fame reached this country not long after his death. The suggestion has been made that he had studied a time at Oxford as well as Paris. Chaucer admired him, and imitated the opening verses of the third canto of the "Inferno" in one of his poems (*Assembly of Foules*). Then Dante's English fame flickered until Milton mastered and admired, and was influenced by, the *Commedia*. Not until the closing years of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth centuries, however, did his fame extend in these islands by means of translations. Happily it is now firmly established. Many eloquent tributes have been paid to his genius by writers like Leigh Hunt, Macaulay, Dr. Milman, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Cary, his faithful and accomplished translator. "The style of Dante is," Macaulay wrote, "if not his highest, perhaps his most peculiar excellence. I know nothing with which it can be compared. The noblest models of Greek composition must yield to it. His words are the fewest and the best which it is possible to use. There is probably no writer in any language who has presented so many strong pictures to the mind. Yet there is probably no writer equally concise. This perfection of style is the principal merit of the 'Paradiso', which is by no means equal in other respects to the two preceding parts of the poem."

Dante was essentially a mystic. His attitude of mind was based on the belief of the unity of the whole universe, which he regarded as one thought of God, in Whom all that exists has had origin. The soul comes from Paradise, and is placed by God in the body before birth. It is inspired, during life, with an instinct to ascend towards God in thought and action, but suffers from the trammels of sin and wrong thinking. The whole universe is pervaded by the divine instinct which is the moving and regulating force in the laws of nature. The poet makes Beatrice expound this mystical conception as she leads

him to Paradise. Similarly the Indian Krishna, on the battle-field of Kuru-kshetra, instructed Arjuna regarding "true knowledge", saying:

> Learn thou it is this:
> To see one changeless Life in all the Lives,
> And in one Separate, One Inseparable.

Dante's Beatrice is the soul released from bondage and enduring as a manifestation of the nature of God. In this sense the poet's ideal is real to him. She is what he himself strives to be, because she has become like God from Whom she originally came.

Dante's attitude was shared by Browning, whose poetry is mystical because he sees God manifested in everything:

> God is seen
> In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, and the clod.

In "Old Pictures in Florence", he writes:

> When I say "you", 't is the common soul,
> The collective, I mean: the race of Man
> That receives life in parts to live in a whole
> And grow here according to God's clear plan.

Even sin had its purpose for Browning:

> Why comes temptation but for man to meet
> And master and make crouch beneath his foot,
> And so be pedestaled in triumph?[1]

Wordsworth's mysticism is revealed in such lines as these from "The Prelude":

> Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
> Is with infinitude, and only there.
>
> The highest bliss
> That flesh can know is theirs—the consciousness
> Of Whom they are.

As Dante conceived that the soul was influenced by an instinct of divine origin, so did Wordsworth feel in his soul—

> An obscure sense
> Of possible sublimity, whereto
> With growing faculties she doth aspire.

[1] The Pope in *The Ring and the Book.*

Tennyson, too, like Dante, conceived of the divine instinct in everything:

> But that one ripple on the boundless deep
> Feels that the deep is boundless, and itself
> Forever changing form, but evermore
> One with the boundless motion of the deep.[1]

In "In Memoriam" (xcv) Tennyson feels his individuality merging into the all-pervading "boundless being":

> And all at once . . .
> His living soul was flashed on mine,
>
> And mine in this was wound, and whirl'd
> About empyreal heights of thought,
> And came on that which is, and caught
> The deep pulsations of the world.

In the condensed prose version of the *Divina Commedia* which follows, the reader can obtain but a dim impression of the beauty and sublimity of the original, because, "as its tune is to a song, and as its savour to a dish, so is its rhythm to a poem". The *Commedia* was composed in hendecasyllabic metre with rhymes. One of the most successful imitations of Dante's manner is the metrical translation of Sir Samuel W. Griffith, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia.[2] He has not attempted to rhyme, but conveys, without that melodious accompaniment, an idea of the harmonies of the great poem. He begins the first canto as follows:—

> Midway upon the road of our life's journey
> I found myself with a dark wood about me,
> For the straight way was lost by a mistaking:
> And all so hard a thing as is the telling
> Of what the wood was, wild and rough and sturdy,
> Which at the thought of it renews my terror,
> It is as bitter—scarcely death exceeds it:
> But, to set forth the good I found there fully,
> I will tell o' the other things that there I noticed.

Dante's Inferno is a spiral funnel, with nine circles, or whorls, that penetrates to the centre of the earth. His Purgatory is an

[1] "The Ancient Sage." [2] London. Henry Frowde.

island mountain in the southern hemisphere. The Garden of Eden is on the summit. There are seven ledges on the mountain, connected by narrow stairways. Heaven is in the sky, and has eight planetary divisions and one stellar division. The tenth heaven is beyond the mundane universe, and in it the glory of God is visible. The planets include the sun and also the moon, which is "the eternal pearl" as in Pagan religions —Ægean, Chinese, Indian, Mexican, &c. The moon was anciently connected with the mother goddess who rose from the deep like Aphrodite—a pearl in a shell. Pagan symbolism, including colour symbolism, survives in Dante's poems.

Divina Commedia

I. Inferno

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
Chè la diritta via era smarrita.
Ahi quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura
Questa selva selvaggia ed aspra e forte,
Che nel pensier rinnova la paura!
Tanto è amara, che poco è più morte:
Ma per trattar del ben ch'ivi trovai,
Dirò dell'altre cose, ch'io v'ho scorte.

In the midst of our life's pilgrimage[1] I found myself in a dusky forest,[2] where the right path was lost.[3] Ah! difficult is it to tell how savage and rough and unbending was this forest; the thought of it revives my horror; death itself could be scarce more bitter.[4] Yet, so that I may deal with the good[5] I found there, I will tell of the other things beheld by me.

I cannot rightly explain how I entered the forest, for sleep was heavy on me when I turned aside from the right path. Onward I went till I reached the end of that valley which had filled my heart with fear, and then I saw a high mountain; its shoulder was already bright with the rays of the sun[6] that guides men aright on every path. Somewhat quieted then was the fear that in my heart's lake had troubled me piteously all night. Like to one who, with gasping breath, has been cast by the sea on the shore, turns him round and gazes on the

[1] When the poet was thirty-five, half of the Psalmist's "three score and ten".
[2] The wood of error. Allegorically, "the world".
[3] He doubts and wanders from the faith.
[4] Worldly sufferings may be as bitter as the agonies of death.
[5] His faith as a believer who sees the light.
[6] The helpful light of God's revelation on the Mount of Salvation, Psalm cxxi.

perilous water, so did my soul, still hastening in flight, look back towards the pass from which never before had man escaped alive.[1] I rested my wearied body; then I went along the desert slope. As I climbed, I beheld a light-footed speedy leopard with spotted skin. It kept bounding in front of me, and hindered me so that time and again I had to turn away.

It was early morning, and the sun rose up with those stars that were with him when Divine Love at first set in motion all beautiful orbs. The bright skin of the leopard, the hour, and the delicious season were to me hopeful signs. Then I saw the dreadful lion approaching me with head reared boldly; hunger made him angry, and the very air trembled. Next came the lean and famishing she-wolf that has caused many to be miserable. So great was the fear she inspired that I lost all hope of ascending the mountain. Step by step I was driven back towards the place where the sun is dumb.[2] As I ran downwards, my eyes fell on a man who seemed to be hoarse from lengthy silence.[3] To him I cried out in the desert, saying: "Oh, pity me, whoever you are, man or ghost!"

He answered me: "No man am I, but I was once a man. Both my parents were Lombards of Mantua. *Sub Julio*[4] was I born, although late, and I lived in Rome under the good Augustus during the time of false and untruthful gods. I was a poet, and sang of the just son of Anchises, who came from the Trojan shore after proud Ilion had been burned. But tell me why you are hastening back to such trouble. Why do you not ascend Mount Delectable, which is the source and inspiration of all joy?"

Said I, with bashful face: "And are you that Virgil, that fountain which pours afar a stream of rich eloquence? O glory and light of all other poets! May my devotion and long study of your book avail me! You are my master and my own author. It is from you I have acquired the style that has brought me

[1] As a believer escapes from sin.

[2] The beasts were evidently suggested by Jeremiah, v, 6. Here they symbolize lust, ambition or vanity, and avarice, or, as some have suggested, Florence, France, and the Court of Rome.

[3] A reference to the long neglect of Virgil's poetry.

[4] When Julius ruled as head of the State of Rome.

fame. Behold the beast from which I flee! Protect me, O renowned sage, for I tremble in every vein and pulse!"

Virgil made answer: "If you wish to make escape, you must needs follow another path." He perceived that I wept. "This beast you fear," he said, "will not permit men to pass her; she slays them, and her hunger is never satisfied; the more she devours the more she famishes. She has wedded many animals, and will wed more until the Greyhound[1] comes, who will cause her to perish. Not on dominion or wealth will he feed, but on wisdom and love. His kingdom shall stretch from Feltro to Feltro,[2] and he shall be the saviour of degraded Italy, for which died Camilla, Euryalus, Turnus, and Nisus. He shall pursue the wolf through every city until she is driven back again to Hell, whence Envy first set her free. . . . It would be well for you to follow me. I will be your guide, and lead you through the eternal place where you shall hear the hopeless lamentations of ancient spirits in suffering who cry out for a second death. You shall also behold those who are contented within the fire because they hope to reach, whenever that may be, the souls that are in bliss. Then, if you wish to ascend to those who are blest, a soul more worthy than I am shall guide you.[3] I will leave you with her when I go away. The Emperor[4] above has decreed that I shall not reach the city of bliss, because that I was rebellious to His law. He rules the whole universe. He dwells yonder. There is His city and His high throne. Oh, blessed are they who are called by Him!"

Said I: "Poet, I entreat you by that same God you never knew, so that I may escape this woe and worse. Oh, guide me whither you have said, so that I may behold the Gate of St. Peter and those who are so sorrowful!"

Virgil walked on, and I followed behind him.

Day was departing,[5] and the brown air released all animals from their toils, while I alone made myself ready to endure the

[1] Christ. Or a liberator of Italy.

[2] Two towns to the north and south of the area in which Dante's friend Can Grande della Scala of Verona fought for the royalist cause. It may be, therefore, that Can Grande was the "greyhound".

[3] Beatrice. [4] God. [5] On Good Friday, 8th April, 1300.

struggle of the journey, and the woe which an unerring memory will now recall:

> O Muses, O high genius, now assist me!
> O memory, that didst write down what I saw,
> Here thy nobility shall be manifest![1]

To Virgil I spake, saying: "Poet who guides me, have I sufficient strength of manhood to continue this arduous journey? . . . You say that the father of Sylvius (Æneas) went to the immortal land, and is there in the body. He was chosen to be the father of Rome where now sits the successor of St. Peter. Afterwards Paul went there to confirm the faith that leads to salvation. But whither am I going now, and who permits it? Neither an Æneas nor a Paul am I. If I consent to follow you my enterprise may prove foolish."

Said Virgil: "Your soul is touched with coward fear, but I will dismiss your doubts by explaining why I came and took pity on you. I was among those who remain in suspense, when a beautiful woman[2] came nigh and called me by name. Brighter than the day-star were her eyes. She told me of your coming, and feared you would go astray. 'Aid him and comfort him,' said she, 'and say to him: I, Beatrice, have sent you. I come from a place to which I long to return. Love moves me and compels me to speak. When I am in the presence of my Lord I will praise you before Him.' . . . It was because of Beatrice that I came to you. . . . Why do you falter now? Why is there fear in your heart? In Heaven the divine ladies, Mercy, Grace, and Wisdom, protect you, and I promise you much good."

Then as small flowers, bowed down and shut fast by chilly night, rise up and open on their stems when the sun whitens them, so was my fainting heart uplifted and opened. Indeed, my heart thrilled, and I said: "She who is compassionate has succoured me, and you so courteous quickly obeyed her. Now my heart is filled with desire to accomplish my purpose. Go on, for now we are two with but a single will, my leader, my lord, my master."

Thus I spoke, and he moved on. I entered on a difficult

[1] Longfellow's translation. [2] Beatrice.

and savage path until I reached the portal of Hell. There I read these words inscribed above it:

Through me is the road to the dolorous city;
Through me is the road to the everlasting sorrows;
Through me is the road to the lost people.
Justice was the motive of my exalted maker;
I was made by divine power, by consummate wisdom, and by primal love;
Before me was no created thing, if not eternal; and eternal am I also.
Abandon hope all ye who enter.[1]

"Master," I said to Virgil, "appalling to me is the significance of these words."

Said he, speaking with knowledge: "Here must all distrust be abandoned and cowardice have end. We have reached the place of sorrowful souls who have been bereft of all good of the intellect."

He placed his hand in mind and smiled to comfort me.

He led me in among the secret things.
There sighs, complaints, and ululations loud
Resounded through the air without a star,
Whence I, at the beginning, wept thereat.
Languages diverse, horrible dialects,
Accents of anger, words of agony,
And voices high and hoarse, with sounds of hands,
Made up a tumult that goes whirling on
Forever in that air forever black,
Even as the sand doth, when the whirlwind breathes.[2]

Virgil told me these were melancholy souls without blame or praise. Among them were those angels who have not been rebels nor faithful to God, but have thought of themselves alone. They had been cast out of Heaven, and Hell would not receive them. Envious are they of the lot of others.

We looked, and passed on, and soon beheld people on the bank of a mighty river. Then, lo! there came towards us in a boat a grey-haired old man. He shouted: "Woe unto you, depraved souls! Have no hope of seeing Heaven. I have come to lead you to the other shore, even into darkness eternal —into fire and ice. You who are alive," he addressed me, "stand back from those who are dead."

[1] Leigh Hunt's translation. [2] Longfellow's translation.

When he perceived that I moved not, he said: "Go by other ways, by other ferries. You cannot cross here. A lighter boat will carry you."

Said Virgil: "Distress yourself not, O Charon. Heaven has willed we should cross, and what Heaven wills must be accomplished. Say nothing more."

The ferryman was thus quietened, but the waiting souls grew pale, and gnashed their teeth because of his cruel words. They blasphemed God, their parents, all mankind, and the hour and place of their birth. Then, weeping bitterly, they departed to that accursed shore which awaits everyone who does not fear God.

The demon, Charon, with flaming eyes, beckoned to them and assembled them, smiting with his oar those who lagged behind. As in autumn-time the leaves fall off, one after another, until branches are stripped bare, so did these, the evil seed of Adam, cast themselves from that strand one by one, as a bird to its lure. They went away across the brown water, and ere they landed on the opposite shore another crowd had collected.

Said Virgil: "All who die under God's wrath assemble here. Divine justice makes them haste, because fear is changed into desire. No pious soul comes this way. If Charon censures you, his motive will be understood by you."

I became like one possessed by sleep, with senses confused, till a thunder-peal aroused me. Then I found myself on the edge of the abyss, having entered the First Circle. I heard naught but the sound of sighing that made the air tremble. There was melancholy here, but no torture; crowds of men, women, and children suffered from hopeless desire. My soul was made sad. "Has no one," I asked, "ever left this place and gained, by his own merit or by that of another, eternal bliss?"

Said Virgil: "Not long after I came hither I beheld a Mighty One (Christ), who came hither with tokens of victory. He led away Adam and Abel and Noah, Moses the lawgiver, the patriarch Abraham, King David, Israel and his children, and Rachel, and many others, who entered bliss with Him. Know that until that hour no soul had been saved."

Onward we went until a voice called: "Honour and glory to the great poet whose shade returns to us!"

Four shadowy figures came nigh. Neither downcast nor elated were they, and Virgil said: "Behold the one with a sword in his hand who leads the others. He is Homer, sovereign of poets. The second is Horace the satirist, the third is Ovid, and Lucan comes last. Each names me 'Poet', and worthily." Thus did I gaze upon the followers of Homer, who, like an eagle, soars above the others. Having conversed together, the poets saluted me, whereat Virgil smiled. Greatly did they honour me, regarding me as one of their number, so that I was one of the six amidst such minds.

Then we walked towards the light. We reached a high castle, girt with seven walls and a stream. Passing through seven gates, we came to a fresh green meadow, where we saw grave-eyed people of lofty mien, who had sweet voices but rarely spoke. I saw great spirits, and rejoice to have seen them. I saw Electra (mother of Dardanus, who founded Troy), with her companions, among whom were Hector and Æneas. I saw the hawk-eyed Cæsar. I saw Camilla and Penthesilea (the Amazons). Withal, I saw King Latium, who sat beside Lavinia, his daughter, and I saw Brutus, Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, and Cornelia.[1] Apart stood Saladin (the Sultan).

Lifting up my eyes, I beheld Aristotle, the Master, in his philosophic family; he was looked up to and honoured by all. With him were Plato, Socrates, Democritus, Diogenes, and others, including Livy, Seneca, and Euclid.

Then we passed on, the company of six poets diminishing to two. Virgil and I entered the second circle, where sorrow begins. There sits grim Minos, who shows his teeth. He investigates each sin, gives judgment, and sends each to a certain circle. Each spirit stands before him, speaks and is spoken to, and is then snatched away.

Minos addressed me, saying: "Beware in whom you confide. Be not deceived by the wideness of this entrance."

Said Virgil: "'Tis willed Yonder that he should pass within. Hinder him not and say no more."

[1] Julia, wife of Pompey, Marcia, wife of Cato, and Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi.

Then we entered a place devoid of light, which resounds like a storm-afflicted sea. There the licentious ones are afflicted. When spirits reach the broken cliffs they shriek and curse and make moan, and the storm sweeps them into the black gulf. Thick as starlings, or in procession like cranes, they pass by on the winds. "Who are these that are lashed by the storm?" I asked. Said Virgil: "There is Semiramis,[1] who gave suck to Ninus, and was his spouse; there, also, is Dido, who killed herself for love after she had broken her vow over the ashes of Sichæus. Luxurious Cleopatra comes next." I saw Helen (of Troy), the great Achilles, who, in the end, fought for love. I saw Paris and Tristan and many others, who had parted with life for love's sake. Pity possessed me. There I held converse with Francesca and Paolo, who were slain by Francesca's husband. Said Francesca: "Love which seized me in strong passion has not forsaken me here—love which brought death to us both. He who slew us is punished like Cain." As she spoke, Paolo wept, and I fainted with pity.

Next I passed to the Third Circle, where gluttons are afflicted, while an eternal storm of hail, snow, and foul water descends upon them.

On the brink of the Fourth Circle Plutus shouted: "Pape Satan! pape Satan, aleppe!" (Hoa, Satan! hoa, Satan, Alpha!) but Virgil rebuked him in Heaven's name, and he fell down like a wind-stretched sail when a mast is snapped. In this circle the avaricious and prodigal are punished eternally. They laboured rolling weights and jostled one another, and as a weight rolled backward they called: "Why do you grasp it?" and "Why do you let it slip away?"

"In life," said Virgil, "these shades had squint-eyed minds. These were avaricious priests and popes and cardinals."

We crossed the circle and reached the marshy shore of Styx, and saw shadows wallowing and struggling fiercely one with another, and maiming one another in the mire. "These," said Virgil, "are shades who in life were slaves of wrath. Underneath are those whose sobs make the slime bubble as they moan: 'Sad were we in the sweet air and sunshine; our hearts

[1] Queen of Assyria.

were enveloped in smoke, and now we are smothered in mire.'"[1]

Across the marsh we were ferried by wrathful Phlegyas.[2] As we crossed the slimy channel a weeping and accursed spirit, covered with grime, rose from the depths. He stretched out his hands towards the boat, but Virgil pushed him back, saying: "Get thee gone to the other dogs." The spirit embraced me and cried: "There are many in the world esteemed as great kings who shall wallow here like swine in mire, leaving behind them horrible memories." This was Philippo Argenti.[3]

We drew nigh to the city named Dis, in Lower Hell, with its numerous and guilty people. Looking across the dusky valley I saw its mosques red as fire, and Virgil said: "The everlasting flames cause them to shine redly as you see them." At the gate of Dis the ferryman shouted roughly: "Get out; here is the entrance."

More than a thousand angels who had been cast out of Heaven raged furiously, saying: "Who is this living one in the kingdom of death?"

Virgil sought to speak with them apart, but they said: "Enter alone, and let this man go wandering on his foolish path."

Trembling, I said to Virgil: "Let us turn back if we are not permitted to go farther."

Then the three Furies, with serpents in their hair, cried aloud: "Come hither, O Medusa, so that this man may be changed to stone."

Virgil bade me turn round and close my eyes, and so did I. Then I heard a terrifying crash like to a storm striking a forest, scattering the branches and causing wild beasts and shepherds to take flight.

I turned round, and saw Heaven's messenger, who was putting the thousand ruined souls to flight; they fled as frogs flee before their enemy, the serpent. We then entered the city

[1] The pessimists.

[2] Son of Mars (war-god), who was cast into Hell by Apollo because of his foul sins of fire-raising and rape.

[3] A rich, powerful, and arrogant Italian, whose horse had shoes of silver (Argento).

of Dis, and saw a wide plain on which burn in tombs arch-heretics and their followers of all sects.

Along a narrow path we went across the Sixth Circle and reached a precipice. We descended by a steep way, and saw on a rocky ledge the horror of Crete (the Minotaur), who plunged angrily hither and thither like a bull striving to break free. At the foot of the cliff we beheld armed centaurs, tripping one behind the other, and they threatened us; but Virgil spoke of Beatrice, who had sent him to me, and a centaur named Nessus became our guide. We reached the River of Blood, and saw boiling in it souls that screamed loudly.

Said Nessus, the centaur: "These are tyrants who took to shedding blood and pillaging. Here they sorrow for their pitiless offences. There is Alexander (the Great), and fierce Dionysius who caused Sicily to have years of grief. That black-haired one is Azzolino,[1] and the fair-haired one is Obizzo of Este,[2] who was smothered by his stepson.

Farther on we saw a spirit standing apart, and the centaur said: "That one cleft the heart, in God's bosom, which is still honoured upon the Thames."[3]

In the stream were also Attila (the Hun), who had been a scourge on earth, Pyrrhus, and Sextus;[4] shedding tears eternally, there were Rinier of Corneto and Rinier Pazzo, who waged so much war on the highways.[5]

Next we entered (Seventh Circle) a deep and pathless wood of dark trees, in which nest winged harpies with human forms, big bellies, and claws for feet. Lamentations arose on every side. This is the wood of suicides, whose souls have taken root and grown as trees. Beyond it we saw the plain of burning sand, not unlike the desert (of Libya) which Cato's feet once pressed. Here were naked souls in misery. Some lay shrieking on the ground; others sat crouching, and others wandered

[1] A thirteenth-century tyrant of Padua, nicknamed "Son of the Devil".

[2] Another tyrant; a Guelph.

[3] Guy de Montforte, who at mass stabbed in God's bosom (the church) at Viterbo Prince Henry, nephew of Henry III. The prince's body was taken to London, and the heart was put into a golden vase and placed on a pillar of London Bridge.

[4] Supposed to be Pyrrhus of Epirus and Sextus Pompey, the Mediterranean corsair.

[5] Highwaymen and assassins during the reign of Frederick II. Rinier Pazzo was a noble-

about restlessly. Over all the plain fell flakes of fire, as falls thick snow on the Alps. Those who lay on the burning sand had committed violence against God, those who sat, against nature and art, and those running about, against nature.

I saw a mighty spirit who seemed not to heed the fire as he lay disdainful and writhing, and asked who he was.[1] The spirit heard me asking my guide concerning him, and made answer: "Such as I was when alive so am I in death. Although Jove should weary his smith, from whom he seized in anger the sharp thunderbolt, and, as in the fight at Phlegra, cast at me with his full strength, yet he should not have joyous vengeance."

My guide spoke to him, and said: "O Capaneus, because your arrogance is not extinguished, you are punished all the more. No torment were sufficient for you equal to the pain of your own wrath."

My guide then said to me: "That man was one of the seven kings who besieged Thebes; he defied, and still seems to defy, God, regarding Him as of little account. But, as I told him, his defiant words are the fittest ornaments for his breast. . . . Follow me."

Silently we skirted the wood round the plain of burning sand, and came to the river of blood which gurgles across the sand. My guide told me why this river was so famous. "In the midst of the sea," he said, "there is a wasted land named Crete, under whose ancient king the world was once chaste. There is Mount Ida that used to be beautiful with foliage and streams, but now it is deserted and desolate. Crete was chosen by Rhea as the cradle of her son (Zeus—Jupiter), and when he sobbed she caused a clamour to be made so that he might remain concealed.[2] Inside the mount stands a great old man, his shoulders towards Damietta, his face towards Rome. His head is of gold, his arms and breast of silver, below that he is of brass, and below the brass of iron, and his feet are of clay. The image is broken, except where it is gold, and from every crack tears fall; these tears collect in the cave and drop down

[1] Capaneus, one of the seven kings who laid siege to Thebes. As he climbed the wall Jupiter struck him with his thunderbolt, and his body was scattered in pieces. In Hell he is arrogant, defiant, and blasphemous. [2] From Saturn (Chronos).

over rocks to the valley, forming the Lake Cocytus. Hence, too, the River of Blood and Lethe."

We went onward far from the wood, and saw a company of spirits, one of whom recognized me and called out: "What a marvel!"

I gazed at his baked and shrivelled face and knew him. "Are you here, ser[1] Brunetto?" I said.

"What has brought you hither?" he asked. I told him, and he said: "Follow your star and you shall reach Paradise. Had I not died young, I should have encouraged you." I sorrowed with him there.

"My kind and well-beloved father," I said, "you instructed me how man can reach everlasting bliss. While I live I shall reveal my gratitude in song."[2]

Others of my countrymen, mostly churchmen, whose sin I cannot name, I saw under the fiery shower. Then was I led by Virgil to where the waters fall over a precipice with deafening clamour into the Eighth Circle.[3] Round my waist was the cord of St. Francis, and my guide lowered it over the cliff. The signal was answered, for up rose the monster Geryon (Fraud), that unclean image of deceit. He had two hairy paws, a face like that of an honest man of benign aspect, and a serpent's body; his forked scorpion-like tail hung over the precipice. As among the guzzling Germans the beaver sits watching for his prey, so perched that fiend on the brink of rocks.

To him Virgil spake, and we mounted on his back. The fiend descended with us, wheeling in large circles. Slowly he wheeled, so that I did not realize, but for the wind on my face, that we were going down. I heard the roaring of the whirlpool below the falling stream, and loud cries of agony, so that I crouched quaking with terror. Like a weary falcon that sees no bird to prey on, and descends, wheeling slowly, while the falconer shouts: "Ah me, you are coming down!" even thus did Geryon descend nigh to a rugged rock. When we stepped off his back, he flew away swiftly like an arrow from a bow.

[1] The title "ser" was given to Brunetto because he was a notary.

[2] Dante's teacher, Brunetto Latini, a worthy but worldly Florentine. It is strange that the poet should have placed him in Hell.

[3] The waters of Phlegethon.

This Eighth Circle is called Malebolge (Evil Pits). It is formed entirely of stone which is of iron colour, and in the middle of it is a yawning pit very wide and deep. The bottom of it is divided into ten great trenches[1] of torment connected with bridges of flint. In these are naked sinners. In one I saw horned demons who, with large scourges, smote seducers and others on their backs, in others they smote flatterers, in another Simonists[2] who were transfixed in holes head downwards, with feet burning incessantly. I descended and saw the soul of Pope Nicholas (the Third). He thought I was Boniface (the Eighth), and cried out: "Ha! are you standing there, O Boniface? . . . Are you so quickly sated with the riches for which you deceitfully seized the lovely Lady,[3] and brought her sorrow?"

I made answer, saying: "I am not the one you think I am," and then I rebuked him.

Virgil led me to the bridge, and, looking down, I saw at the bottom of the Fourth Trench a procession of weeping souls, walking silently and slowly at the pace of those who chant litanies. Each one was distorted from chin to chest, so that their faces were turned right round about. They had thus to walk backward in the direction they looked. I wept to see them, nor could I keep my face dry as I leaned against the rocky arch, and Virgil said: "Are you like the other fools? If there is no pity in this place, piety will continue to be."

I saw Amphiaraüs,[4] whom the earth yawned to swallow, and Virgil said: "He desired to see too far beyond, and now looks forward as he walks backward." I saw Tiresias[5] who had changed his sex. Born a male, he became a female, and afterwards, when he had struck the two twisted serpents, he resumed his male form. I saw Aruns,[6] who in the mountains of Luni had a cave among marble rocks where he could have

[1] Or trench-like valleys. There are ten of these in this part of hell.

[2] The reference is to Simon (Acts, viii, 18), who offered money for power to make those on whom he laid hands receive the Holy Spirit, when Peter said: "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money".

[3] The Church. [4] One of the seven kings who laid siege to Thebes.

[5] The Theban soothsayer. According to the legend he was changed into a female after smiting and separating two serpents. Seven years elapsed. Then he struck the serpents again and became a man.

[6] An Etruscan soothsayer. The mountains of Luni, famed for their marbles, are above Carrara.

uninterrupted vision of the stars and the ocean. I saw the virgin Manto[1] who retired to a lone valley to work her spells. Men afterwards built a city over her bones and named it Mantua. So Virgil told me. "That bearded man," said my guide, "is Eurypylus, who, when Greece was emptied of warriors, helped Calchas in Aulis, and gave the right moment for severing the first cable.[2]

Thus said Virgil: "That other man with slender flanks is Michael Scott. Well he knew how to work magical illusions."[3]

I saw also Guido Bonatti[4] and Asdente,[5] who now wishes he had stuck to his leather and thread, but repents too late. I saw the miserable women who left needle and spool and spindle and practised witchcraft, making use of herbs and of effigies.

Next we passed to the Fifth Trench, and found it marvellously black. As in the Arsenal of the Venetians the sticky tar is boiled in winter to smear damaged vessels, so did the thick pitch bubble in this Trench of Hell in which were public peculators writhing in agony. Black demons, with outstretched wings and nimble-footed, tortured sinners. I saw new-comers being thrown in, and then lifted out to be flayed. As cooks hang flesh on hooks, so did the demons deal with these sinners, using their pronged spears.

In the next trench were hypocrites—a painted people who wept as they walked slowly, looking weary and exhausted. They were attired like to monks in Cologne. Outwardly they were beautiful, but they wore cloaks of lead that were gilded.

[1] Daughter of the Theban soothsayer Tiresias.

[2] When the Achæans and their allies set sail for Troy.

[3] The famous Scottish scholar, regarding whom many legends survive in his native land. He was famous on the Continent as physician and astrologer to Emperor Frederick II, and Italy, like Scotland, remembers his prophecies. Boccaccio, who tells "he was recently in Florence", refers to him as "a great master in necromancy, who was named Michele Scotto because he came from Scotland. He received great honour from many noble people." In Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (Canto II) his tomb is opened to recover the "magic book".

> In these far climes it was my lot
> To meet the wondrous Michael Scott;
> A wizard of such dreaded fame
> That when in Salamanca's cave
> Him listed his magic wand to wave,
> The bells would ring in Notre Dame!

[4] An astrologer.

[5] A cobbler of Parma who had the gift of prophecy.

Among them I saw two friars who had been magistrates of Florence. I saw also Caiaphas, the High Priest.

To the Seventh Trench we climbed, and found it full of thieves, who were tortured by serpents, and among these were nobles who had been magistrates of Florence.

The Eighth Trench is filled with evil counsellors, and I sorrowed to behold them there thick as fireflies seen by the peasant who rests on the hill and gazes towards the valley. Each soul was tortured by the flames surrounding it. There I saw Ulysses and Diomed. Together they ran to escape punishment, and moaned for the ambush of the horse.[1]

Virgil held converse with Ulysses, who told that after he had reached Ithaca his love for his son, his reverence for his sire, and his devotion to Penelope could not hold him back from further wandering. With one ship Ulysses sailed westward to Spain and Morocco, and then beyond the pillars of Hercules. He desired to reach the unpeopled land that lay westward, and, addressing those who were with him, made them share his desire. "The ship was turned westward," Ulysses said, "and we made wings of our oars for our mad flight. . . . Five times the moon had been rekindled and quenched as we went on our arduous voyage. Then, dim in the distance, appeared a mountain. To me it seemed the highest mountain I had ever beheld. Glad were we, but soon our joy was turned to sorrow, for from the new land rose a tempest that smote the forepart of the ship.

> Three times it made her whirl with all the waters,
> At the fourth time it made the stern uplift,
> And the prow downward go, as pleased Another,[2]
> Until the sea above us closed again.[3]

The flaming Ulysses spoke no more, and the gentle poet (Virgil) permitted him to depart. Other evil counsellors came nigh and held converse with us.

Thereafter we passed to the Ninth Trench, in which were tortured the sowers of scandal and schism.

We saw Mahomet, whose body had been ripped open so

[1] The wooden horse of Troy. [2] God. [3] Longfellow's translation.

that his entrails protruded; his heart was laid bare. To me he spake, saying: "Behold how I tear myself and how I am mutilated. I am Mahomet. Before me walks Ali, my son, weeping, his face cleft in twain. Behind us is a devil who smites us with the sword. When we walk round the sorrowful path our wounds heal, and then he smites us again."

Then I saw Curio, who urged Cæsar to cross the Rubicon and rouse civil war, and many others who caused evils to be by wrong counsel.

In the last trench were falsifiers of all kinds, impostors, false witnesses, coiners, alchemists, forgers, and impersonators. They wailed as they suffered various torments.

Round the edge of the Ninth Circle were the earth-giants who of old waged war against God. Among them were Nimrod. He shouted unintelligible words, accusing himself. I saw Ephialtes, of great bulk, who made mighty efforts at the time the giants caused the gods to tremble. We went on and reached Antæus.[1] To him Virgil spake, so that he might take us in his arms to the lowest part of Hell, and this he did.

> Yet in the abyss,
> That Lucifer with Judas low ingulfs,
> Lightly he placed us; nor, there leaning, stayed;
> But rose, as in a bark the stately mast.

In that dark and dismal pit I stood on a frozen lake. I saw doleful sinners up to their necks in ice. This circle is named Caïnea, because Cain is there and other traitors.

The last circle of the pit is named Judecca, after Judas Iscariot. There were tortured many traitors. In blocks of clear ice some lay flat, others stood upright, some on their soles and some on their heads, and some were bent double. We went onward until Virgil showed me the being who once was fair. "Behold Dis (Satan)," he said, "and behold the place in which you must arm yourself with fortitude."

I trembled as if nigh to death. . . . The Emperor of Hell was breast-high in the ice. He had three faces on his head: the one in front was red as fire, the right one was whitish-

[1] Who refused to join his brother giants in waging war against the gods (Lucan, iv, 587).

yellow, and the left was like the faces of those from the source of the Nile (black).[1] He had two great wings broader than sea-sails; these had no feathers, but were in form and texture like the wings of the bat. As he flapped them, winds issued forth to freeze Cocytus. Tears fell from his six eyes. In each of his three mouths he chewed sinners, so that he kept them in constant torment. The middle sinner was Judas Iscariot; his head was inside and his legs writhed outside; the one who hung from the mouth of the black face, head downward and silent, was Brutus; the other was Cassius. Then said Virgil: "Night is coming on and we must go hence, for we have seen all."

Virgil bade me clasp his neck, and this I did. Then he clutched the hairy flanks of Lucifer, and dropped down through the hole in the ice. At the thigh we turned round until our heads were where our feet had been. I thought, as we dropped farther, that I was returning to hell, but found I was climbing through a hole in a rock. I looked up, thinking to see Lucifer, and beheld him with his legs aloft as if standing on his head. Greatly perplexed was I, as can judge those stupid people who do not understand what point I had reached.[2]

Together we ascended, and reached a hidden way which Virgil and I climbed to the bright world.

> And heedless of repose
> We climbed, he first, I following his steps,
> Till on our view the beautiful lights of heaven
> Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave:
> Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.[3]

[1] Red for wrath and vitality, the sickly whitish-yellow for jealousy and faded splendour, and black for evil.

[2] He had reached the earth's centre, which is the centre of gravity. Virgil and Dante turned heads over heels at the centre, and then found they could ascend to the southern hemisphere.

[3] Cary's translation.

II. Purgatorio

Having left behind so cruel a sea, the ship of my genius spreads out its sails on more peaceful waters. I shall now sing of that second region where the human soul purges itself, so as to become worthy of ascending to Heaven. Oh! holy Muses, since that I am your child, let Calliope uplift me, accompanying my song with the music that caused the sorrowing magpies to despair of forgiveness:[1]

> The sweetest oriental sapphire blue,
> Which the whole air in its pure bosom had,
> Greeted mine eyes, far as the heavens withdrew;
>
> So that again they felt assured and glad,
> Soon as they issued forth from the dead air,
> Where every sight and thought had made them sad.
>
> The beauteous star, which lets no love despair,
> Made all the orient laugh with loveliness,
> Veiling the Fish that glimmered in its hair.[2]

I turned to the right hand and gazed at the opposite (southern) pole. There I saw four stars[3] never before beheld except by our first parents.

> Heaven seemed rejoicing in their happy light.
> O widowed northern pole, bereaved indeed,
> Since thou hast had no power to see that sight.

As I looked towards the other pole, where the Wain (Great Bear) had vanished, I saw nigh to me a lonely old man.[4]

[1] The reference is to the nine Macedonian girls who challenged the Muses in song and were transformed into magpies. Calliope is the Muse of heroic poetry.

[2] Venus is the "beauteous star", and outshines the constellation Pisces at dawn. Verse rendering by Leigh Hunt.

[3] The Southern Cross. Dante is supposed to have heard of it.

[4] Cato the Younger, the stern Stoic moralist. Dante makes him Keeper of Purgatory, although he consigned Brutus to one of the mouths of Satan.

A long beard, turning white like the hair of his head, fell down on his breast. "Who are you that, crossing the dark river, have made escape from the everlasting pit? Who was your guide? Who lit your path out of the darkness? Have the laws of the abyss been broken, or has Heaven's decree been changed so that one who is condemned can leave the dark cavern?"

Said Virgil: "Not of my own will did I come hither. I obey the command of a lady (Beatrice) who came down from Paradise and bade me guide this man. . . . I have taken him through Inferno. Now may it please you to bless his coming. He is a seeker after Liberty. We have not broken Heaven's laws. Minos did not hold us back. I dwell in that circle in which is Marcia,[1] who still loves you. For her love's sake be favourable to us."

Cato answered: "In the upper world Marcia was dear to me; I could deny her naught. But now that I have been taken from the region in which she is, my affection has ceased in obedience to eternal laws. As you are acting in accordance with the command of a Heavenly Lady, it is sufficient to ask a favour from me in her name. Pass on. But first let this man's face be cleansed[2]; he must not approach the angel guardian with eyes obscured by fog. . . . Now rises the sun which will guide you as you ascend the mountain."

> The lingering shadows now began to flee
> Before the whitening dawn, so that mine eyes
> Discerned far off the trembling of the sea.[3]

We walked across the lonely plain and came to a shady place, where I cleansed my face with the dew on the grass. Then, resuming our journey, we reached the desolate shore of a wide sea. No man having crossed that sea has ever returned. We waited, and as red Mars sank in the west, whilst morn grew bright, I saw a splendour coming over the sea that grew larger and more brilliant as it came. "Kneel down," said Virgil, "and clasp your hands. Behold the Angel of God!"

[1] Cato's wife, who was given to Hortensius.
[2] Having been in Inferno, the poet's face is black with mire and smoke and fog.
[3] Leigh Hunt.

To the shore there soon came, very swiftly, a beautiful and lustrous boat, the heavenly pilot standing on the poop. A hundred spirits sang, as in one voice, the psalm:

In exitu Israel de Egypto.[1]

When the singing ceased the angel blessed them with the sign of the cross, and they left the boat, leaping ashore. Then he went away as quickly as he had approached.

The new-comers gazed about them, wondering greatly, and asked the way to the mountain, but Virgil said: "We are strangers here, and came but a little time before yourselves."

Observing that I breathed, the spirits were amazed. One was Casella, whom I knew—a musician of Florence—and he sang to me my own song:

Love which pleasure takes
In whispering to my soul
Of all my lady's claims.

So sweetly did he sing that the music of my song still haunts my ears. The other spirits listened, enraptured, and seemed to forget where they were, until Cato's voice was heard, saying: "O ye sluggish souls, why do you tarry negligently? Make haste towards the mountain and cast off the vestments that conceal God." Like doves that are scared from their food, so did the spirits take flight towards the mountain. And no less speedily did we also depart.[2]

We reached the base of the mountain, which I found to be rocky and steep, and difficult to climb. A second party of spirits came nigh us, and Virgil invoked their aid, but when they perceived that my body cast a shadow, they drew back amazed. Then one who had a wound on his forehead approached me, and I saw he was Manfredi, King of Sicily,[3]

[1] When Israel out of Egypt came.

[2] In his sonnet to Henry Lawes, Milton refers to this incident:

Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than is Casella, whom he wooed to sing,
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

[3] An illegitimate son of Frederick II. Although he was crowned he was excommunicated.

who had been slain in battle. To me he gave a message for his daughter, Costanza, Queen of Aragon, beseeching her to hasten his release from Purgatory.

Led by the spirits up a narrow path, we reached a ledge of rock on which were those who endured punishment because they had delayed repenting until the last moments of life. Onward we went, and other spirits we saw. They spoke to me, relating their sorrows:

> Ah! when thou findest thee again on earth—
> (Said then a female soul), remember me,—
> Pia. . . . Sienna was my place of birth,
> The Marshes of my death. This knoweth he,
> Who placed upon my hand the wedding ring.[1]

We continued to ascend until we reached a solitary soul, crouching apart. Grave was his aspect and haughty his eyes. Virgil asked this hermit-like one to point out the easiest path, but for answer he asked whence my guide came. Said Virgil: "Mantua." Then the lonely spirit rose up and said: "O Mantuan, I am your fellow-townsman, Sordello."[2]

Virgil and he embraced. Then said I: "O servile Italy, hostelry of woe, ship without a pilot in a storm, Lady of Nations no longer, but a land of ill repute. This noble spirit never heard the voice of a fellow-citizen without bidding him welcome, and now those who live within your borders wage war against each other."

Sordello then asked: "Who are you?"

"I am Virgil," answered my guide. "I have lost the right to enter Heaven for no other fault than not having faith."

Said Sordello: "O glory of the Latians, eternal pride of Mantua, what merit of mine, or what divine grace, reveals you to me?"

Having honoured Virgil, Sordello led us to a green hollow

[1] This is Madonna Pia, a beautiful heiress of a noble Sienna family. Her jealous husband took her to the marshes of Volterra and lived with her alone in a deserted tower, refusing to speak to her. He is said to have murdered her after a few months. He lived the rest of his life in silence, never uttering a word to anyone.

[2] A learned and valiant poet of the thirteenth century, the subject of Browning's famous poem beginning

> Who will may hear Sordello's story told.

adorned with bright flowers of many hues. The sun was setting as we reached it, and there we found princes and lords who had been delayers of penitence. They sang together in that flowery place of sweet scents, and from a knoll we watched them as day faded slowly.

'T was now the hour, when love of home melts through
Men's hearts at sea, and longing thoughts portray
The moment when they bade sweet friends adieu;

And the new pilgrim now, on his lone way,
Thrills, if he hears the distant vesper bell,
That seems to mourn for the expiring day.[1]

One of the souls rose up and beckoned to the others. Then, clasping his hands and facing the east, he sang the hymn: "Te lucis ante terminum" (Thee before the closing night).[2] The other spirits accompanied him with sweet voices and eyes raised towards heaven. Thereafter two angels, grasping fiery swords that had no points, descended from above. Their garments were green, and floated on the wind raised by their green wings.[3] Said Sordello: "These angels come from the bosom of Mary to protect this flowery hollow from the serpent." Soon the serpent appeared—the same serpent which had tempted Eve. It crept through the grass and flowers, turning now and again to lick its back.[4] When it heard the noise of the angels' green wings—those celestial hawks—it fled away.

I fell asleep, and while I slept I dreamed that I beheld an eagle hovering on outstretched golden wings. Then it swooped down upon me as if I were abandoned Ganymede. It came terribly near, and then it snatched me up and carried me towards the fire.[5] I seemed to burn, and awoke suddenly.

[1] Leigh Hunt's translation.

[2] A hymn sung in Catholic churches at evening service before the close of prayer.

[3] The green Osiris, the green god of the Tiber in the *Æneid*, the green fairies, the green ghosts of Scotland, and other green gods and spirits had anciently a precise significance. The "water of life" was green, and all life had origin in water. The Mexican myth about the first deities relates that they were in water covered with green feathers. The spirit of the immortal Osiris was in vegetation; therefore it was green. He was associated with the Nile and Ocean, and the Ocean was called the "Great Green" by the ancient Egyptians. Horus was the Egyptian celestial hawk and guardian.

[4] The Tempter puts a gloss on sin.

[5] It was believed that there was a fire (the Empyrean) above the earth's atmosphere and near the moon.

Virgil was by my side, Sordello having departed. "You have reached Purgatory,"[1] he said. "While you lay sleeping among the valley flowers, St. Lucia[2] came and carried you hither. I followed her, and she vanished as you awoke."

The portal of Purgatory was on the face of a precipice. Three steps led up to it; the first was white as marble, the second was black and split as if with fire, and the third was blood-red.[3] On the blood-red step stood the Angel of God. On each of the three steps I prayed that the portal would be unlocked. Then I knelt at the feet of the angel, beating my breast three times. With the sword's point the guardian inscribed on my forehead seven "P's",[4] saying: "Wash off these signs when you are within."

From his ash-coloured garment the angel drew forth two keys, one of silver and the other of gold,[5] and with these he unlocked the gate and said: "Enter, but do not look back, because the one who looks back must go outside again." The gate roared like to thunder on its metal sockets as it was being opened, and again when it was being shut. Together we entered, and, as we did so, heard voices singing the hymn: "Te Deum Laudamus" ("We praise Thee, O God"). It seemed as if I were listening to sweet singing when the organ is played and the words are not clearly heard.

We had to climb by a rocky path in a narrow gorge to the First Circle, in which the proud suffer punishment. There I saw sculptured, on white marble, scenes of humility—the oxen drawing the holy ark in a cart, the lowly Psalmist dancing before the Lord, a poor widow weeping at the bridle of the Emperor Trajan's horse, and beseeching him to avenge her son's death. As I looked, Virgil drew my attention to the souls suffering

[1] He had been previously passing through Ante-Purgatory.

[2] Symbol of the light of grace. She was also the saint who protected eyesight. Dante had suffered from an eye trouble, and attributed his cure to her influence. She was consequently his favourite saint.

[3] White for sincerity at confession, black and broken for the heart dark with sin which has become contrite, and red for the soul's love of God.

[4] The seven deadly sins (Peccati) were thus symbolized.

[5] The silver key symbolizes the office of the priest confessor and the golden key the power of absolution.

torment. Each carried an enormous burden, and one called out:

> Know ye not, we are worms
> Born to compose the angelic butterfly,
> That soars to heaven when freed from what deforms.

All were bent down, and even the one who was most patient seemed to say: "More I cannot endure". As they went past they chanted a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, praying for a good pilgrimage.

We continued on our way, walking over tombstones sculptured with awesome figures—Lucifer falling amidst fire from heaven, Briareus struck down by the thunderbolt,[1] Nimrod confounded at the tower of Babel, Niobe turned to stone, Saul pierced by his own sword, Sennacherib slain by his son, Cyrus's head in a cup of blood, and Troy in ruins. So realistic were the figures that it seemed indeed as if the dead were dead and the living alive.

As we pursued our way an angel drew nigh arrayed in white, his face gleaming like the star of morning. He led us to where the cliff was broken, and, beating his wings, took the first "P" from my brow. Then I found I could move more lightly.

We reached the Second Circle, where the envious are punished. The souls were attired in rock-dark garments of sackcloth, and seemed like beggars, leaning one against the other; their eyes were sewn up with thread of iron, and they cried out: "O pray for us, Mary, Michael, Peter, and all the Saints!" My heart was filled with pity for them. I saw and spoke to souls I had known in life. Suddenly, in the stillness, a voice passed like lightning through the air: "He who will find me shall slay me", and broke in thunder. It was the voice of Cain. Then another voice called: "I am Aglauros who was turned to stone", and thunder followed.[2]

An angel took off another "P" from my forehead, and led us towards the Third Circle, where, amidst thick smoke, souls were being punished for the sin of wrath. Thicker was the smoke

[1] One of the giants who made attack on heaven.

[2] Aglauros, princess of Attica, who was jealous of her sister and was turned to stone by Hermes (Mercury).

than night when the sky is without a star, or even than Hell's darkness. Scarcely could I keep my eyes open. Like a blind man I stumbled on through the putrid and murky air. Voices round about me prayed to the Lamb of God for mercy and peace. These were the voices of souls who were undoing the knots of wrath as they purified themselves. Among the sad sights in that realm was an angry crowd stoning to death a youth whose eyes were turned to Heaven.[1]

Like one who has been caught in an Alpine mist and escapes from it into sunshine, so passed I from the realm of smoke and darkness. Another "P" was taken from my forehead by a divine spirit. We passed into the Fourth Circle after climbing a stair, and saw souls that suffered because of lukewarmness. "Here," said Virgil, "are those whose love of goodness, which failed in performance, is being corrected and strengthened."

I heard souls lamenting the sin of slothfulness and the lack of zeal for well-doing.

When night came on I slept, and had a vision of a yellow misshapen woman who said she was the siren who had tempted Ulysses with her song.[2] Then appeared a lady[3] who smote the siren and revealed the foulness of her. I awoke, remembering this revelation.

The sun was shining brightly. Many souls I saw; they were enduring punishment for the sin of avarice and prodigality. They wept bitterly, lying with their faces pressed against the ground; but, realizing full well that the punishment was just, they bore it patiently. I heard one lamenting that while he lived on earth his eyes were bent on worldly things instead of being uplifted towards Heaven.

In this circle I met and held converse with Hugh Capet, from whom had descended the Philips and Louises of France. Grievously did he lament the avarice of his family.

As I left him, the mountain of Purgatory trembled. Never did Delos shake so violently ere Latona's nest was built upon it. When the trembling had ceased, a voice cried: "Fear naught, for I am your guide"; and all souls sang together: "Gloria in

[1] Stephen. [2] Immorality. [3] Virtue.

Excelsis Deo" ("Glory be to God in the Highest"). Thus did Purgatory tremble and rejoice because a soul had been sufficiently purified to ascend to Paradise. Cries of gladness were uttered by souls in torment.

We met the liberated soul. It was Statius; but, ere we knew, Virgil asked: "Let us know who you were on earth."

Said the soul: "In the days when the goodly Titus avenged the death of Him whom Judas had betrayed, I lived on earth enjoying the name that endures longest and is most highly revered.[1] I had fame," said he, "but no faith. So sweet was my song that Rome drew me within her gates, although I was a native of Tolosa, and crowned me by placing the myrtle garland on my head. On earth I am still called Statius. Of Thebes I sang, and then of Achilles, but perished under the latter burden.[2] The *Æneid* was the divine flame from which came the sparks that lit my poetic fire; it was the mother and muse of my poetry. Would I had lived on earth with Virgil!"

Virgil turned to me and said: "Speak naught." As he spake he smiled, whereat Statius wondered greatly. Then said Virgil: "You wonder why I smile, but you will wonder more when I tell you that I am Virgil from whom you received inspiration to sing of men and gods."

Statius knelt to embrace the Master's feet, but Virgil said: "Refrain from acting thus, a shade are you, and I am a shade."

Said Statius: "Now you know how I revere you, for I deemed thy shadow was a real body."

Thereafter Statius told that avarice was not his sin, but prodigality. I perceived as he spoke that his hands had been extended, for he had been wont to spend lavishly.

Virgil asked him how he became a Christian, and Statius said: "You yourself sang:

> "'The age renews itself,
> Justice returns, and man's primeval time,
> And a new progeny descends from heaven'.

"I became a poet through you, and through you I became a Christian. When Domitian persecuted the Christians I wept

[1] The name of poet. [2] The *Achilleid* was never completed.

with them, and their uprightness made me scorn all other sects. From them I received baptism. Yet long was I a Christian in secret, pretending the while to be a Pagan."[1]

We passed on together, and a divine spirit took another "P" from my forehead.

Thereafter we three entered the Sixth Circle, where souls are cleansed of the sin of gluttony and intemperance. I beheld a beautiful fruit tree from which a voice came saying: "Of this food ye shall not taste." Tempting was the fruit and sweet the smell of it. In this circle were souls that were haggard and lean, with pale faces and hollow eyes. Like rings from which gems have been taken seemed their eye sockets. Greatly indeed did these sinners suffer who during life had feasted and drunk beyond measure. They hungered and thirsted in Purgatory so as to regain holiness of spirit, while the smell of the sweet fruit on the forbidden tree continually excited their appetites. Another tree I saw. It had grown from a plant of the tree from which Eve plucked fruit.

To the Seventh Circle we passed. There, amidst flames of fire, souls are purified from the sin of incontinence. I heard sung the hymn: "Summæ Deus clementiæ" ("God of consummate mercy"). The souls thirsted more than do Indians and Ethiopians for cool water from wells. Thick as ants, the souls went on their way. To ascend I had to cross through the fire. I feared to go with Virgil and Statius, but Virgil said: "My son, Beatrice is beyond." Then was my obstinacy removed, and, as we entered the flames, my guide said: "Methinks I can already behold the eyes of Beatrice." Through the fire we went, and up a rocky gorge. The sun was setting, and thick darkness came on, and I lay down weary and disconsolate. The only light visible fell from the stars, which seemed larger and brighter than ever I had beheld them. Sleep at length overpowered me, and as I slept I dreamed, and beheld a fair lady crossing a meadow and plucking flowers and singing:

> Know I am Leah, here plucking at morn
> The fairest of flowers my hair to adorn.

[1] The conversion of Statius was a pious fiction of the Middle Ages.

Rachel, my sister, sits all day and sighs
At her mirror adoring her exquisite eyes;
To muse on her beauty is ever her joy,
And mine in sweet labour my hands to employ.[1]

Dawn brightened as I awoke, and I found that the last "P" had been taken from my forehead. And after that Virgil told me he would soon leave me. "You have seen the everlasting fire and the temporal," he said, "now you draw nigh to the realm that I cannot enter. The sun is bright on your forehead, and your own will can guide you."

We three poets came to a divine forest on a meadow where a delicious cool breeze blew gently, making the branches murmur, while sweet-voiced birds among the leaves greeted the dawn.

Even as from branch to branch
Along the piny forests on the shore
Of Chiassi, rolls the gathering melody,
When Eolus hath from his cavern loosed
The dripping south.[2]

We walked through the forest and at length reached a stream of crystal waters, which flowed deeply under the shade of trees which is never pierced by rays of sun or moon. On the opposite bank were fresh May flowers of many hues. Then suddenly among them appeared a lady[3] who sang as she gathered the flowers. To her I spoke, saying: "Come nearer, O fair one, so that I may hear your song."

With downcast eyes this modest maiden came through red and yellow flowers. Then where the waters wet the grass she looked up with eyes more bright than Venus. "Speak," she said, "for I have come to answer you."

I asked her regarding the stream, and she told me it came from a never-failing source. "It is called Lethe on this side," she said, "and has the virtue of cleansing the mind of the memory of sin; on the other side it is called Eunoë, and there it makes the mind recall every good deed. Those who of old sang of the Golden Age thought that this realm was on Parnassus. Here

[1] Leah symbolizes the active Christian worker, and Rachel the contemplative Christian.

[2] Cary's translation.

[3] Matelda. Like Leah, she symbolizes works. Supposed to be the "Great Countess" of Tuscany. Her heavenly sister Beatrice resembles Rachel.

the first of the human race lived in innocence;[1] here prevailed eternal spring, and here grew all fruits. This water is the nectar of which one tells."

I looked at the two poets, Virgil and Statius, and they smiled to find that they were spoken of as men who were dreamers.

The lady walked along the banks of the stream and I followed her, the water being between us. Fifty paces farther onward I found myself facing the east. I saw a bright light gleaming through the forest. Like lightning it came and went, and then I heard a sweet melody rippling through the air. I walked on and saw what I thought were seven golden trees, but soon found they were seven golden candlesticks burning brightly.[2] Behind them were figures clad in white garments—of purer whiteness than has ever been seen on earth. Behind these were four beings.[3] Each had six wings with feathers full of eyes, like to the eyes of Argus. Between these four beings came a two-wheeled triumphal car drawn by a winged gryphon[4] with golden limbs and a body of white speckled with vermilion. Three women[5] were tripping round the right wheel. One was red as fire, the second green as emerald, and the third white as new-fallen snow. On the left were four other beings,[6] robed in purple, and dancing to the song of one of them who had three eyes in her forehead.[7] Behind the group walked two dignified and solemn aged men,[8] clad in different raiment, one carrying a sharp sword, and after them came four men,[9] meanly attired. Last of all came a sleeping man, with intellectual face, walking alone.[10]

Then from Paradise descended Beatrice. Her face was veiled; she wore a chaplet of olive, and was attired in a flame-

[1] This is Eden. [2] Symbols of the seven spirits of God (*Revelations*, iv 5).

[3] Symbols of the four Gospels.

[4] The gryphon is a symbol of Christ, human and divine, and the car a symbol of the Church.

[5] Love, Hope, and Faith. [6] Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude.

[7] Prudence. She beholds the past with the first eye, the present with the second, and the future with the third.

[8] St. Luke and St. Paul. The latter strikes with the sword of the spirit.

[9] The apostles James, Peter, John, and Jude.

[10] St. John as the visionary of the Isle of Patmos.

red garment under a green mantle.[1] My heart was smitten with reverence for her as when I was a boy and first beheld her. I turned to speak to Virgil, saying: "Every drop of blood in my veins is thrilling. I know the attributes of the olden flame."[2] But my dearest sire, Virgil, had vanished, and I wept, because I had depended on him for my safety. Then said Beatrice: "Dante, do not weep because Virgil has left you; soon must you weep for another sword (sorrow)."

I looked towards her, and she continued: "How came it that you approached this mountain? Know you not that here man is happy?"

So did she rebuke me. Then she addressed the angels, saying that when I was a youth I proposed to lead a new life, but my thoughts drifted away from her, and I turned on other paths, following false images of good. Having obtained from Heaven the power to influence me, she had caused Virgil to guide me through the outer regions towards Lethe. "The decree of God would have been broken," she said, "if he had passed Lethe and drunk of its waters without paying scot[3] of remorseful tears."

Then Beatrice rebuked me for my shortcomings, and I stood ashamed, listening to her. When at length I looked up, and beheld her in exalted beauty, remorse stung me and I swooned.

As soon as I recovered my senses, the lady (Matelda) I had first seen, plunged me into Lethe, and carried me across the stream. Then was I embraced by the four beautiful beings (the four cardinal virtues). "Here", they said, "we are nymphs; in Heaven we shine as stars.[4] Ere yet Beatrice descended to earth we were her handmaidens. We shall now lead you to her."

Beatrice stood before the Gryphon. Because I had drunk of Lethe I had forgotten I had ever gone astray. The angel choir sang:

"Turn, Beatrice, O turn thy holy eyes",
Such was their song, "unto thy faithful one,

[1] Like the Celtic deities and fairies she wears green and red.

[2] He quotes from the *Æneid*.

[3] Scotto (payment); the word is the same in derivation and meaning as English 'scot' in 'scot-free', 'to pay one's shot', &c.—Tozer's *An English Commentary on Dante's Divina Commedia*, p. 380.

[4] The four stars of the Southern Cross.

Who has to see thee ta'en so many steps.
In grace do us the grace that thou unveil
Thy face to him, so that he may discern
The second beauty which thou dost conceal."[1]

Then Beatrice unveiled her face. My genius is obscured in attempting to tell of the splendour of her everlasting beauty. So steadfastly and intently did my eyes satisfy the thirst of ten years,[2] that my other senses were extinguished. Her holy smile drew them into the old net of love. The other beings said: "He is too fixed in contemplation," and I looked around, only to find myself for a time bereft of vision, like to one who has been gazing at the sun.

Thereafter Beatrice bade me drink of Eunoë, to revive my drooping powers. I drank, and Statius, who had come with me, drank also.

If, Reader, I possessed a longer space
For writing it, I yet would sing in part
Of the sweet draught that ne'er would satiate me;
But inasmuch as full are all the leaves
Made ready for this second canticle,
The curb of art no farther lets me go.
From the most holy water I returned
Regenerate, in the manner of new trees
That are renewed with a new foliage,
Pure and disposed to mount unto the stars.[3]

[1] Longfellow's translation. [2] Beatrice had been dead for ten years.
[3] Longfellow's translation.

III. Paradiso

O kind Apollo, for my final labour
Make of me such a vessel of thy power
As thou dost ask to give thy much-loved laurel
Up to this point one summit of Parnassus
Sufficed me, but with aid of both together
I must make entry on the course remaining.
Enter into my bosom and inspire me. . . .
O Power Divine! if thou thy presence lend me,
So that the shadow of the blessèd kingdom,
Imprinted on my brain, I make apparent,
Shalt see me come unto thy tree belovèd,
And with a garland of those leaves invested
Of which my theme and thou have made me worthy.
So seldom now, O Father, are they gathered. . . .[1]

It was high noon, the time of year being the vernal equinox, when Beatrice turned round and like an eagle fixed her gaze upon the sun, while all intent I kept looking in her eyes. It would be vain to attempt telling in words what happened. Suddenly I found day added to day, as if God had set another sun in the sky. Whether I was in the body, or the spirit only, God knows.[2] The newness of the sound and the great light made me long to know their cause. Beatrice read my agitated thoughts ere I could speak and said: "You are not on the earth now, as you imagine. Lightning never darted more quickly than you have in returning hither."[3] Then I said: "I am amazed, nor can realize how I have risen to these bright bodies," and she answered me, saying: "Through this region pass souls

[1] Sir Samuel W. Griffith's translation.

[2] The poet found he had suddenly ascended with Beatrice to the sphere of fire between the earth and the moon.

[3] Lightning was supposed to come from this fabled region of fire. The soul returned to Heaven, where it existed before birth.

to different havens in the great sea of Being, moved by an instinct that guides them."[1]

This bears away the fire towards the moon;
This is in mortal hearts the motive power;
This binds together and unites the earth.
Nor only the created things that are
Without intelligence this bow shoots forth,[2]
But those that have both intellect and love.
The Providence that regulates all this
Makes with its light the heaven forever quiet,
Wherein that turns which has the greatest haste.[3]

So spake Beatrice, and then she said: "You should not wonder more at your ascent than at a stream descending from a lofty mountain. There would be more cause for wonder if you had stayed below, just as one would wonder if a living flame did not rise from the earth."[4]

O ye who have been listening eagerly to me, following as in a little boat behind my ship that sails on in song, turn back now and gaze upon your own shores. Do not put out to sea, lest on losing me you may yourselves be lost. I go forth to cross an untraversed ocean. Minerva sends the breeze, my pilot is Apollo, and the nine Muses point to the Bears. Ye, on the other hand, who are few—ye who have eaten the bread of angels—put out your ship and follow in the wake of mine across the sea that will soon become smooth, and you will yet be stricken with wonder.[5]

Beatrice gazed upward, and I gazed at her. Like an arrow from the bow we passed into the next region. I was in the moon; the eternal pearl[6] received us, just as water receives a ray of light which remains unbroken.[7]

[1] The instinct placed by God in all beings and in every part of the world—the law of God. Sin interrupts the working of this instinct, but when the soul is freed from sin it ascends to God.

[2] I.e. this instinct propels and guides the pious. [3] Longfellow's translation.

[4] It is as natural that a purified soul should ascend to God as that a stream should fall down a hill-side and as that a flame should spring up.

[5] Those who read me for the sake of the song may now turn back, but those who are concerned about philosophy and theology should follow me.

[6] The moon is "the pearl of Heaven". This is no mere poetic image, but a survival of Pagan faith, connecting pearl and moon with the love-goddess.

[7] There are ten spheres in Dante's Paradise beyond the sphere of fire in the upper air: (1) the Moon; (2) Mercury; (3) Venus; (4) the Sun; (5) Mars; (6) Jupiter; (7) Saturn; (8) fixed stars; (9) *Primum Mobile*, where the motion of the heavens is directed; (10) Empyrean Heaven, where God is.

I asked Beatrice regarding the dusky spots on the moon, which make people on earth tell a fabulous story about Cain, and she revealed to me the lunar secret.[1]

Thereafter I had a vision of the souls in the moon. Their faces seemed like faces reflected in clear water. These were the spirits who had not kept their monastic vows. I saw Piccarda, sister of my friend Forese Donati, who had been a virgin sister in the world. I asked if she and the others were happy in that sphere.

"Are you desirous of a higher place,
To see more or to make yourselves more friends?"

She answered:

"Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
Of charity, that makes us wish alone
For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.
If to be more exalted we aspired,
Discordant would our aspirations be
Unto the will of Him who here secludes us."[2]

Then she told me how she had been forced to break her vows by her brother, who took her from the monastery and made her marry. She showed me Constance, who had also been a nun, and was taken back into the world.[3]

Next we passed to the sphere of Mercury, which is directed by Archangels. There we saw the souls of those who, desiring fame, had done noble deeds.

As in a quiet and clear lake of fish,
If aught approach them from without, do draw
Towards it, deeming it their food; so draw
Full more than thousand splendours towards us;
And in each one was heard, "Lo! one arrived
To multiply our loves."[4]

There I saw and spoke with the Emperor Justinian, who related his deeds, and Romeo, the pilgrim, who, having been unjustly accused, became a wanderer:

Aged and poor
He parted thence; and if the world did know

[1] Which is not of much interest now, being quite wrong.
[2] Longfellow's translation.
[3] A princess of Sicily, who became the mother of Frederick the Second.
[4] Cary's translation.

The heart he had, begging his life by morsels,
'T would deem the praise it yields him scantily dealt.[1]

Ere I was aware of it I found I had ascended to the planet Venus, in which sphere are the souls of lovers. Beatrice became more beautiful.

And as within a flame a spark is seen,
And as within a voice a voice discerned,
When one is steadfast, and one comes and goes.
Within that light beheld I other lamps
Move in a circle, speeding more or less,
Methinks in measure of their inward vision.

So, full of love, were the spirits there. Among those who came dancing towards me was King Carlo Martello of Hungary, whom I had loved well on earth.[2] I saw also the fair Clemenza.[3] Rahab, the harlot, was also there, with others.

We next passed to the Sun, in which are the souls of the Blessed Doctors (theologians) of the Church.

Then I saw a bright band, in liveliness
Surpassing, who themselves did make the crown,
And us their centre: yet more sweet in voice,
Than, in their visage, beaming.[4]

The spirits that circled round us were St. Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Gratian the Benedictine, Pietro Lombardo, Solomon, Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, Paulus Orosius, Boëthius, Isidore,[5] the Venerable Bede, Richard of St. Victor,[6] and Sigebert of Gemblours. These were named by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Thus moved in glorious circle, saw I those
Whose answering voices kept in time, with tone
Of greater sweetness than to notes it owes
Only within an entrance there such joy is known.[7]

Thereafter a second circle of souls danced round us, and

[1] Here Dante seems to muse over his own sad lot in exile.
[2] He had been a friend in need to Dante.
[3] Daughter of Charles Martel and second wife of Louis X of France. She had several lovers, including Sordello.
[4] Cary's translation.
[5] Bishop of Seville and author of *Origines*.
[6] Author of *De Contemplatione*.
[7] C. Porter's translation.

each one was named.[1] Solomon told how souls become glorified after the resurrection of the body:

> Our shape, regarmented with glorious weeds
> Of saintly flesh, must, being thus entire,
> Show yet more gracious.

Then suddenly I became aware of a new horizon and new appearances. I found that, with Beatrice, I had moved to the sphere of higher salvation by the influence of the star which seemed redder than was its wont. I was in Mars, the abode of the spirits of martyrs and warrior saints.

So beautiful did Beatrice become that the mind cannot comprehend it, or words express her infinite sweetness. I saw amidst the ruddy brilliance the cross, and on it was the body of Christ.

> From horn to horn, and 'twixt the base and summit,
> Lustres were moving, scintillating brightly,
> Both as they joined together and in passing. . . .
> Along the cross a melody was swelling,
> That, though the hymn I not distinguished, rapt me.
> I well perceived it was of lofty praises
> Because there came to me "Arise and conquer"
> As to a man who hears, not comprehending.[2]

As I stood there I perceived a star-like spirit descending from the right horn of the cross, and from it came a voice, addressing me:

> O sanguis meus, O super infusa
> Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
> Bis unquam Cœli janua reclusa?[3]

It was my ancestor, Cacciaguida, who said to me: "O leaf of mine, in whom I have taken pleasure. I am the root of your stock. That one who has given his name (Alighieri) to your family was my son and your great-grandsire. He has been in

[1] They are mostly forgotten fathers. [2] Griffith's translation.

[3] "O flesh of my flesh! O superabounding Divine Grace! when was the door of Paradise ever twice opened, as it shall have been to thee?" Evidently Dante rendered this passage in Latin because he felt that the panegyric was something strong. "And in truth," commented Leigh Hunt, "it is a little strong."

the first circle of Purgatory for a hundred years, but you, by your works, should shorten his sojourn there." Then he spoke of my native city as it was when he was in life, saying:

"Florence, within the ancient boundary
From which she taketh still her tierce and nones,
Abode in quiet, temperate and chaste.
No golden chain she had, nor coronal,
Nor ladies shod with sandal shoon, nor girdle
That caught the eye more than the person did.
Nor yet the daughter at her birth struck fear
Into the father, for the time and dower
Did not o'errun this side or that the measure.
No houses had she void of families. . . .
Bellincion Berti saw I go begirt
With leather and with bone, and from the mirror
His dame depart without a painted face;
And him of Nerli saw, and him of Vecchio,
Contented with their simple suits of buff,
And with the spindle and the flax their dames.
O fortunate women! and each one was certain
Of her own burial-place, and none as yet
For sake of France was in her bed deserted.
One o'er the cradle kept her studious watch,
And in her lullaby the language used
That first delights the fathers and the mothers;
Another, drawing tresses from her distaff,
Told o'er among her family the tales
Of Trojans and of Fesole and Rome. . . .
To such a quiet, such a beautiful
Life of the citizen, to such a safe
Community, and to so sweet an inn,
Did Mary give me, with loud cries invoked,
And in your ancient Baptistery at once
Christian and Cacciaguida I became. . . .
I followed afterward the Emperor Conrad,
And he begirt me of his chivalry,
So much I pleased him with my noble deeds.
I followed in his train against that law's
Iniquity, whose people doth usurp
Your just possession, through your Pastor's fault.[1]
There by that execrable race was I
Released from bonds of the fallacious world,
The love of which defileth many souls,
And came from martyrdom unto this peace."[2]

[1] He fought against the wicked Saracen law.

[2] Longfellow's translation.

He was silent a time. Then he lamented again over Florence. "Better it would have been," he said, "if my countrymen had kept it as it was in my day. . . . The intermingling of people has ever been a malady to cities. Size is not strength. . . . Even cities perish. . . . Ah, in those days Florence was worthy of her name, for she flourished indeed!"

My ancestor again remained silent a time, but I entreated him to speak, and he foretold the sufferings I was to endure. "As Hippolytus went from Athens," he said, "because of his false and cruel stepmother, so must you depart from Florence. This has been decreed, and soon will it be accomplished by those by whom Christ is bought and sold. You will have to leave everything beloved by you. That is the first arrow that will be shot from the bow of exile. You shall know how salt is the bread of strangers, and how hard the going up and down the stairs of strangers. But what will weigh most upon your shoulders will be the wicked and worthless company your lot must be cast among. They shall turn against you—the whole mad, heartless, and ungrateful crew. Soon afterwards, however, they will have cause to be ashamed of their brutishness, and well it will be for you that you have made a party by yourself."

Then he told me of the places in which I should find refuge, and of those who would befriend me. "Ere long," he said, "the snare will be drawn round you; but do not envy your neighbours, because your life will survive beyond the punishment of their wickedness."

"Alas!" I said; "I can see that the time is not far off when such a blow will be struck at me as is heaviest to him who most gives way. I will arm myself with foreknowledge. If I lose the spot dearest to me on earth, my songs will not deprive me of other refuge. I have been down in the infernal regions; I have climbed the mountain of Purgatory; thus far have I come through Paradise.

I have learned that which, if I tell again,
Will be to many a savour of strong acid.
And if I am a timid friend to truth
I fear lest I may lose my life with those
Who will hereafter call this time the olden.

My ancestor then spoke, saying:

A conscience overclouded
Or by its proper shame or by another's
In truth will feel thy word to be ungentle.
Thou, ne'ertheless, laying aside all falsehood,
See that thy vision all be manifested,
And where the itch is thou let be the scratching. . . .
This cry of thine shall do as doth a tempest
Which smites most fiercely the most lofty summits:
And this makes no small argument of honour.[1]

Thereafter Beatrice and I passed to the sphere of Jupiter. There I saw the souls of those who have been worthy administrators of justice. Like to birds that rise in flocks and form the letters "D" and "I" and "L" in their flights, so did I see bright spirits soaring there until they formed in parts the words: "Diligite justitium qui judicatis terram" ("Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth"). And as one strikes a smouldering log from which sparks arise, so did a thousand bright spirits arise until they formed an eagle's head and neck.[2] Then this eagle, formed by congregated spirits, spread out its wings and spoke to me, uttering "I" and "my", but meaning "we" and "our". The eagle began, saying:

"Being just and merciful
Am I exalted here unto that glory
Which cannot be exceeded by desire;
And upon earth I left my memory
Such, that the evil-minded people there
Commend it."

Then this holy bird continued:

"Unto this kingdom never
Ascended one who had not faith in Christ,
Before or since he to the tree was nailed.
But look thou, many crying are, 'Christ, Christ!'
Who at the judgment shall be far less near
To him than some shall be who knew not Christ.
Such Christians shall the Ethiop condemn,
When the two companies shall be divided,
The one forever rich, the other poor."

[1] I.e. this will redound to your credit. Griffith's translation.

[2] The eagle was the symbol of the Imperial Empire, and therefore, according to Dante's politics, of Justice.

The eagle then spoke of the Book in which all actions are recorded by the angel's pen. From it the deeds of Albert will be read,[1] and the misery caused on the banks of the Seine by that adulterator of his kingdom's money who shall die from the attack of a boar.[2] There will be beheld in that book also the pride-creating thirst which intoxicates the kings of Scotland and England so that they cannot keep within their own borders.[3] Beheld will be, too, the luxury and effeminate life of Spain's monarch,[4] and of him of Bohemia[5] who never desired or understood righteousness. The Cripple of Jerusalem[6] will have, against his name, virtue marked with a unit and sin by an M (a thousand). Thus did the eagle speak of these and other rulers.

Thereafter we passed to the Seventh Heaven, that of Saturn, in which are the spirits of the contemplative. In that crystal sphere I beheld a lofty stairway, the summit of which was out of sight. Its hue was like that of gold on which sunshine falls. I saw lights descending the stairs; these were the spirits of the contemplative. Among them was Pietro Damiano.[7] I saw also Saint Benedict.

From Saturn we went to the heaven of the fixed stars, which is controlled by Cherubim. I looked downward through space and beheld our earth so small that I smiled at its mean aspect. I saw the moon without spots,[8] and the sun, the brightness of which I could endure, and nigh to it Mercury and Venus, and I could see Jupiter of tempering influence between cold Saturn, his father, and fiery Mars, his son.

Beatrice waited in the sphere, looking wistfully towards the meridian, like to a bird that all night in darkness has rested among foliage where her offspring are, and yearns for the dawn when she can behold her young and seek food for them. The

[1] Albert I of Bohemia.

[2] *Philip the Fair, who was killed by a fall from a horse when a wild boar made attack.*

[3] A reference to the wars of Edward I of England and John Baliol of Scotland.

[4] Ferdinand IV of Castile, whose intemperance was notorious. [5] Winceslaus II.

[6] Charles II of Naples, who assumed the title "King of Jerusalem".

[7] An eleventh-century corrector of clerical abuses who was revered.

[8] The obverse side of it.

region towards which she gazed grew bright, and at length she exclaimed:

"Behold the hosts
Of Christ's triumphal march, and all the fruit
Harvested by the rolling of these spheres!"

Her face had grown brighter, full of bliss were her eyes. I saw a dazzling luminary, brighter than the sun, on which I could not look, and Beatrice said:

"What overmasters thee
A virtue is from which naught shields itself.
There are the wisdom and the omnipotence
That oped the thoroughfares 'twixt heaven and earth,
For which there erst had been so long a yearning."

Thereafter she said:

"There is the Rose in which the Word Divine
Became incarnate;[1] there the lilies are
By whose perfume the good way was discovered."

Amidst the lights which resounded with the name of Mary, I at length beheld incarnate the Blessed Virgin.

Then came nigh us a light which was Saint Peter, and with him I held converse on faith. He gave me his benediction. St. James came and spake of hope, and St. John who spake of charity. Afterwards I saw Adam, who told it was not because he ate the fruit that he fell, but because he had broken the divine command not to partake of it. For four thousand three hundred and two years he remained in the anguish of Hell, speaking a language which had become obsolete before Nimrod's day.

Brighter grew the light of Saint Peter, who spoke to me thereafter, denouncing the failings of the Roman Pontiffs. Unto me he said:

"And thou, my son, who by thy mortal weight
Shall down return again, open thy mouth;
What I conceal not, do not thou conceal."

Beatrice and I passed then to the Ninth Heaven, named the Crystalline, or *Primum Mobile*, directed by the Seraphim; in

[1] The Virgin Mary.

this sphere the movements of the heavenly bodies are directed. Then I saw a point of light[1] of acute brightness. Beatrice said:

"From that point
Dependent is the heaven and nature all.
Behold that circle most conjoined to it,
And know thou, that its motion is so swift
Through burning love whereby it is spurred on."

Without being aware of it I passed with Beatrice into the Empyrean Heaven. Beatrice spake, saying:

"We from the greatest body
Have issued to the heaven that is pure light;
Light intellectual replete with love,
Love of true good replete with ecstasy,
Ecstasy that transcendeth every sweetness."

I was given new powers; a new gift of sight was mine. I beheld a river of light flowing between banks adorned with wonderful flowers. Living sparks rose from the river and settled on the flowers; then they seemed to be like rubies set in gold. Then, as if intoxicated by the scents, the lights returned to the river. As one light vanished another came forth.[2]

The mansions of Paradise were revealed to my eyes. I saw the white celestial rose formed of angels and souls that have returned to Heaven from the world, and Beatrice led me to the yellow centre of it in the sea of God's glory.

In fashion, as a snow-white rose, lay then
Before my view the saintly multitude,[3]
Which in his own blood Christ espoused. Meanwhile
That other host,[4] that soar aloft to gaze
And celebrate His glory, whom they love,
Hovered around; and like a troop of bees,
Amid the vernal sweets alighting now,
Now, clustering, where their fragrant labour glows,
Flew downward to the mighty flower, or rose
From the redundant petals, streaming back
Unto the steadfast dwelling of their joy.
Faces had they of flame, and wings of gold:

[1] The unity of the Godhead—the dot within the circle.
[2] The river is the grace of God, the flowers souls in bliss, and the sparks angels.
[3] Of souls saved by Christ. [4] The angels.

The rest was whiter than the driven snow;
And, as they flitted down into the flower,
From range to range, fanning their plumy loins,
Whispered the peace and ardour, which they won
From that soft winnowing.[1] Shadow none, the vast
Interposition of such a numerous flight
Cast, from above, upon the flower, or view
Obstructed aught, for, through the universe
Wherever merited, celestial light
Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents.[2]

Beatrice left me, and an old man with gentle eyes came nigh me. He was St. Bernard, and he showed me Beatrice raised on high, and I cried to her, saying:

"O Lady, thou in whom my hope is strong,
And who for my salvation didst endure
In Hell to leave the imprint of thy feet,
Of whatsoever things I have beheld,
As coming from thy power and from thy goodness
I recognize the virtue and the grace.
Thou from a slave hast brought me unto freedom,
By all those ways, by all the expedients,
Whereby thou hadst the power of doing it.
Preserve towards me thy magnificence,
So that this soul of mine, which thou hast healed,
Pleasing to thee be loosened from the body."

Beatrice heard me. She so far above smiled and looked at me once again.

Saint Bernard bade me look higher. I looked and beheld above the rose the Blessed Virgin. At her feet sat Eve in great beauty. Beneath Eve in the third line were Rachel and Beatrice, and beneath them were Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and Ruth, and beneath these other saintly Hebrew women. The Hebrew women were between saints arranged in accordance with their particular faith in Christ. On one side were those who believed in Him ere he lived on earth, and on the other those who followed Him after His coming. I saw the seat of John the Baptist who endured the wilderness and martyrdom, and was afterwards in Hell for two years.[3] Nigh to the great

[1] By rising towards God. [2] Cary's translation.
[3] Until Christ died and released him.

John were Francis, Benedict, and Augustine. I saw, too, the faces of infants, and heard their voices, and my guide told me that in the early ages of the world their parents' piety and their own innocence saved them. Afterwards those who were circumcised were saved until, in the time of grace, came the ordinance of Christian baptism. Those innocent children who were not baptized were thereafterwards sent to Inferno.

For me did St. Bernard, my guide, make intercession to the Virgin Mary, saying:

> "In thee compassion is, in thee is pity,
> In thee magnificence; in thee unites
> Whate'er of goodness is in any creature.
> Now doth this man, who from the lowest depth
> Of the universe as far as here has seen
> One after one the spiritual lives,
> Supplicate thee through grace for so much power
> That with his eyes he may uplift himself
> Higher towards the uttermost salvation. . . .
> See Beatrice and all the blessed ones
> My prayers to second clasp their hands to thee."

Her eyes revealed how grateful to her are the prayers of the devout.

Saint Bernard then bade me look up towards the Eternal Light.

> From that time forward what I saw transcends
> My power of speech.

I was like one who had dreamed, and who afterwards retains the feeling it produced, forgetting the rest. What I beheld has almost all vanished from my mind, yet its sweetness lingers in my heart. . . . I know I saw the Divine Essence,[1] because I feel the joy I experienced.

> Within the deep and luminous subsistence
> Of the High Light appeared to me three circles,
> Of threefold colour and of one dimension. . . .
> O Light Eterne, sole in Thyself that dwellest,
> Sole knowest Thyself, and, known unto Thyself
> And knowing, lovest and smilest on Thyself!

I was like a geometrician who endeavours to square the circle

[1] The glory of God.

yet is unable to discover the principle he requires. So felt I in the presence of that vision. I saw an image in human likeness.[1]

I wished to see how the image to the circle
Conformed itself, and how it there finds place;
But my own wings were not enough for this,
Had it not been that then my mind there smote
A flash of lightning, wherein came its wish.
Here vigour failed the lofty fantasy:
But now was turning my desire and will,
Even as a wheel that equally is moved,
The Love which moves the sun and the other stars.[2]

[1] The incarnation of the Word. The circles symbolize the Trinity.

[2] Quotations from Longfellow's translation. It will be noted that "Inferno", "Purgatorio", and "Paradiso" end with the word "stars".

THE MILTONIC EPIC

Introductory

O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England.
Tennyson.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.
Wordsworth.

Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs
And makes the word "Miltonic" mean "*Sublime*".
Byron.

He died
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of Light.
Shelley.

Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appeared,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard:
To carry Nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Cowper.

Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next, in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go,
To make a third, she joined the former two.
Dryden.

Græcia Mæonidam, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem.[1]
Selvaggi: Ad Joannem Miltonum.

Still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
Milton.

I. Milton and his Mission

Coleridge set himself one evening, when in the company of friends, to contrast Shakespeare with Milton. "Shakespeare's poetry," he said, "is characterless; that is, it does not reflect the individual Shakespeare; but John Milton himself is in every line of the *Paradise Lost.*"[2] We know little regarding the man Shakespeare and less about the boy, but Milton is far from being an obscure personality. Very definite and illuminating impressions of him have come down to us, and he has revealed himself not only in his poetry but in his voluminous prose writings. We can even catch glimpses of him in his childhood. His portrait was painted when he was but ten years old, and it shows us that he was a boy of marked intelligence and winsome character. He was painted again in his twenty-first year, and one is not surprised to learn that he was then called "The lady" at Christ College, Cambridge. "Something feminine", Coleridge has said, "—not *effeminate*, mind—is discoverable in the countenance of all men of genius. Look at the face of old Dampier, a rough sailor, but a man of exquisite mind. How soft is the air of his countenance, how delicate the shape of his temples."[3] There is likewise an expression of feminine grace and delicacy in the serene face of young Milton, which is exceedingly comely and yet instinct with strong manliness, intellectual power, and force of character. The poet had a smooth white forehead, broad and high, with rounded temples, dark grey eloquent eyes, a pink-and-white complexion, and light auburn hair. In his first portrait the hair is closely cropped

[1] Greece boasts her Homer, Rome can Virgil claim;
England can either match in Milton's fame.

[2] *Table Talk*, May 12, 1830. [3] *Table Talk*, March 17, 1832.

in Puritan fashion; in the second it falls in generous ringlets. Similarly, in *Paradise Lost*, Adam's

> hyacinthine locks
> Round from his parted forelock manly hung
> Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.

There is no affected self-conscious pose in this portrait at twenty-one of one of the world's greatest poets, no indication that he shrank from contact with the crowd. Here is a scholar-poet who is also a man of the world. One cannot help feeling that he must have been a sociable and pleasant companion. Did he not become soon afterwards the author of bright and spirited *L'Allegro*, as well as of *Il Penseroso* which expresses his love of studious quiet when the Muse called him? A pleasant smile lingers on his lips. Before his life was overshadowed by affliction, Milton displayed a playful humour which is reflected in his sonnet on his book with the ponderous title *Tetrachordon*:

> It walked the town a while,
> Numbering good intellects; now seldom pored on.
> Cries the stall reader, "Bless us! what a word on
> A title-page is this!"

From this glimpse of the renowned poet in his early years we turn to him in his late manhood, when he was numbered among the political offenders considered worthy of imprisonment and worse, and gossips and informers were making themselves offensive to him—when he suffered from ill-health and domestic troubles, and was daily being impelled by his indomitable spirit to proceed with his Herculean task of composing *Paradise Lost*—

> Though fallen on evil days,
> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
> In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
> And solitude.[1]

The "solitude" of a man who was stone blind! He was working, surrounded by enemies, like his own Samson:

> Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves.

[1] *Paradise Lost*, Book VII.

In addition to being blind, he is found to be a victim of hereditary gout which has caused his fingers to be swollen and stiffened; his face is "pale but not cadaverous", and the thin straggling red streaks on his cheeks recall the bloom of fresh youth; his auburn hair, still carefully groomed, is sprinkled with white. Richardson pictures him slowly pacing of an afternoon his little back garden; sometimes, wrapped in his grey overcoat, he sits all alone at the door of his house, "near Bunhill Fields, without Moorgate", enjoying the fresh spring air and sunshine: a pathetic figure! Sometimes one of his few friends comes to offer him an arm, when he is not too much enfeebled by gout, so that he may saunter through the lanes and streets of London. Poorer people know him as "the blind old gentleman in grey". An elderly clergyman who once called on him told Richardson that he found Milton, attired in "black clothes, and neat enough", sitting "in an elbow chair". . . . "Among other discourse, he expressed himself to this purpose: that, was he free from the pain this (gout) gave him, his blindness would be tolerable." From others Richardson gathered that "his deportment was manly and resolute, but with a gentlemanly affability. . . . His voice was musically agreeable", and, according to Aubrey, "he pronounced the letter *r* very hard". This peculiarity Dryden regarded as characteristic of "a satirical wit".

John Milton was born in his father's house in Black Spread Eagle Court, Bread Street, London, at half-past six in the morning of Friday, 9th December, 1608. The famous Mermaid Tavern, in which Shakespeare and other poets were wont to meet, was situated in this street, as can be gathered from Ben Jonson's lines:

> At Bread-street's Mermaid, having dined and merry,
> Proposed to go to Holborn in a wherry.

When he first saw the light, Queen Elizabeth had been dead for five years and Shakespeare was completing his life-work, having written during the early period of James's reign his great tragedies, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*. *Anthony and Cleopatra* was a product of the year of Milton's birth, and

the *Tempest* was written when the future author of *Paradise Lost* was but three years old.

It is possible that Milton's father knew some of the famous dramatists, because he was a scrivener—that is, a professional penman who drew up legal documents and copied literary and other manuscripts. Chaucer employed a scrivener to copy his poems. In the *Taming of the Shrew* one of the characters says:

> We'll pass the business privately and well.
> Send for your daughter by your servant here:
> My boy shall fetch the scrivener presently.

The elder Milton, among his other activities, advanced money on heritable security and bought and sold property for clients. It may be that Shakespeare consulted him in his day. Withal, the poet's father was an enthuiastic amateur musician who had some praiseworthy compositions to his credit. Like his son, he was a good vocalist, and he may have occasionally been in demand at the Mermaid.

The scrivener came from Oxfordshire. He had turned Protestant in his early manhood, and had consequently been disinherited by his father, Richard Milton, a strict Roman Catholic, who resided near Shotover and had been twice fined £60 for refusing to conform and attend the parish church.

Our poet seems to have given early promise of his greatness. At twelve he was already an industrious student. "He sate up very late, commonly till twelve or one o'clock at night," Aubrey tells, "and his father ordered the maid to sit up for him." St. Paul's School was close at hand, and he attended it as a day pupil. His father also employed, as a private tutor for the boy, a Scotsman, Thomas Young, who was a graduate in arts of St. Andrew's University. In *Paradise Regained* Milton makes reference to his early years:

> When I was yet a child, no childish play
> To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
> Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
> What might be public good; myself I thought
> Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
> All righteous things.

In *The Reason of Church Government*[1] he wrote: "I had, from my first years, by the ceaseless diligence and care of my father (whom God recompense!), been exercised to the tongues and some sciences, as my age would suffer, by sundry masters and teachers both at home and at schools". At fifteen he had composed at least two paraphrases of the psalms, the best known being the cxxxvi.

> Let us with a gladsome mind,
> Praise the Lord, for He is kind;
> For His mercies aye endure,
> Ever faithful, ever sure.

He was sent to Christ College, Cambridge, when in his seventeenth year, and four years later wrote his *Hymn on the Nativity*. In 1632 he completed his university studies, having taken the M.A. and B.A. degrees. His father had by this time retired from business in comfortable circumstances and was living at Horton. Thither the poet went to reside. He was already conscious of his high destiny and had lamented in a fine sonnet on his twenty-third birthday,

> My late spring no bud or blossom showeth.

He submitted, however, to "the will of Heaven":

> All is, if I have grace to use it so,
> As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.

During his six years' residence at Horton he produced *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Arcades*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*.

No poet has ever had such a father as had Milton. The retired scrivener believed in his son's greatness and encouraged him to shape his own destiny. A great epic was already in contemplation, although the theme had not been decided upon. "What am I thinking of?" wrote Milton, when twenty-nine years old, to a friend. "Why, with God's help, of immortality! Forgive the word, I only whisper it in your ear! Yes, I am pluming my wings for a flight." He read more deeply than extensively, and pondered over what he read. In *Paradise Regained*[2] he wrote in this connection:

[1] Book II. [2] Book IV, 322.

Who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep-vers'd in books, and shallow in himself.

The obvious comment on this view is that we cannot all regard Shakespeare and Homer as our equals.

Milton also devoted himself to music. *Comus* was a masque which was set to music by Henry Lawes, the most distinguished English composer of this period.

The poet, with the Horton poems to his credit, was already assured of immortality, but, in his own opinion, "the world was all before him". He was yet to rival Homer, Virgil, and Dante, and take his place among the few great epic poets of the world. In 1638, having acquired so thorough a knowledge of Italian that he could compose poetry in that language, he set out on a journey to Italy, his generous father having provided a sum equivalent to about £1000 at present.

Milton met Hugo Grotius at Paris and Galileo at Rome. He had, no doubt, Galileo in his mind when he referred in *Paradise Lost*[1] to the astronomer's "glazed optic tube". The Italian scholars welcomed the author of *Lycidas* and of Latin poems of undoubted merit, and one of the Florentine poets hailed him in an ode as "the swan of Thames. . . . Thames, which, owing to thee, rivals Bœotian Permessus". He returned to his native land when King Charles I was quarrelling with Parliament and asserting the divine right of kings. Settling in a house at Aldersgate Street, London, he supplemented the allowance he received from his father by taking in pupils. He also engaged himself as a pamphleteer, and for years his fame as a controversialist overshadowed his reputation as a poet.

In 1643 he married Mary Powell, the eldest daughter of Richard Powell, a cavalier in Oxfordshire who had borrowed heavily from the retired scrivener. She was but a girl of seventeen, who had been scarcely educated, and he was thirty-five and an austere Puritan of studious habits, with strange notions regarding the inferiority of women, as can be gathered from

[1] Book III, 590. Galileo is referred to also in Book V, 261–3.

Paradise Lost. In her father's house she had been accustomed to meet gay cavaliers, and to make merry in song and dance. On arriving at the dull home of her stern, exacting husband, whom she had known for only a few weeks, she grew home-sick, and in less than a month asked permission to return to her father's home for a time. It was arranged that she would come back at Michaelmas, but she failed to do so. Milton wrote to her again and again, but received no answer. He sent a messenger, who was "dismissed with some sort of contempt". The poet waxed indignant, and wrote his fiery pamphlet on *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, which was followed by *Judgment of Martin Bucer*, *Tetrachordon*, and *Colasterion*. Two years elapsed, and then the royal cause was ruined at the battle of Naseby, in June, 1645. The Powell family, having been rendered bankrupt, fled to London. Mary Powell met Milton at the house of a mutual friend, knelt at his feet and asked for forgiveness, blaming her mother for "promoting her frowardness". The scene is immortalized in *Paradise Lost*,[1] Mary figuring as Eve and poet as Adam:

> Eve . . . with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
> And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
> Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
> His peace. . . .
> Her lowly plight,
> Immovable, till peace obtain'd from fault
> Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
> Commiseration: soon his heart relented
> Tow'rds her, his life so late, and sole delight,
> Now at his feet submissive in distress—
> Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking . . .
> As one disarmed, his anger all he lost.

Milton was residing in a house in Barbican, and thither he took, not only Mary, but the whole Powell family. Before his wife died, in 1652, when only twenty-six, she had given birth to four children, of whom three daughters survived. Two years before her death Milton was appointed Latin Secretary to the Council of State. For ten years he had suffered from failing eyesight, and in the year of his wife's death he had become

[1] Book X, 937.

totally blind. His mother had suffered from defective eyesight, but his father had such splendid vision that he could read without spectacles when he was over eighty years of age.

In 1656 Milton married Katherine Woodcock, who died in childbirth about a year later. It was to her memory that he wrote the sonnet:

> Methought I saw my late espousèd saint
> Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave.

He dreamed that she

> Came vested all in white, pure as her mind. . . .
> But, oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
> I waked; she fled; and day brought back my night.

When at the Restoration Charles II was proclaimed king, Milton, among other Republicans, had to go into hiding. For a time he was in danger of being hanged. Ultimately, however, his name was included in the general amnesty, but before it took effect he was arrested and had to spend a brief spell in prison.

II. History of the Epic

Paradise Lost was planned as a drama in 1642, the year before the poet married Mary Powell. Ere he became blind, he had resolved to write an epic instead, and had composed a portion of it—perhaps the greater part of the first two books, for the third book begins with his invocation of the "holy Light!" in which the poet laments:

> Thus with the year
> Seasons return; but not to me returns
> Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
> Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
> But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
> Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair,
> Presented with a universal blank
> Of nature's works to me expunged and razed,
> And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.

In 1658 Milton set himself to overcome, by regular spells of work, his great masterpiece, and he appears to have finished it in 1663. The task, however, did not occupy him continuously. To his nephew, Edward Phillips, he confessed, in 1662, "that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinoctial to the vernal" (that is, from October until March) "and that whatever he attempted in the other part of the year was never to his satisfaction". This statement has been questioned, but without apparent reason. It is hardly possible to imagine even such a hard worker as Milton standing the strain of continuous composition.

The great blind poet was in the habit of composing ten, twenty, or thirty lines at a time. These he dictated to someone —perhaps one of his daughters, or a relative, or a friend who chanced to be available. Richardson tells that when dictating "he sat leaning backward obliquely in an easy chair, with his leg flung over the elbow of it". Frequently he "composed lying in bed in a morning. When he could not sleep, but lay awake whole nights"—it is not surprising to learn that overstrain brought spells of insomnia—he tried in vain to compose. He enjoyed occasions, however, when his great lines flowed freely and rapidly, and then he would ring for one of the girls to take down what he had composed; he might dictate "forty lines, as it were in a breath, and then reduce them to half the number".

It was a dull time for his daughters. The blind poet was an exacting father as he had been an exacting husband. The girls had to read to him daily in eight languages; he taught them to read only, however, for they did not understand what they read. When the youngest, Deborah, was an old woman she could repeat long passages from Homer, Ovid, and Euripides. On being asked why her father did not teach her and her sisters to understand the languages they read, she said his frequent joke was that "one tongue was enough for a woman".

In time the girls revolted, and he accused them, apparently not without cause, of conspiring with the servant maid to cheat him in his accounts and of selling his books. Dr. Paget, who proved to be a friend in need, found a suitable wife for him.

This was Elizabeth Minshull, a Cheshire woman "of genteel family". In the marriage declaration her age is given as "about twenty-five years" and his as "about fifty years". She proved to be an excellent wife. Having been well educated, she could write for him, if needs be. She could also sing, but Milton was wont to tell her, with a smile and a shake of his head, that although her voice was good her ear was defective. The daughters, the eldest of whom was only seven years younger than the third Mrs. Milton, were sent out at their father's expense to learn embroidery in gold and silver, so that they might be able ultimately to earn a living. Milton's domestic troubles then seem to have come to an end. Evidently Elizabeth Minshull came up to his standard of an ideal wife as set forth in *Paradise Lost* in such passages as:

> Nothing lovelier can be found
> In woman than to study household good.[1]

In 1665 the Great Plague broke out in London, and Milton went to reside in a cottage at Chalfont St. Giles, county Bucks. *Paradise Lost* was then complete and thoroughly revised. In the autumn the poet began to compose *Paradise Regained.* When the plague had abated, he returned to London and resumed residence in his house in Artillery Walk, Bunhill. This was early in 1666. The Great Fire broke out in September and destroyed two-thirds of the city. It came within a quarter of a mile of the poet's house. His native Bread Street was wiped out, and, with the loss of property inherited from his father, his private income, equivalent to about £200, was cut down by a half.

Milton finished *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* without referring either to plague or fire. In April 1667, amidst the ruins of London, he arranged for the publication of *Paradise Lost*, for which he received £5 down, the equivalent of £17, 10*s.* at present. In all, the poem was, according to the publisher's agreement, to bring him the equivalent of £70. He did not, however, write it to make money, and with what he received he was satisfied.

[1] Book IX, 233.

The literary world had by this time all but forgotten the Horton poems, and Milton was not in touch with contemporary authors. Dryden had just proved to his own satisfaction, in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, that blank verse was unsuitable for serious poetry, and even for drama, when *Paradise Lost* was issued from the press. Dryden is said to have exclaimed, after dipping into it: "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too". A second edition was called for in 1674. *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* were published together in 1671, and the early poems were republished in 1673. Milton died, after a brief illness, on the night of Sunday, 8th November, 1674, when within a few weeks of his sixty-sixth birthday. He was buried in the chancel of the church of St. Giles, near Cripplegate.

III. The Art of Milton

Paradise Lost and *Paradise Regained* are the two greatest—the only truly great—epics in the English language. It has been claimed for *Paradise Lost*, indeed, that it is the greatest epic in the world. "The theme it handles", says Professor Raleigh, "is vaster and of more universal interest than any handled by Milton's predecessors. It concerns itself with the fortunes, not of a city or an empire, but of the whole human race, and with that particular event in the history of the race which has moulded all its destinies. . . . The scene of the action is Universal Space. The time represented is Eternity. The characters are God and all His Creatures. . . . And if the plot be vast, the stage is large enough to set it forth. . . ." "The scenical opportunities offered in the *Paradise Lost*", wrote De Quincey, "become in the hands of the mighty artist elements of undying grandeur not matched on earth." Withal, Milton's poetic style is majestic and ornate, sonorous and rich, dignified and beautiful and musical. It partakes of the solemnity of evening:

> Now came still even on, and twilight grey
> Had in her sober livery all things clad. . . .

It rolls like thunder, as when Satan is cast out of heaven:

> Him the Almighty Power
> Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky
> With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire
> Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

It has its "dying falls", like music, as when Adam and Eve leave Eden:

> They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

It flashes a picture suddenly before us in a couplet:

> Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
> Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night.

It is often a jewelled mosaic of beauty, as when we follow the angel in Eden

> Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
> And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm—
> A wilderness of sweets. . . .

It gives eyes to our imagination even in space, voicing the vaguest impressions:

> Who shall tempt with wandering feet
> The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
> And through the palpable obscure find out
> His uncouth way?

Milton's sublimity is emphasized even by those unappreciative critics who have charged him with "vagueness and looseness of imagery". Ruskin, who looked on poetry with the eye of a professional art critic, declares, in *Modern Painters*, that "Milton's vagueness is not a sign of imagination but of its absence". Then he goes on to say: "It does not follow because Milton did not map out his Inferno, as Dante did, that he could not have done so if he had chosen; only it was the easier and less imaginative process to leave it vague than to define it. Imagination is always the seeing and asserting faculty; that which obscures or conceals may be judgment,

or feeling, but not invention. The invention, whether good or bad, is in the accurate engineering, not in the fog of uncertainty." In effect, this is a plea to impose upon poetry the limitations of the painter's art. Dante's hell is like the landscape painting of a mediæval artist, illustrating a manuscript, full of details and lacking in breadth and perspective; his hell's embankments and ditches are carefully surveyed and measured; his Inferno is, indeed, a mosaic of Italian cities and landscapes; while his devils with forked tails and wicked eyes, his three-headed Satan, and his shining angels are conventional artistic figures. When he looks into Infinity he see symbols and is mystical, because he is Dante.

Milton did not visit Hell like a privileged tourist and set himself afterwards to write an account of his travels. He escaped from desk and easel to ascend a mountain and breathe in a larger atmosphere. The prospect unfolded before him was so vast that when we look through his eyes we feel like that stout explorer

> When with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Looked at each other in a wild surmise—
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Irrelevant, indeed, in Milton's descriptions of Hell, would have been such minute details as Tennyson noted on a small English sea beach:

> When to the land
> Bluster the winds and tides the self same way,
> Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand
> Torn from the fringe of spray.

Milton's Hell is not made up of cells and cubicles like an Italian prison. It is the unmeasured, unexplored ocean of "bottomless perdition", overwhelmed

> With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire.

There are great continents of ice, Sahara-like stretches of burning desert, and

> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
> And rest can never dwell.

From Hell's gates Satan looks out on Chaos—

> A dark
> Illimitable ocean, without bound,
> Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height
> And time and place are lost.

Here the painter lays down his brush, but the poet is articulate although sublimely vague; without vagueness there would be no sublimity. More terrible than the painter's is the poet's vision of the figure of Death:

> The other Shape—
> If shape it might be called that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, and limb;
> Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
> For each seemed either—black it stood as Night,
> Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
> And shook a dreadful dart: what seemed his head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
> Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
> The monster moving onward came as fast
> With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.

Milton's Satan is a less grotesque and more imaginative figure than Dante's:

> With head uplift above the wave; his other parts besides
> Prone on the flood, extended, long and large,
> Lay floating many a rood. . . .
>
> On the other side
> Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
> Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
> That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
> In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war.
>
> His form had not yet lost
> All her[1] original brightness, nor appeared
> Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
> Of glory obscured.

Here we have visions grander and more wonderful than the Indian Yama or the Egyptian Osiris of painters and sculptors. Milton's Satan is alive; his history, character, and tempera-

[1] "Its" was just coming into use in Milton's day.

ment are stamped on the imagination, which visualizes him as lightning is visualized, with a sudden sense of terror; his majesty startles and impresses us vividly; whether or not his tail is forked is an irrelevant detail. Sufficient for us is the fact that this is Satan. We feel and know it is, and the poet has therefore accomplished his purpose, and leaves us with his thunder echoing in our ears.

IV. Milton's Cosmology

Ruskin, in urging his plea for a well-engineered and carefully-constructed hell in future epics, overlooked the fact that Milton's cosmological ideas differed from those of Dante. As has been shown, the Italian poet believed that hell was a great spiral funnel, with nine whorls, that penetrated to the centre of the earth, that Purgatory was an island mountain in the southern hemisphere, and that Paradise, which was in the sky, had ten divisions. His cosmological system was the Ptolemaic.[1] The first seven heavenly spheres were controlled by a planet,[2] the first being the sphere of the moon and the seventh that of Saturn. The eighth was the sphere of fixed stars, the ninth the Crystalline sphere, and the tenth the Primum Mobile (First Moved). Dante's tenth heaven is the Empyrean, which surrounded the globe of the mundane universe. The mount of Purgatory is a memory of the Babylonian earth-mountain, while the subterranean hell is reminiscent of the Egyptian Paradise and Hell of Osiris and the Babylonian "House of the Dead". The Egyptian hell had its lakes of fire and its cold regions of outer darkness. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and other early English poets knew of no other cosmological system than the Ptolemaic. To them, as to Dante, the earth was a fixed body round which planets and stars revolved.

The Ptolemaic system was superseded by that of Copernicus,

[1] So called after its expositor, Claudius Ptolemæus, a Greek astronomer of the second century A.D., who resided at Alexandria, in Egypt, and developed ancient Babylonian ideas regarding the universe. [2] Both sun and moon were planets.

the sixteenth-century astronomer, who held that the sun was the centre round which the earth and the other planets revolved. He was the father of modern astronomy.

Copernicus was long regarded as a heretic, and his books were forbidden to Roman Catholics. Milton, who met Galileo when in Italy, understood the Copernican system, but he did not adopt it entirely for *Paradise Lost*. He still clung to the Ptolemaic system, as in his early poem "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity", in which he refers to the music of the spheres:

> Such music (as 't is said)
> Before was never made,
> But when of old the sons of morning sung,
> While the Creator great
> His constellations set,
> And the well-balanced world on hinges hung.

Milton, however, rejected Dante's underground hell and planetary heavens. His "world" was the mundane universe of Ptolemy, but on the point whether the sun, moon, planets, and stars move round the earth, or the earth moves with other planets round the sun, he is not very definite. Adam, with a human desire to have the problem solved, asks the angel Raphael for information, but receives a vague answer.[1] The Puritan in Milton admonishes his ancestor with the orthodox view:

> God, to remove his ways from human sense,
> Placed heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight
> If it presume, might err in things too high,
> And no advantage gain. What if the sun
> Be centre to the world[2]; and other stars
> By his attractive virtue and their own
> Incited, dance about him various rounds?

Or if

> The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
> Insensibly three different motions move?

Or if the moon reflects the light of the sun? These are not matters that should concern Adam—

> Leave them to God above; him serve and fear.

[1] *Paradise Lost*, Book VIII, 50–178. [2] I.e. the mundane universe.

Milton's "world" of sun, stars, and planets was enclosed in an untransparent globular crust and suspended from the foundations of Heaven. If a circle is drawn and divided in the middle by a straight line, the upper part will represent Heaven and the lower Chaos, at the bottom of which is Hell. The "world" dangles in the higher reaches of Chaos, and, compared in size with the great circle, it is like a pea to an orange.

When, in *Paradise Lost*, the rebel angels are hurled out of Heaven, they fall through Chaos,

> With hideous ruin and combustion, down
> To bottomless perdition.

In the Sixth Book it is stated:

> Nine days they fell: confounded Chaos roared,
> And felt tenfold confusion in their fall. . . .

Then

> Hell at last
> Yawning received them whole, and on them closed.

It was after the rebel angels fell through Chaos that God created the "world"—that is, according to Milton, the mundane universe. When Satan left Hell he had to fly, swim, wade, and crawl upwards to reach the world, for Chaos was not empty but a compound mass of water, mud, rocks, and volcanic mountains, while

> A universal hubbub wild
> Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused
> Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
> With loudest vehemence.

At one stage he meets "a vast vacuity", or, as our flying-men might now put it, "an air pocket", and

> Plump down he drops
> Ten thousand fathom deep.

He would have continued falling had not

> The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud
> Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
> As many miles aloft.

When, at length, the opal towers and sapphire battlements of Heaven come in sight, Satan beholds

> Fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
> This pendant World, in bigness as a star
> Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.

That is, the "world" (the whole mundane universe enclosed in a crust) appeared beside Heaven no bigger than a star beside the moon. Addison mistook the sense of this passage. In his *Spectator* essay (No. 314) he wrote: "The glimmering light which shot into the Chaos came from the utmost verge of the Creation, with the distant discovery of the earth hung close by the moon, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical". No light, however, issued from that untransparent globular crust enclosing sun, moon, earth, planets, and stars. The light beheld by Satan darted out from "the walls of Heaven. . . . far into the bosom of dim night".

Reaching the crust of the "world"

> Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
> It seemed, now seems a boundless continent.

Darkness enveloped it

> Save on that side which from the wall of heaven,
> Though distant far, some small reflection gains
> Of glimmering air.

After prowling about like a hungry vulture, Satan reaches the opening on the summit of the globe through which is lowered the stairs (ladder) that Jacob saw in a dream. He looks downwards and surveys the Ptolemaic universe inside the crust, beholding "innumerable stars" and

> Above them all
> The golden sun.

The stars are "turned" by the sun's "magnetic beam". Downwards into the "world" drops Satan on extended wings, and, flying between the stars, makes for the sun, on which he alights. There, pretending to be a minor heavenly spirit, he converses with Uriel, the guardian angel, who points out the

earth to him. Leaving Uriel, Satan descends towards Eden "in many an aery wheel" and reaches the summit of Mount Niphates, which overlooks the walled garden of our first parents.

To appreciate *Paradise Lost* we must forget Dante's little universe and enter Milton's grander and vaster one. Nor need we regard his theology as a stumbling-block. It is undoubtedly narrow, but it is part of our history as a people. We do not read Homer for his mythology but for his poetry, and, when all is said, *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* endure because they are great poems and because Milton "has", as a French critic puts it, "an indefinable serenity and victoriousness, a sustained equality, an indomitable power".

Paradise Lost

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly thou, O spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

I. The Plots of the Rebel Angels

What cause moved our first parents to transgress the will of the Creator and fall? But for one restraint, they were lords of the world. Who first caused them to revolt? It was the infernal Serpent; stirred with envy and desire for revenge, he deceived the Mother of mankind. Because of his pride, he had been cast out of Heaven with all his rebellious followers

who helped him in his plan to be exalted above his peers, so that he might equal the Most High. He

> With ambitious aim
> Against the throne and monarchy of God
> Raised impious war in heaven, and battle proud,
> With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
> Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
> With hideous ruin and combustion, down
> To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire,
> Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

For the space of nine days and nine nights the rebel angels lay confounded in the fiery gulf. Satan's doom, however, was to suffer even greater punishment. He was tormented with the thought of lost happiness and enduring pain. With baleful eyes, flashing pride and hate, he gazed round about him, and beheld a scene of great affliction and dismay; the vast dungeon flamed on all sides like a great furnace, and no light came from the flames, which only made the darkness visible, revealing sights of woe,

> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
> And rest can never dwell: hope never comes
> That comes to all: but torture without end
> Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
> With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed . . .
> Oh, how unlike the place from whence they fell!

Among his companions,

> O'erwhelmed
> With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

he beheld Beelzebub, and, breaking the silence, spoke to him of their fall and ruin. "I do not repent," he declared, "nor have I changed my mind. Although the battle is lost,

> All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate
> And courage never to submit or yield.

Greater than our downfall would be the shame of suing for grace on bended knees. We can wage eternal war, refusing to be reconciled to our great enemy, who now triumphs, rejoicing to reign alone and tyrannize in heaven."

Despairingly Beelzebub made answer, regretting the revolt, the sore defeat they had sustained, and the loss of heaven. "Of what avail is it to us," he said, "if we regain our strength only to suffer eternal punishment?"

"It is miserable to be weak," answered Satan, "whether we are doing or suffering, but be assured of this, it will never be our task to do good; rather it will be our delight to oppose the high will that we now resist. Mayhap we shall yet make Him grieve by interfering with the working of His decrees. Come, let us reassemble our afflicted host and consult how we shall henceforth trouble our enemy. Let us ascertain

> What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
> If not, what resolution from despair".

Satan lifted his head above the fiery waves, his eyes ablaze with hate and arrogance. Then he reared himself in mighty stature, expanded his wings, and flew from the fiery lake to dry land, on which his unblest feet found rest, and Beelzebub followed him.

"Is this the region we must change for heaven?" the fallen archangel exclaimed, as he gazed about him. "Is this mournful gloom to be exchanged for celestial light? So be it, since He whom force has made supreme has willed it.

> Farewell, happy fields
> Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
> Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
> Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
> A mind not to be changed by place or time:
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
> What matter where, if I be still the same,
> And what I should be; all but less than he
> Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
> We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
> Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
> Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice,
> To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
> Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven."

Thereafter Satan called to his fallen followers "rolling in the flood with scattered arms and ensigns" to awake and arise

lest their heavenly enemies should attack them again and transfix them forever to the bottom of the gulf. They heard him, and rose hovering under the cope of hell like to the pitchy cloud of locusts that in Egypt's evil day darkened the realm of the impious Pharaoh. Towards their Emperor they came. Their names had been blotted out of the book of life, and they had not yet received their new names from mankind by whom certain of them were to be worshipped as gods, including Moloch, Baalim, Ashtaroth—

> for spirits when they please
> Can either sex assume, or both—

Astarte, "queen of heaven with crescent horns"; Thammuz (Tammuz), whose love-tale and annual death was to be lamented by Syrian maids; Dagon, half man and half fish, who was to be dreaded round the coast of Palestine; Osiris, Isis, Orus (Horus), and their train, who were, in brutish form, to be gods of fanatical Egypt; he who was to be the golden calf worshipped by Israel; the Ionian gods, Titan, Saturn, Jove—those who were to reign with Jove, first in Crete and Ida and then in Olympus, and those who

> with Saturn old
> Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
> And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.

These and others came flocking to Satan, but with downcast looks. He roused their fainting courage, and bade Azazel set up, to the sound of trumpets and clarions, the imperial ensign, which

> Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
> With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
> Seraphic arms and trophies.

The assembled host then raised a mighty shout that tore through the concave of hell and startled Chaos and Night.

> Ten thousand banners rise into the air
> With orient colours waving; with them rose
> A forest of huge spears; and thronging helms
> Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
> Of depth immeasurable.

The host moved forward, and Satan's heart swelled with pride.

> He, above the rest
> In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
> Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost
> All her original brightness; nor appeared
> Less than an Archangel ruined, and the excess
> Of glory obscured.

The host formed half a square before him, so that he might address them. Thrice he attempted to speak, but thrice, in spite of his scorn, such tears as angels weep burst forth. Then he spoke, hailing his host as powers that were matchless, except against the Almighty. God had long held his throne by repute, consent, or custom, concealing his strength so that they were moved to attempt his overthrow. "Now", Satan said, "we know His might and we know our own. We shall not provoke new war, but work by fraud and guile, so that He who has overcome us by force may find he has overcome only half of our opposition." Having spoken thus, the evil one informed his followers of the rumour in heaven that God intended to create human beings in a new world.

> Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
> Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere;
> For this infernal pit shall never hold
> Celestial spirits in bondage.

"War, open or hidden, must be waged," he declared.

When Satan had addressed his followers in this manner, a million flaming swords were drawn and held on high, and their brightness illumined Hell; the rebel angels smote their shields with their swords in defiance of Heaven.

Thereafter the great host flew towards a mountain, led by Mammon, who first taught men to burrow for gold in the bowels of their mother earth. On the mountain slopes the host tore open the soil and dug out ribs of gold.

> Let none admire
> That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
> Deserve the precious bane.

They then set to work and reared a stately palace. The

architect was known in heaven, where he had raised many a high tower in which exalted angels dwelt like princes, ruling each in his hierarchy.

> Nor was his name unheard or unadored
> In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
> Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
> From heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
> Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
> To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
> A summer's day; and with the setting sun
> Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
> On Lemnos th' Ægean isle.

When the great palace was ready, trumpets were blown to proclaim a solemn council, which was to be held at Pandemonium, Satan's capital. The worthiest were sent thither from every band and regiment, and thousands crowded at the gates. They gathered in clusters like to swarming bees. Then a great wonder was worked. The gigantic beings became smaller than dwarfs

> or faery elves,
> Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
> Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
> Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
> Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
> Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
> Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
> At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.

Thus did the immense shapes assemble in their smallest forms within the hall of the infernal court. Far within, Satan and his lords sat on golden seats, in secret conclave, retaining their own dimensions.

> High on a throne of royal state, which far
> Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
> Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
> To that bad eminence.

He addressed the assembly, declaring that no deep within the gulf could hold back immortal vigour. In Hell there was

no good for which to strive, and consequently no strife from faction could grow up. None would strive for precedence there, none would covet more where the portion of each was pain. They would therefore have more unity than in Heaven, and firm accord in claiming their just inheritance. "Whether", he said, "our claim should be urged by open war or covert guile, those who can advise should now declare."

Moloch, sceptred king, arose to speak. He was the fiercest spirit who had fought in Heaven, and despair had made him fiercer. It was his desire to be equal to the Eternal, and rather than be less he cared not to be at all. "My advice", he said, "is to wage open war. I have no skill in trickery. Let us turn Hell's flames into arms against the torturer and attack the high towers of Heaven. If we fail, we can meet with no greater calamity than is now our lot. What can be worse than to dwell here in utter misery? The worst that can befall us is to perish utterly. Why then should we fear? Better it would be to die than to suffer in Hell for ever. If we cannot die, let us make constant inroads to alarm Him and achieve, if not victory, at least revenge."

Frowning, he sat down, and Belial then spoke. False and hollow was he, although his tongue dropped manna. He was slothful in doing good and industrious in vice. "I should favour war," said he, "if I were not doubtful of its success, especially when I find Moloch, who is peerless in battle, propping his courage on despair and utter death. He seeks revenge, but Heaven's towers are impregnable, and scouts hover in the darkness outside, so that there is no possibility of surprise. We cannot confound God, and if we exasperate Him we shall undoubtedly perish. When we escaped from His wrath this Hell became a refuge for us. What if God were to make Hell more terrible, and if He chained us down here for endless and hopeless ages? That would be worse than our present state. I am therefore against open or hidden war. Who knows what chance may yet bring—perhaps something worth waiting for? Let us not bring greater woe upon ourselves."

So did Belial counsel ignoble ease and slothful peace. Mammon then arose. "There can be no place in Heaven

for us," he said, "if we do not overpower the supreme Lord. Should He relent and readmit us as vassals, it would be wearisome to spend Eternity worshipping the One we hate. Rather let us live our own life and seek our own good, preferring hard liberty to servile pomp and an easy yoke. Let us thrive by overcoming difficulties, let us obtain ease by enduring labour and pain. In this desert soil are gems and gold. Let us raise magnificent structures. What more can Heaven show? In time we may become accustomed even to our sufferings. Here we are safe, and here we may overcome what is hurtful to us. Dismiss from your minds all thought of war."

Applause greeted his words, for all dreaded greater punishment than they endured. Greatly did they fear the thunder of God and the sword of Michael. They preferred to found an empire that would in time rival Heaven.

Beelzebub, who sat next highest to Satan, perceived this and rose majestically. His look compelled attention, and silence fell on the assembly. "Who knows," he said, "while we favour the building of a growing empire here, whether God has decreed that Hell should be our safe retreat or a dungeon? Be assured he will lose no part of his kingdom by our revolt. He will rule here as He rules in Heaven. Terms of peace have not been offered or asked for. What peace will be given to us who are enslaved? What peace can we offer without feelings of hate and desire for revenge? It is useless to attack Heaven; its high walls are safe from sudden attack or siege. We may find another enterprise easier. Another world has been created. It is to be the happy seat of a new race called Man, who, although less powerful than us, will be more greatly favoured. Let us seek out the new world which is to be defended by those who hold it. We may meet with success there. We may either drive out the puny inhabitants or seduce them to become our allies, so that their God may become their enemy, and with a repenting mind abolish his own works.

> This would surpass
> Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
> In our confusion, and our joy upraise
> In his disturbance; when his darling sons,

Hurled headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss—
Faded so soon.

"Say if this is not worth attempting, or if we should sit here in darkness planning vain empires?"

Pleased were they all with this bold design, planned by Satan and advocated by Beelzebub, and they gave full assent to it. "You have decided well," said Beelzebub. "We shall rise now, in spite of fate, nearer to our ancient seat, and escape from the gloom and sufferings of Hell. But who shall we send forth to explore the dark abyss and discover this new world?"

All who heard him pondered in dismay over the perils of such an undertaking. None ventured to accept the commission.

Then, at last, Satan arose and spoke with monarchal pride and said: "The way that leads from Hell up to light is long and difficult. This huge convex of fire encloses us and the gates of adamant are shut. If one should open them he will find that a profound void gapes beyond, and if one should pierce the void, who knows what dangers lie beyond it? It would ill become me, your king, however, if any thought of personal danger should deter me from attempting to overcome difficulty or danger. I shall venture abroad through the wastes of destruction and darkness to find deliverance for all of us. No one shall share the perils with me."

So spoke Satan. He would not permit of any reply. Others might wish to rival him and win cheap renown by offering to do what they feared to do, knowing their request would be refused. All rose to reverence him, and the assembly was dissolved amidst shouts of loud applause.

With minds more at ease, each of the counsellors then went his own way. Some entertained themselves at sports, to while away the irksome time till Satan would return.

Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle.

Others, sitting on a hill apart from the others,

> reasoned high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Others went forth on bold adventure to explore the wide dismal region so as to find if any other clime in Hell would afford easier habitation. They went along the banks of four infernal rivers that pour into the burning lake:

> Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
> Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
> Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
> Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon
> Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
> Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
> Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
> Her wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks
> Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
> Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
> Beyond this flood a frozen continent
> Lies dark and wild.

To this continent the damned are driven by harpy-footed Furies at certain periods:

> From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
> Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
> Immovable, infixed, and frozen round
> Periods of time—thence hurried back to fire.

The adventurous bands of explorers were horrified by what they saw:

> Through many a dark and dreary vale
> They passed, and many a region dolorous,
> O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
> Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death . . .
> Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
> Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
> Abominable, inutterable, and worse
> Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
> Gorgons and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.

II. Satan's Flight to Earth

Meanwhile Satan winged his way towards the threefold gates of Hell. He saw on either side two formidable shapes. One[1] seemed like a woman down to the waist; the lower part of her was like to a serpent "voluminous and vast". Hell hounds barked unceasingly beside her, and, when disturbed, they crept into her womb, which was their kennel.

> The other Shape,[2]
> If shape it might be called that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
> Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
> For each seemed either, black it stood as night.

The Shape challenged Satan and each made ready for combat, but the snaky fiend rushed between them: "O Father," she cried to Satan, "why lift up your hand against your only son?" and to the other, "O son, what fury moves you to aim a mortal dart at your father's head?"

Satan asked the hag who she was that she should call him "Father".

Said she: "Have you forgotten me? When at the assembly in Heaven you conspired against the King and your head threw forth flames, I sprang from it as an armed goddess. The host of Heaven was amazed, and recoiled afraid and called me 'Sin'. I was cast out of Heaven with you and your followers. Pensively I sat here alone. Here I brought forth your only begotten son Death, and, when I beheld him brandishing his fatal dart,

> I fled, and cried out Death!
> Hell trembled at the hideous name and sighed
> From all her caves, and back resounded, Death![3]

[1] Sin. [2] Death.

[3] These lines may have been echoing in Shelley's ears when he wrote in *Prometheus Unbound*, which contains the grandest blank verse since Milton:

> The tongueless caverns of the craggy hills
> Cried, "Misery!" then; the hollow Heaven replied,
> "Misery!"

When Sin had thus revealed herself, Satan made known the object of the journey he desired to take. He promised Sin and Death to find for them a place where they would dwell at ease. On the new earth all things should be their prey. Death grinned a horrible smile, and Sin opened the gates of Hell but was unable to shut them again. Chaos was beyond:

> Before their eyes in sudden view appear
> The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
> Illimitable ocean without bound,
> Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
> And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
> And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
> Eternal anarchy.

Satan spread his wings and flew upward many a league. Then he fell into a vast vacuity until he struck a cloud of fire, which cast him many miles aloft. Onward he floundered, now swimming, now sinking, now wading, now creeping, now flying until he reached a noisome coast nearest to where darkness borders on light. Then he beheld the throne of Chaos and sable-vested Night, his consort. Addressing Chaos, he asked him regarding the new world, and was told it hung suspended by a golden chain on that side of Heaven whence fell the rebel angels. "Go and speed," said Chaos:

> Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain.

Satan flew on until he saw the pendent world fast by Heaven, "once his native seat".

As Satan approached, the Almighty Father, throned in the pure empyrean, with His only Son, the image of His glory, on His right, looked down on His works, and saw our first parents in the happy garden. Then he surveyed Hell and the gulf between, and beheld Satan coasting the wall of Heaven, ready to rest his wearied wings on the bare outside of the world.[1]

God spake to His Son saying: "See you the rage that stirs our adversary. The bars and chains of Hell cannot hold him down,

> So bent he seems
> On desperate revenge, that shall redound
> Upon his own rebellious head.

[1] The crust enclosing stars, planets, sun, moon, and earth.

He hastens towards the newly-created world, and towards man placed there. Man will hearken to his lies, and transgress the one pledge of obedience.

> Whose fault:
> Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
> All he could have; I made him just and right,
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

Man has decreed his own revolt, and although I have foreknowledge, it has no influence on the fault."

Said the Son: "Shall the adversary, if man falls by his own folly, obtain his end, and frustrate your design by drawing the whole race of man after him into Hell?"

The Creator made answer, saying:

> "Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will . . .
> Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
> Elect above the rest; so is my will:
> The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
> Their sinful state. . . .
> They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
> But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more,
> That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
> And none but such from mercy I exclude.

Man must die or else justice must die, unless one is willing to pay death for death."

Then God, addressing the heavenly Powers, asked of them:

> "Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
> Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?
> Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?"

There was silence in Heaven. None answered on man's behalf until the Son of God said: "I offer life for life for man. Let your anger fall upon me. Regard me as man. For his sake will I leave your bosom, and for him die well pleased. Let Death wreck his vengeance on me. I shall not remain for long vanquished by his power. I shall rise victorious and subdue my vanquisher. Then I shall return with the multitude of my redeemed, and there will be no wrath in your presence, but entire bliss."

All Heaven was struck with amaze and admiration at these words. The Almighty granted His son's wish, saying:

"Be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored; without thee, none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons."

Then God foretold that at the last day His Son, sitting on the throne, would judge bad men and angels. Hell would then be filled and shut forever. Meanwhile the world[1] would burn, but a new heaven and earth would spring from its ashes, and in it the just should live.

And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shall lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

The angels shouted sweetly, and their loud hosannas filled the eternal regions, as they knelt down adoring the Son.

Meanwhile Satan walked upon the firm untransparent globe of the round world.[2] Far off it resembled a globe, but it now seemed a boundless continent. Round it swept the storms of chaos, and it was dark except where it caught glimmering light falling from the wall of Heaven. Like a vulture on a mountain from which it looks down to catch sight of lambs or kids:

the fiend
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey.

Long he wandered on, until he saw a gleam of dawning light, towards which he hastened. Rising towards Heaven's gate from the summit of the globe he perceived the stairs whereon Jacob beheld, in his dream, angels ascending and descending, so that, on awaking, he cried: "This is the gate of Heaven".

[1] That is, the universe. [2] The universe enclosed in a crust.

The "ladder" was not always there; sometimes it was drawn up. It was let down when one arrived from earth, sailing over a sea of jasper or liquid pearl, wafted by angel wings, or in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds. Wondering greatly, Satan looked down through the wide opening and beheld the world. Then he descended into the first region, wending his way

> Amongst innumerable stars, that shone[1]
> Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds;
> Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
> Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
> Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
> Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
> He stayed not to enquire.[2]

His eyes were allured by the golden sun, and he flew towards it. This great luminary held itself aloof from the vulgar constellations.

> They, as they move
> Their starry dance in numbers that compute
> Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
> Turn swift their various motions, or are turned
> By his magnetic beam.[3]

Satan landed on the sun, which blazed with radiant light; metal there seemed partly gold and partly silver, and stones seemed ruby or topaz; there, too, was the stone that philosophers on earth have long searched for in vain. The air was pure elixir, and the rivers were molten gold. No shadow was cast by any object.[4] The view was clear and sharp on every side. Gazing about him Satan beheld the archangel Uriel, with flowing curls falling from beneath his coronet, and his many-coloured wings sprinkled with gold. In his right hand was a silver wand. Uriel was one of the seven who are the eyes of god, and bear his errands through the heavens and down to the earth.[5]

The false dissembler, pretending to be a minor angel, addressed Uriel, saying he desired to visit the earth. "In which

[1] Lit up.

[2] Here the poet departs from Ptolemaic ideas about the heavenly bodies and favours the Copernican.

[3] Milton believed that all the stars were controlled by our sun.

[4] A memory of Dante.

[5] The Egyptian Horus and Hathor were "eyes" of the sun god Ra.

of all these shining orbs has man his seat?" he asked. "I long to gaze with admiration at him on whom the Creator has bestowed these worlds, and all the graces, so that I may praise God, who has justly driven his rebel foes to deepest Hell, and created a new happy race to serve him better. Wise are all His ways."

Neither man nor angel can perceive hypocrisy—that evil thing, which walks invisible, is seen by God alone.

> Oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
> At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
> Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
> Where no ill seems.

Uriel, unsuspectingly, made answer. He pointed out the earth to Satan, and also the very spot, named Paradise, in which Adam dwelt.

Satan bowed low, for it is customary in Heaven to bow to superior spirits. No one neglects due reverence and honour there. Then he took leave,

> and towards the coast of earth beneath,
> Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success;
> Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
> Nor staid till on Niphates' top he lights.

III. Adam and Eve in Eden

With the hell within him stirring his troubled thoughts, Satan gazed about him from the summit of Mount Niphates. Sometimes he looked towards pleasant Eden and sometimes towards Heaven, where the sun "sat high in his meridian tower". Sighing, he addressed the sun, saying:

> "To thee I call
> But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
> O sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
> That bring to my remembrance from what state
> I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
> Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
> Warring in heaven against heaven's matchless King.
> Ah, wherefore? he deserved no such return
> From me, whom he created what I was
> In that bright eminence. . . .
> Which way I fly is hell: myself am hell."

He could not repent. There can be no reconcilement where wounds of deadly hate have pierced deeply. God had created mankind and the new world to be a new delight to Him.

> So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
> Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
> Evil, be thou my good: by thee at least
> Divided empire with heaven's king I hold,
> By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
> As man ere long, and this new world shall know.

The first to practise falsehood under saintly guise, Satan disfigured himself on the Assyrian mountain. Uriel, looking down from the sun, watched him, noting his fierce gestures and angry demeanour, and then saw him hastening towards delicious Eden which was surrounded by a high wall and clumps of

stately trees laden with blossoms and fruit of golden hue, intermixed with gay colours. Satan found as he approached this Paradise that the air grew purer.

> Gentle gales,
> Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
> Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
> Those balmy spoils.

Satan crept through the thick undergrowth of shrubs and tangling bushes that surrounded the wall. There was but one gate. It faced the east, and the arch felon disdained to enter by it. He leapt instead over the wall, as a hungry wolf leaps over a fence into a fold of sheep, seeking its prey, or as a thief climbs into the house of a rich burgher. Then he flew towards the tree of life, and perched on it like a cormorant; there he sat,

> Devising death
> To them who lived.

Eden was unfolded before him, stretching its line eastward to the royal towers of great Seleucia.[1] Noble trees grew there, and in the midst of them was the tree of life,

> blooming ambrosial fruit
> Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
> Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
> Knowledge of good, bought dear by knowing ill.

A large river flowed through Eden; it passed underneath a mountain, and divided itself into four main streams that wandered through many a realm and country. In the garden

> the crisped brooks,
> Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
> With mazy error under pendent shades
> Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
> Flowers worthy of Paradise.

Satan surveyed the beauties of that hallowed place.

> Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;
> Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,

[1] The Greek Babylonian capital.

Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only—and of delicious taste.
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringèd bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves.

In Eden Satan saw new and strange living creatures, and among them two erect, tall and godlike,[1]

with native honour clad
In naked majesty. . . .
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he and valour formed;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him;
His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadornèd golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay. . . .
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

They walked hand-in-hand towards a well, and seated themselves

On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers,

[1] Adam and Eve.

to eat savoury fruit and drink water. Round them frisked and played those animals that have since been wild.

> Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
> Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces,[1] pards,
> Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,
> To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
> His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
> Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
> His braided train, and of his fatal guile
> Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
> Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
> Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
> Declined, was hasting now with prone career
> To the ocean isles.

Satan beheld with grief the scene of delight, and vowed that Hell would unfold to entertain this man and woman. He sought league with them. He blamed God for casting him into Hell, and compelling him to seek another refuge. Gazing at Adam and Eve, he spake to himself, saying:

> "And should I at your harmless innocence
> Melt as I do, yet public reason just,
> Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
> By conquering this new world, compels me now
> To do what else, though damned, I should abhor."

He descended from the tree, and assuming the shape of a lion went closer to Adam and Eve, so as to survey them better. Then he became a tiger, and couched to spring on two gentle fawns at play.

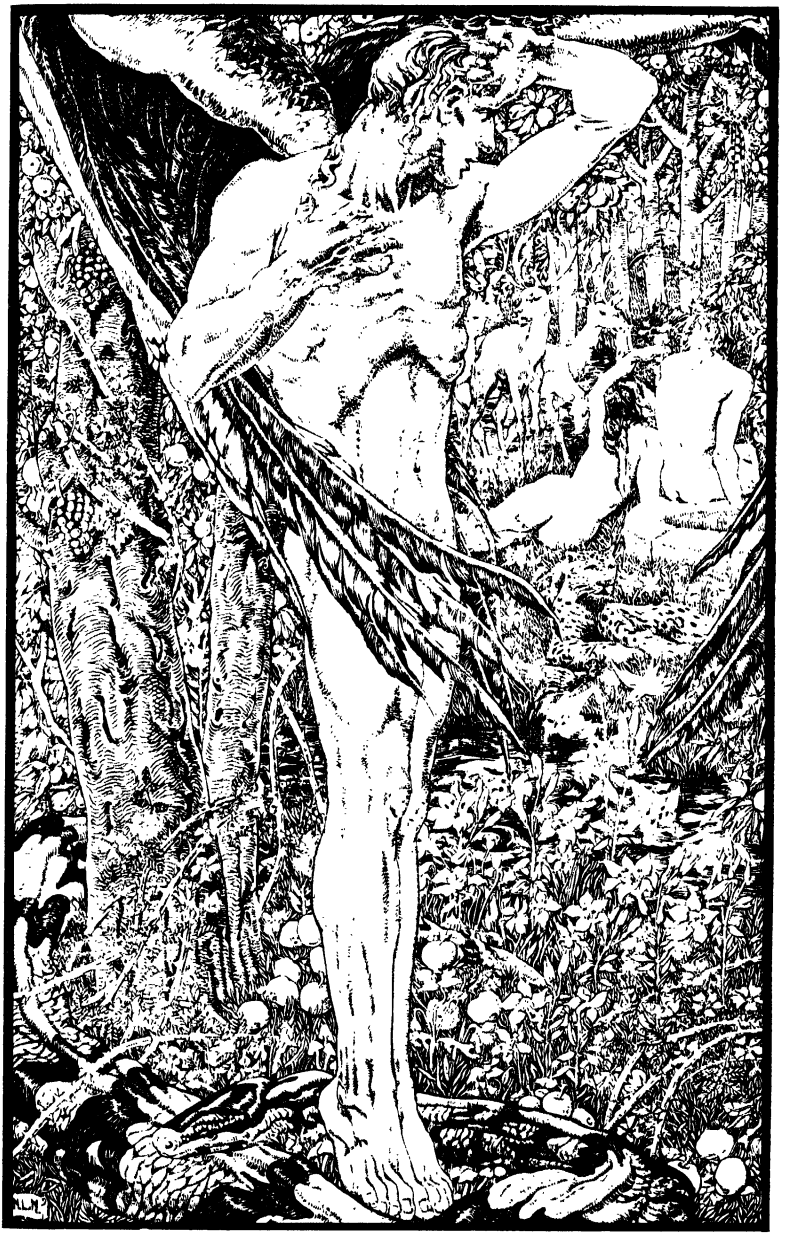
Meanwhile Adam addressed Eve, and spoke of the forbidden tree beside the tree of life, saying:

> "God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,

but do not let us think this one prohibition hard, because we enjoy free leave to take aught else."

Eve made answer, saying: "O thou from whom I was formed, my guide and head, what you have said is just and right." Then she went on to tell how, when she first awoke,

[1] An Asian feline carnivorous animal, allied to the leopard.



"SATAN BEHELD WITH GRIEF THE SCENE OF DELIGHT"

she gazed into a clear pool and saw another woman in it. She shrank back, and the figure shrank also; she went away, and returned, and the figure returned. Then a voice told her that she gazed on her own image, and said: "Follow me." She followed, and beheld Adam, who was less fair, less soft, and less amiably mild than the image in the water. She turned back, but the voice said: "Return, fair Eve. Whom do you flee from?" Eve continued:

> "With that thy gentle hand
> Seized mine; I yielded; and from that time see
> How beauty is excelled by manly grace,
> And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."

So spake our general mother, and

> half-embracing leaned
> On our first father; half her swelling breast
> Naked met his, under the flowing gold
> Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight
> Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
> Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
> On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
> That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip
> With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turned
> For envy.

It was a hateful and tormenting sight to Satan thus to behold the bliss of Eden, for he had been thrust into Hell, where there is neither joy nor love.

Uriel came gliding downward through the evening air on a sunbeam, and told Gabriel, who kept watch over Eden, of the spirit that was visiting the earth. "He is, I fear," said he, "one of the banished crew who has ventured from the deep to create new troubles."

Gabriel, answering, said: "No one had passed through the gate of Eden. If, however, any hostile spirit had overleapt the wall he would be found by dawn."

Uriel returned to the sun, which had fallen beneath the Azores to make swift flight to the east.

> Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
> Had in her sober livery all things clad;

Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale.
She all night long her amorous descant sung:
Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

Adam spake to his fair consort Eve, saying: "All things have retired to rest, and remind us of like repose. God has set labour and rest to man. The timely dew of sleep inclines our falling eyelids to close. Other creatures rove idly all day long.

Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways.

On the morrow at dawn we must resume our pleasant labour in the Garden."

Eve made answer:

"My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey. So God ordains:
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise."

Adam spoke of the angels who kept watch over them:

"How often, from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator!"

So conversing, they passed to their leafy bower:

Each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground.

Lulled by nightingales, Adam and Eve slept within the bower, the flowery roof of which showered roses on their limbs.

Meanwhile Gabriel sent out his guards to search for the hidden spirit who had escaped from Hell, and two of them, named Ithuriel and Zephon, hastened to the bower. There they found Satan,

> Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
> Assaying by his devilish art to reach
> The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
> Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams.

He wished to raise in her heart discontented thoughts, vain hopes and aims, inordinate desires, and pride.

Ithuriel touched the toad with his spear and Satan sprang up, resuming his wonted form. The angels stept backward, amazed to behold the grisly king. Then they asked him which of the rebel spirits he was.

> "Know ye not then," said Satan, filled with scorn,
> "Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
> For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar."

Zephon reproved Satan, and he and Ithuriel went with him as he strode haughtily towards the west. Soon Gabriel beheld the evil one, and reproved him too. Satan defied the angel and prepared for combat, but Gabriel pointed to the celestial sign which showed how useless it was to resist Heaven's command. The fiend looked up and understood. Then he fled

> Murmuring; and with him fled the shades of Night.

When morning came with rosy steps from the east, sprinkling the earth with orient pearl, Adam awoke. He wandered to find that Eve still slumbered,

> With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
> As through unquiet rest.

Touching her softly, Adam whispered:

> "Awake,
> My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
> Heaven's last best gift, my ever-new delight!
> Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field
> Calls us. . . ."

Eve opened her startled eyes and told she had dreamed a dream. She thought Adam called her gently in the night-time, saying:

> "Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
> The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
> To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
> Tunes sweetest his love-laboured song; now reigns
> Full-orbed the moon. . . ."

She dreamed that she rose up but could not see Adam. Searching for him, she came of a sudden to the forbidden tree:

> Fair it seemed,
> Much fairer to my fancy than by day.

As she looked at it an angel appeared:

> And, "O fair plant," said he, "with fruit surcharged,
> Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
> Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despised? . . .
> Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
> Longer thy offered good; why else set here?"

The angel then plucked and tasted the fruit, while Eve was chilled with horror. Overjoyed, he praised the fruit

> As only fit
> For gods, yet able to make gods of men.

"Here, fair angelic Eve," he said, "partake you also of the fruit. Happy as you are, it will make you still happier. Eat and become a goddess among the gods." As he spoke he held the fruit towards Eve; it smelled so sweetly that she could not refrain from tasting it. Then she rose high into the clouds with the angel, who, however, ultimately deserted her. Thereupon she sank down to earth and fell asleep. "Glad am I," she told Adam, "to find this is but a dream."

Adam was troubled, fearing that the dream was "of evil sprung", but whence came the evil he could not tell. He comforted Eve, saying:

> "Be not disheartened, then, nor cloud those looks,
> That wont to be more cheerful and serene,

Than when fair Morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers. . . ."
So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheered,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair. . . .

Adam kissed her ere another tear could fall—"so all was cleared". At the door of their bower they worshipped God together, and prayed.

"Hail, universal Lord! Be bounteous still
To give us only good; and if the night
Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark."

Heaven's King looked down on them with pity, and called Raphael, the sociable angel, to whom he said: "You have heard that Satan has escaped from Hell. He visited Paradise, and disturbed the human pair this night because he designs to ruin them and all mankind. Go to Eden and converse with Adam as friend converses with friend.

Such discourse bring on
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free
Yet mutable: whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, too secure; tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fallen himself from heaven, is plotting now
The fall of others. . . ."

IV. The War in Heaven

Raphael flew swiftly from the Holy Mount and reached the gate of heaven;

> the gate self-opened wide
> On golden hinges.

Downward he winged his way, past shining globes, and saw, in the distance,

> Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned
> Above all hills. As when by night the glass
> Of Galileo, less assured, observes
> Imagined lands and regions in the moon.

He alighted on the eastern cliff of Paradise, and from his six wings fell a heavenly fragrance that filled the air. He passed the glittering tents of angels who kept watch, and entered Eden, walking through a wilderness of beautiful flowers and spicy woods. Adam he found sheltering from the noon-day sun in his cool, shady bower, while Eve gathered fruit. Adam called to Eve, requesting her to offer food to the heavenly visitor. The woman at once heaped fruit of all kinds on the board; she also crushed grapes, and with the juices of these, and of berries and nuts, flavoured dulcet creams. On the ground she strewed petals of roses and of scented shrub flowers.

Adam bowed low and welcomed Raphael, who acknowledged the salutation and greeted Eve with a kiss. The woman seemed lovelier

> Than wood-nymph or the fairest goddess feigned
> Of three that in mount Ida naked strove.

Raphael ate of the fruit "with keen dispatch of real hunger", while Eve filled up the flowing cups. And when they had "sufficed and not burdened nature", Adam and the angel held converse in the bower.

Raphael related to Adam the story of the revolt in heaven, which broke out after Satan had assembled his followers in his royal palace,

> High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
> Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
> From diamond quarries hewn and rocks of gold.

Satan had been stirred to jealous wrath when God decreed in heaven:

> "This day I have begot whom I declare
> My only Son, and on this holy hill
> Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
> At my right hand. Your head I him appoint,
> And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
> All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
> Under his great viceregent reign abide,
> United as one individual soul,
> Forever happy. Him who disobeys,
> Me disobeys, breaks union, and, that day,
> Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
> Into utter darkness, deep ingulfed, his place
> Ordained without redemption, without end."

Satan's opposition to this decree was supported by

> an host
> Innumerable as the stars of night,
> Or stars of morning, dew drops which the sun
> Impearls on every leaf and every flower.

At his palace the apostate addressed these rebel angels, saying:

> "Another now hath to himself engrossed
> All power, and us eclipsed under the name
> Of King anointed."

He asked them to consider how they should have to receive the Son when he came expecting

> "Knee tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!
> Too much to one!"

He contended that all of them should be regarded as equally free.

> "Who can in reason then, or right, assume
> Monarchy over such as live by right
> His equals."

So did Satan hold bold discourse. He was opposed by Abdiel, who spoke forth, saying:

> "O argument blasphèmous, false, and proud—
> Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
> Expected; least of all from thee, ingrate,
> In place thyself so high above thy peers!
> Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
> The just decree of God . . . shalt thou dispute
> With Him the points of liberty, who made
> Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heaven
> Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?"

Satan made haughty answer, and said:

> "Our puissance is our own: our own right hand
> Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
> Who is our equal."

He bade Abdiel carry this message to the anointed King. Thereupon,

> as the sound of waters deep,
> Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
> Through the infinite host.

Abdiel, although surrounded by foes, addressed Satan fearlessly, calling him a "spirit accursed", and warning him of coming punishment. "Expect full soon," he said, "to feel God's thunder on your head." Then he went away and hastened to the mount of God. There he ascertained that the news he brought was already known. Preparations were being made for the coming conflict. He saw

> All the plain
> Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
> Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds.

A voice from a golden cloud addressed him, saying:

> "Servant of God, well done! Well hast thou fought
> The better fight, who single hast maintained
> Against revolted multitudes the cause
> Of truth."

Thereafter, God commanded Michael and Gabriel to lead the

armed saints to battle against the rebellious angels, saying:

> "Them with fire and hostile arms
> Fearless assault; and to the brow of Heaven
> Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
> Into their place of punishment, the gulf
> Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
> His fiery chaos to receive their fall."

The holy mountain was then darkened by clouds and wreaths of dusky smoke, while flames sprang forth—

> the sign
> Of wrath awakened.

Loudly sounded the ethereal trumpet, and the bright legions of God moved on

> to the sound
> Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
> Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds.

Meanwhile Satan's warriors were advancing towards the mount of God, hoping to win it "by fight or by surprise", so that Satan might be placed on the throne.

As soon as the armies met, Abdiel attacked Satan. His sword fell swiftly on the proud crest of the apostate, who recoiled ten paces, and, staggering, fell on bended knees, supporting himself with his spear. The rebels were struck with amazement and rage. Michael bade the archangel trumpet to be sounded, and attacked the rebel host. Then arose the noisy clamour of battle:

> All heaven
> Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
> Had to her centre shook.

The battle was waged over a wide extent of heaven. The angels fought

> sometimes on firm ground
> A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,
> Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
> Conflicting fire.

For a time the issue hung in the balance. Satan had performed prodigious deeds, and, seeing Michael felling squadrons

with his sword, pressed towards him. Their shields blazed like two suns; they rushed against each other like mighty planets;

> but the sword
> Of Michael from the armoury of God
> Was given him tempered so, that neither keen
> Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
> The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
> Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,
> But, with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
> All his right side. Then Satan first knew pain. . . .

Rebel angels ran to give aid to their stricken leader. Some interposed to defend him; others carried him on their shield to his chariot and laid him in it, and there he lay gnashing his teeth in anguish. Ashamed was he and humbled.

Meanwhile Gabriel went against Moloch, and, smiting him fiercely, compelled him to flee bellowing.[1] Uriel and Raphael also won successes against rebel leaders.

> And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,
> With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
> Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
> With shivered armour strown, and on a heap
> Chariot and charioter lay overturned,
> And fiery-foaming steeds. . . .

The Satanic host grew faint-hearted, and fled ignominiously as night came on. Michael and his angels encamped on the battle-field, and

> placed in guard their watches round
> Cherubic waving fires.[2]

Satan held an assembly in the darkness, at which Nisroch spoke forth and said: "We have fought against an enemy with superior arms. Our matchless valour and strength have therefore proved unavailing. He who can invent better weapons for us will earn great praise in helping us to achieve deliverance."

Satan then arose, and said: "Deep underground there are dark and crude materials, and spirituous and fiery spume. Let us shape hollow engines[3] which shall send forth at the touch

[1] Like Mars from the plain of Troy. [2] Another Homeric scene. [3] Cannon.

of fire implements of mischief with thunderous noise that will shatter our foes. Then they will think we have disarmed the Thunderer of his dreaded bolt. These engines we can construct before dawn. Revive your strength, all of you, and abandon fear and dismay!"

Many hands were ready to begin work. They mixed sulphurous and nitrous foam taken from the celestial soil, and converted these into blackest grain.[1] They also dug up hidden veins of mineral and stone

> Whereof to found their engines and their balls
> Of missive ruin.[2]

The rebel angels finished the work in secret, and then set their engines in order.

When morning appeared, the victor-angels rose to arms, and their scouts went out to search for the distant foe. Soon Satan's army was seen advancing firmly. With wonder, Gabriel's scouts beheld the new engines of war, which resembled pillars laid on wheels. Behind each engine stood a seraph with a flame-tipped reed in his hand. Suddenly the reeds were applied to a narrow vent. Flame and smoke appeared, and the deep-throated engines, roaring loudly, disgorged

> Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolt and hail
> Of iron globes.

The faithful angels were overthrown in thousands. Satan stood scoffing, believing that victory was assured. He saw his enemies fleeing towards the hills, but they did not take flight in fear. The angels of God plucked up the hills and flung them against Satan's host, burying the accursed engines. Satan's followers also plucked up hills and cast them against their opponents.

> So hills amid the air encountered hills,
> Hurled to and fro.[3]

All heaven would have gone to ruin had not God intervened. To His Son He spake, saying:

> "Ascend my chariot; guide the rapid wheels
> That shake heaven's basis; bring forth all my war;

[1] Gunpowder. [2] Cannon and cannon-balls.
[3] In British folk-tales mountain giants throw great boulders against one another.

My bow and thunder, my almighty arms,
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these Sons of Darkness, drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds into the utter Deep;
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God, and Messiah, his anointed King."

When the third morning of war was dawning in heaven the chariot of God went rushing forth like a whirlwind; thick flames flashed from the wheels. The Son was on the throne of sapphire inlaid with amber.

At his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored;
And from about him fierce effusion rolled
Of smoke, and bickering flame and sparkles dire.[1]

Ten thousand saints accompanied the Son, who arose, and

on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky.

The Son spoke words of power, and immediately the uprooted hills returned to their places. Satan's host sorrowed, beholding Him, and drew up for final battle on a height. Commanding the good angels' to refrain from warfare, the Son transformed his face into terror. Full of wrath, he gazed at his enemies, and his chariot rolled forward with the sound of torrent floods. Heaven shook as he attacked his foes.

Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infixed
Plagues. They, astonished, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields and helms

the chariot rolled on and o'er mighty foes lying prostrate. The Son's peerless arrows darted amidst the rebels, shooting forth fire that withered all their strength. Yet He did not put forth half his strength. It was not his wish to destroy the rebels, but

[1] This is like an Indian poet's description of Indra or Vishnu going forth against the demons.

to root them out of heaven. The Satanic warriors fled before the Son to the boundaries of heaven, where a spacious gap yawned, disclosing the wastes of chaos.

> The monstrous sight
> Struck them with horror backward; but far worse
> Urged them behind; headlong themselves they threw
> Down from the verge of heaven: eternal wrath
> Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
> Hell heard the insufferable noise; Hell saw
> Heaven ruining from Heaven. . . .

The whole rebel host, driven out of the celestial regions, fell through chaos for the space of nine days.

> Confounded Chaos roared,
> And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
> Through his wild Anarchy, so huge a rout
> Encumbered him with ruin. Hell at last
> Yawning, received them whole, and on them closed—
> Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
> Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.

Having driven out the rebels, the Messiah returned in triumph to mid-heaven, followed by saints who sang songs of victory.

Thus did the angel Raphael unfold to Adam and Eve the history of the war in heaven. Then he warned them that Satan envied their state, and was plotting to seduce them from obedience, so that human beings might share in his punishment and eternal misery;

> "Which would be all his solace and revenge
> As a despite done against the Most High,
> Thee once to gain companion of his woe."

Raphael counselled Adam to beware of Satan, and said:

> "Listen not to his temptations, warn
> The weaker;[1] let it profit thee to have heard,
> By terrible example, the reward
> Of disobedience. Firm they might have stood,
> Yet fell. Remember, and fear to transgress."

[1] Eve.

V. The Angel's Warning

Raphael next informed Adam that after Satan and his followers had been cast out of heaven, God created the world[1] and all living creatures. Adam asked the angel to inform him regarding the movements of celestial bodies, but was told that there were mysteries that did not concern man. Said Raphael:

> "Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid:
> Leave them to God above; him serve and fear . . .
> . . . Heaven is for thee too high
> To know what passes there. Be lowly wise:
> Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
> Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
> Live, in what state, condition, or degree—
> Contented that thus far hath been revealed
> Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven."

Adam's mind was cleared of doubt by what the angel told him. "The mind of man", Adam said, "is apt to roam unchecked until warned, or else taught by experience, that prime wisdom is the knowledge of what lies before us in daily life, and that

> what is more, is fume,
> Or emptiness, or fond impertinence.

Let us, therefore", Adam continued, "descend to a lower flight. Hear my own story related, seeing the day is not yet ended. It is my desire to detain you, because while I sit with you I seem to be in heaven."

"I am listening," Raphael answered. "I am as well pleased with your words as you are with mine."

Adam told the angel how he first became conscious of life. He felt like to one who had awakened from deep slumber. First of all he gazed with wondering eyes on heaven, and then, rising

[1] The mundane universe.

to his feet, looked around him on hills, dales, shady woods and sunny plains, listening to the murmuring streams. Birds were singing, and his heart overflowed with fragrance and joy. Finding he could speak, he addressed the sun and the mountains and valleys and the living creatures, saying:

> "Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here!
> Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
> In goodness and in power pre-eminent.
> Tell me, how I may know him, how adore. . . ."

No voice answered him, and Adam lay down on a green shady bank and fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream he beheld a divine Shape who hailed him, saying: "Adam, first of men innumerable, first father. . . . I shall guide you to the garden of bliss."

He was led by the Shape over fields and waters, gliding as if on air, and to the summit of a mountain. There he looked down on the beautiful garden of Eden. Trees laden with fruit were on the summit, and his appetite was stirred; he wished to pluck and eat. Then Adam awoke to find that his dream was a reality, and that he was in the presence of God. He immediately prostrated himself, and God raised him up, saying: "Whom thou soughtest I am."

God bade him eat of the fruit of every tree except the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil", saying:

> "Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste
> And shun the bitter consequence; for know,
> The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
> Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die."

Thereafter God caused Adam to fall into a deep slumber, and, taking a rib from his left side, formed Eve. Adam beheld her in a dream:

> So lovely fair
> That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now
> Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained
> And in her looks, which from that time infused
> Sweetness into my heart unfelt before,
> And into all things from her air inspired
> The spirit of love and amorous delight.

When Adam awoke from slumber he saw Eve not far distant from him. Invisibly her Creator guided her, and she heard His voice.

Adam called to her, but she retired modestly. He followed her and caught her hand. "To the nuptial bower," Adam said:

"I led her blushing like the Morn: all Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the Earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the Evening-star
On his hill top to light the bridal lamp."

When Adam had spoken thus, he discussed with the angel the mysteries of love and passion. He asked if the heavenly spirits loved one another as he loved Eve, and the angel said: "Let it suffice you to know that we are happy."

Ere Raphael went away, as the evening star began to set,

Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles,

he addressed Adam, saying:

"Be strong, live happy, and love! but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do aught which else free will
Would not admit; thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the Blest. Stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel."

Adam then took leave of the angel. "Be friendly to mankind," he said, "and return often." Raphael then ascended to heaven and Adam went to his bower.

VI. The Fall

Satan had fled from Eden in the darkness of night, and he returned at midnight, knowing well that Uriel, regent of the sun, would behold him if he came in the daytime. For the space of seven successive nights he moved round the earth in search of a hiding-place. Then he contrived to enter an underground cavern into which flows the Tigris at the foot of Paradise. He was bent on man's destruction, and meditated fraud and malice.

Rising from his hiding-place, concealed in a mist, Satan next made search for a living creature which would serve his purpose. He found that the serpent was "the subtlest beast of all the field". Then, like a black mist, he crept through each dark and dry thicket until he came upon a coiled and sleeping snake. He entered at its mouth without disturbing it, and waited the approach of morning.

When the sacred light began to dawn over Eden, and the humid flowers shed their incense on the air, Adam and Eve came forth from their bower. Eve desired to engage herself among the roses that had become intertwined with myrtle, while Adam busied himself arranging the ivy and woodbine round their bower. "When we are together," she said, "we do less work, because we hold converse and exchange many smiles and looks of love."

Adam protested that God did not intend them to spend their days in irksome toil, but to enjoy life. "If, however," he said, "you are satiated with converse, I will yield to your brief absence,

> For solitude sometimes is best society,
> And short retirement urges sweet return."[1]

[1] Evidently a memory of the first Mrs. Milton's departure for home.

Adam then warned Eve to beware of the malicious enemy who was seeking to bring about their downfall. "'Twere better," he said, "if you did not leave me.

> The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
> Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
> Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."

Eve, however, reassured him that her faith and love could never be shaken, and Adam said: "The enemy will hardly dare to tempt us both at once. He shall attack me first. When you are with me, I am wiser, more watchful and stronger. Why should you not, like me, prefer to be put to trial when we are both together?"

Said Eve: "How can we be happy if we are always to fear harm? If our enemy should affront us, he would not dishonour us; he himself would be dishonoured. Faith, love, and virtue are strengthened by trial. Let us not think our happy state will not continue if we are not always together. Eden would not be Eden if we were to be exposed to danger when apart."

Adam answered: "We are guided by reason, and if reason dictates falsely we may swerve, as is possible, from the right path. It is better to avoid temptation than to seek it. If, however, you think that temptation will only strengthen us, go as you desire rather than remain with me against your will.

> Go in thy native innocence, rely
> On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
> For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine."

Said Eve: "I go forewarned and with your permission, and I go all the more willingly, believing that the foe will not attack the weaker first, because his shame would be greater when repulsed by me."

Then Eve withdrew, and like to a light wood-nymph, an Oread or a Dryad, or one of Delia's train, betook her to the groves. More graceful and more beautiful was she than even Delia.

Alas for hapless Eve! From that hour she never found sweet repast or sound repose. The fiend in serpent shape had come

forth to search for the human pair. It was a great joy to him to see Eve all alone.

> Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
> Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
> About her glowed.

Satan, after experiencing hell, admired delicious Eden. He took as much pleasure in it, and at sight of that fair woman,

> As one who long in populous city pent,
> Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
> Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
> Among the pleasant villages and farms
> Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight—
> The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
> Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound—
> If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
> What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more,
> She most, and in her look seems all delight.

The innocence of Eve overawed the malice of Satan; it took the fierceness from his fierce intent, and for a time he

> remained
> Stupidly good; of enmity disarmed,
> Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.

But soon the hot hell within him brought his joy to an end. He remembered his fierce hate and all his thoughts of mischief. To himself he said: "Let not this occasion be lost. The woman is alone. I cannot see her husband, whose higher intellect I wish to shun. Adam is indeed a formidable foe, of heroic build and haughty courage.

> She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods,[1]
> Not terrible, though terror be in love,
> And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
> Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned—
> The way which to her ruin now I tend."

Thus resolving to deceive Eve by flattering her, the fiend went towards the place where she was at work among the roses. At

[1] Tennyson has "A daughter of the gods divinely tall and most divinely fair".

this time the serpent did not crawl "with indented wave, prone on the ground, as since",

> but on his rear
> Circular base of rising folds, towered
> Fold above fold, a surging maze; his head
> Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
> With burnished neck of verdan gold, erect
> Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
> Floated redundant. Pleasing was his shape
> And lovely.

Eve heard the serpent among the rustling leaves and looked up. Satan at once fawned before her and licked the ground on which she trod. Then he spoke, saying: "Do not marvel because I approach you thus. O fairest resemblance of your fair Maker, all living creatures adore your celestial beauty; yet they cannot discern your full loveliness. One man alone realizes how fair you are. You should be a goddess among gods, adored and served by many and not by one only."

Eve was astonished to hear the serpent speak. "How came you to acquire human speech?" she asked.

Satan made answer, saying: "One day I chanced to see a goodly tree laden with fruit of fairest colours. I climbed the mossy trunk and plucked and ate the fragrant apples. Then I found I had acquired new powers and could reason and speak. I pondered over all things fair and good, and discovered that everything beautiful and good was united in you, O fairest one. Therefore I have come to gaze on you and worship you, O sovereign of living beings, O Universal Dame!"

Eve at once asked where this wonderful tree was situated, and the serpent offered to lead her towards it.

"Then lead me," said Eve.

Satan went on in front, his crest brightening with joy. The glistering reptile resembled the delusive light[1] that misleads the night wanderer

> To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
> There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.

[1] Will o' the wisp.

He led Eve to the Forbidden Tree, and when she reached it she said: "We might have spared ourselves the trouble of coming hither. God has commanded that we should not taste nor touch of this tree, lest we die."

Then the serpent praised the wisdom-giving fruit as "the Mother of science" which had enabled him to discern the causes of things. "It gives you life to knowledge," he said. "Look on me, O Eve. I have eaten and still live. Will God be angry for such a petty trespass? Will He not rather praise your dauntless virtue when He finds that you have desired to have knowledge of good and evil? God cannot hurt you and be just. If He is not just, He is not God. Why has the fruit been forbidden to you?

> Why but to keep you low and ignorant,
> His worshippers. . . .

The Almighty knows well that on the day you and your husband eat of this fruit you will both become gods with knowledge of good and evil, just as I, a brute, have become human. The knowledge you acquire by eating cannot hurt God. . . . You have need of this fruit. Therefore taste of it."

Eve was tempted by his words. The fruit seemed savoury. "Because it is forbidden," she said, "it commends itself all the more to me. Why should we be forbidden to be wise? Such a prohibition is not binding, for we have inward freedom. It is doomed that if we eat, we shall die. Yet the serpent has eaten and still lives and has found joy and good. The fruit is, withal, inviting and fair."

So saying, Eve plucked the fruit with rash hand and ate of it. No sooner had she done so than the serpent slunk back to the thicket. "I grow mature in knowledge," Eve said. "If I had not eaten, I should have remained in ignorance." Then she thought of Adam. "If God has seen me," she said, "I shall die, and Adam will be wedded to another Eve. I am resolved that he shall share my fate, whether in joy or in sorrow. So dearly do I love him, that I could endure death with him; without him, I cannot live."

Adam was waiting for Eve beside the bower, and had made

a garland of flowers to adorn her tresses in like manner as reapers are wont to adorn their harvest queen. Although he looked forward with joy to seeing her, yet his heart misgave him, and he went forth to search for her.

When he approached the forbidden tree, he saw Eve coming towards him carrying "a bough of fairest fruit" which diffused an ambrosial smell. She, on catching sight of him, came hastily forward and said: "Have you wondered at my stay, Adam? I have missed you. Oh! I have suffered the agony of love, never felt till now, because I have been absent from your sight. . . . I have something wonderful and strange to tell you. The tree is not, as we have been told, a dangerous one, nor one that brings evil. It makes gods of those who taste the fruit. The serpent has eaten. He has not died, but has acquired the power of human speech. I have eaten, and I feel myself growing up to godhead. For your sake, Adam, I have done this. The bliss I feel would be odious to me if it were not shared by you. Therefore taste of the fruit, so that we may have equal joy and equal love."

Adam was amazed at her confession. A chill horror ran through his veins. The garland dropped from his hands and the rose petals were scattered on the ground.

"O fairest one," he said, "how you are lost! Oh, you are defaced and deflowered, and you shall die! Some cursèd enemy has beguiled you, and involved us both in ruin. I must die with you. How can I live without you? Although God were to create another Eve, I should never forget you, my fair one! Oh, I can never be parted from you! I must share your lot whether in joy or in sorrow."

Then he chided Eve, but said: "I cannot believe that God will destroy us, his prime creatures. . . . We are one. If I were to lose you, it would be as if I had lost myself."

Eve praised Adam for his resolution and said: "O glorious trial of great love, how shall I follow your high example? Let us share one guilt rather than be separated. The fruit, whether good or evil, has proved your love. If I thought that death would follow after I had eaten the fruit, I should rather die alone and deserted than that you should taste of it. But I do

not feel as if I should die. I have found new life, new joy, and new hope. Mine eyes have been opened.

> On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
> And fear of death deliver to the winds."

So saying, Eve embraced her husband and wept for joy. He had been ennobled by love, having chosen to risk divine wrath and death for her sake. Overcome by female charm, he ate freely of the forbidden fruit. As he did so, the earth trembled, the sky darkened, and thunder was heard, while drops of rain fell like tears from heaven.

Said Adam: "Now I perceive, O Eve, that we have missed much pleasure by abstaining from this delicious fruit."

Then they realized that they were naked and clad themselves with garments made of leaves. They feared God and hid themselves in a thicket. Thereafter each blamed the other for parting that morning. "You should have commanded me absolutely not to go," said Eve.

"Alas!" Adam said; "is this how you recompense me, ungrateful Eve? I might have lived in immortal bliss, but I chose to die with you."

> "Thus it shall befall
> Him who, to worth in woman overtrusting,
> Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
> And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
> She first his weak indulgence will accuse."
> Thus they in mutual accusation spent
> The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;
> And of their vain contest appeared no end.

VII. The Loss of Eden

The evil done by Satan in Eden and the sin committed by Adam and Eve were known to all-seeing God. In Heaven He announced the fall to the angels who were assembled around His throne. Then He sent His Son to Eden, having imparted to Him His own attributes, to judge the transgressors. Adam hid himself in the garden, but the Lord called both him and Eve, and they came forth. They confessed their guilt, and then the judgment was pronounced. It was decreed that woman was to suffer as punishment the pains of birth, and submit to her husband's will. Man would find the ground accursed, and endure sorrow and strife; he must earn his bread by labour until he returned to the ground. He was made of dust and must return to dust.

Meanwhile Sin and Death, who had been sitting at the gates of Hell, followed in the steps of Satan. Across chaos they constructed a bridge connecting Hell with the world. Satan was well pleased with the bridge, and spoke to his daughter, Sin, saying: "Now I will descend with ease through darkness and inform my followers regarding our successes, and rejoice with them. Death and you can proceed to earth and exercise dominion chiefly on man."

Sin and Death flew towards the earth, while Satan returned to Hell. The legions were keeping watch at Pandemonium, waiting for him; and when at length they beheld their king, they welcomed him with loud acclaim.

"I have been successful beyond all hope," Satan declared, addressing his assembled followers. "Now I shall lead you out of this infernal pit to a spacious world, little inferior to Heaven, in which you shall rule as lords. Sin and Death have built a bridge across the vast unbounded deep of horrible con-

fusion, and I shall lead you across it to the new world, so that you may enjoy complete bliss and rule over mankind."

He expected that his words would be received with shouts of applause, but instead he heard

> A dismal universal hiss, the sound
> Of public scorn.

He wondered greatly, and, gazing round about him, saw with amaze that all his followers had been transformed into serpents. His own arms clung to his ribs, and he became a monstrous dragon snake.

All the rebel angels suffered in serpent shape from hunger and thirst, and when they saw near them a tree laden with fruit resembling the Forbidden Tree in Paradise, they climbed it and plucked and swallowed the fruit, only to find that they chewed bitter ashes. Thus were they all plagued and wasted with famine until, in time, they were permitted to resume their wonted shapes. It is said that yearly the fallen angels must assume the form of snakes for "certain number of days" to "dash their pride and joy", because of the seduction of mankind.

Meanwhile Sin and Death arrived in Paradise. Said Sin: "What think you now of our Empire?" and Death made answer, saying: "I suffer from eternal famine and hell, Paradise or heaven is alike to me." Said Sin: "Feed first on these herbs and fruits and flowers; then feed on beasts, fish, and fowl. Devour whatever is mowed down by the scythe of Time

> Till I, in Man residing through the race,
> His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
> And season him thy last and sweetest prey."

Sin and Death then followed different ways to pollute and destroy and ripen things for destruction.

The Almighty, looking down from his transcendant seat, beheld the evil pair, and spake to his saints, saying: "See how hastily these dogs of Hell proceed to make havoc and lay waste the world, which I created fair and good, and would have still kept in that state had not these wasteful furies been admitted owing to the folly of man."

Then God foretold that His Son would yet hurl Sin and Death through chaos, and seal them in Hell for ever. When that glad time came Heaven and earth would be renewed, and made pure without stain. The curse pronounced must, however, remain until the Son would stretch forth his victorious arm.

> He ended, and the Heavenly audience loud
> Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of seas,
> Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
> Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
> Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,
> Destined Restorer of Mankind, by whom
> New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,
> Or down from Heaven descend."

God then issued commands to his mighty angels to carry out changes which were required by the new condition of things. The sun was made to move and shine so that the earth might be affected in parts by extreme heat and extreme cold, and so that winter might come from the north and summer from the south. Moon and stars were arranged in new order, the winds had corners set for them; times were fixed for thunder to roll with terror.

> Some say He bid his angels turn askance
> The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
> From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed
> Oblique the centric Globe.

The sun was readjusted so that by swinging amidst the constellations it might bring changes of seasons to each clime;

> else had the spring
> Perpetual smiled on earth with verdant flowers,
> Equal in days and nights.

Discord, daughter of Sin, was introduced by Death into the world. Then beast began to war with beast, fowl with fowl, and fish with fish; leaving herb food, they devoured each other; each fled from man, or glared at him with grim countenance as he went past.

Adam saw these changes taking place, and abandoned himself to sorrow, hiding in a gloomy shade. His mind was

meanwhile tossed in a troubled sea of passion. "O misery of lost happiness!" he exclaimed. "Is this the end of the new glorious world? Is this the end of me, formerly the glory of the glorious world, and now accursed? I have brought evil on myself and on all who shall succeed me through the ages. . . . Gladly would I now meet death and lie down and sleep secure in the lap of my mother earth. . . . One doubt pursues me. Mayhap I cannot die. My body may perish, but not the breath of life, the soul of man, which God inspired. . . .

> Ah, why should all mankind,
> For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned,
> If guiltless? But from me what can proceed
> But all corrupt."

While Adam lamented thus, sad Eve approached him. She spoke soft words to temper his fierce passion, but, frowning, he repelled her, saying:

> "Out of my sight, thou serpent! That name best
> Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
> And hateful: nothing wants, but that thy shape
> Like his, and colour serpentine, may show
> Thy inward fraud.

But for you", Adam continued, "I should have remained happy. You in your pride and wandering vanity rejected my forewarning. You disdained not to be trusted,

> longing to be seen,
> Though by the devil himself; him overweening
> To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
> Fooled and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee. . . .

I thought you were wise, constant, mature, and proof against assault, never imagining all was but a show and not solid virtue —that you were but a rib crooked by nature, inclined to be drawn from me to act a sinister part.

> Oh! why did God,
> Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
> With spirits masculine, create at last
> This novelty on Earth, this fair defect
> Of Nature, and not fill the World at once
> With men, as Angels, without feminine?

If woman had not been created," Adam lamented, "this mischief had not taken place. But more will yet befall;

> innumerable
> Disturbances on earth through female snares
> And strait conjunction with this sex. For either
> He never shall find out fit mate, but such
> As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
> Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
> Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
> By a far worse, or, if she love, withheld
> By parents; or his happiest choice too late
> Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound
> To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
> Which infinite calamity shall cause
> To human life, and household peace confound."

Having spoken thus, Adam turned away from Eve, but she was not repulsed. With tears flowing fast and tresses all disordered, she fell at his feet, and, embracing them, begged his forgiveness. "Adam," she wailed, "do not forsake me! Let heaven witness what sincere love and reverence I bear you in my heart—you whom I have offended and unhappily deceived. Oh! I beg you, clasping your knees, not to bereave me of your gentle looks, and of your help and advice. You are my only strength and stay. If I am left forlorn, where can I go and how can I live? . . . Do not cast on me the hatred of your misery. We have both sinned. You have, however, sinned against God only. I have sinned against God and against you. . . . Oh! I will go to the place of judgment and beseech Heaven

> that all
> The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
> On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;
> Me, me only, just object of His ire!"[1]

Adam's heart was touched by the words of the fair woman who had been his sole delight, and was seeking reconcilement,

[1] This scene has been much criticized, especially by women. Although Adam, however, blames Eve, and is unchivalrous, Milton should not be accused of having a poor opinion of woman. Eve, with all her vanity, is here shown to be capable of supreme heroism. She is willing to die for the sake of the man she loves. She is ready to ask God to let her suffer for Adam's sin as well as her own. The poet's Eve is nobler than his Adam, and she inspires the man to be noble.

kneeling before him, submissive in distress. He ceased to be angry. "As before," he said, "you are unwary and too anxious regarding what is beyond your knowledge. You wish to bring all the punishment on yourself. Alas! bear your own first, for you are unable to sustain God's full wrath. If prayers could alter His decrees, I should hasten with more speed than you to the judgment-seat and be there first, and with voice louder than yours plead that the whole blame should be placed on my head, and that you should be forgiven, because, frailer than me and of infirmer sex, you were committed to my care. But arise; let us contend no longer, nor blame each other. We are blamed enough elsewhere. Let us strive instead in the offices of love, bearing each other's burden and sharing each other's sorrow."

Said Eve: "The sole desire of my heart now is to regain your love. I shall never again hide my thoughts from you."

Then Adam and Eve conversed together regarding their fate, their future, and their unborn children. Adam said they should pray for forgiveness. Together they then prostrated themselves, confessing to God their faults with humility, and begging for His pardon. Their tears watered the ground and their sighs trembled in the air. Contrite were their hearts and sincere was their sorrow.

Their prayers ascended to heaven. The Son bore them to the Father in a golden censer mixed with incense, and the Father accepted them, but he decreed that Adam and Eve must leave the hallowed ground of the earthly Paradise, lest they should partake of the Tree of Life and live for ever.

Then he commanded the angel Michael to make known His will to Adam, and also to reveal to him what should come to pass in future days.

The archangel approached Adam in human shape but attired like a king. He made known God's will, and Eve, who was concealed near at hand, lamented aloud, saying: "Must I leave Paradise—my native soil? How can I part from its flowers that I have trained and watered? How can I wander down into a lower world obscure and wild? How can I breathe air less pure—I who have been accustomed to celestial fruits?"

Said Michael: "Lament not, O Eve. You are not going alone, for your husband will accompany you. It is your duty to follow him. Regard his home as your native soil."

Adam spoke sorrowful words also, lamenting his fate.

Thereafter Michael led Adam to the summit of a mountain, and caused him to behold in a vision all that would take place until the Flood. Then he related what would take place until the coming of Christ, saying:

> "A virgin is his mother, but his sire
> The Power of the Most High. He shall ascend
> The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
> With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens."

Michael thereafter led Adam to the foot of the mountain, where Eve lay sleeping in the bower. She awoke as Adam entered, and said: "God is in sleep. He has given me guidance, and I know now that some good is in store for me. Lead me on. There is no delay in me. To go with you is to be in Paradise; to stay here without you would be like leaving Paradise unwillingly. You are all things to me; you are all places to me. . . . I carry forth a consolation in my heart. Although by me all is lost,

> By me the promised Seed shall all restore."

Adam heard, well pleased, the words uttered by Eve.

Meanwhile the sentinels of God descended, and with them came the sword of God, which blazed fiercely like to a comet. Michael caught the hands of our lingering parents and led them to the eastern gate and down the cliff to the plain. Then he vanished.

Adam and Eve looked back. They saw God's sword, which resembled a flaming brand, set above the eastern gate, where thronged dreadful faces and fiery arms.

> Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;
> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
> They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

लाल बहादुर शास्त्री राष्ट्रीय प्रशासन अकादमी, पुस्तकालय
L.B.S. National Academy of Administration, Library
मसूरी
MUSSOORIE
यह पुस्तक निम्नांकित तारीख तक वापिस करनी है।
This book is to be returned on the date last stamped

दिनांक Date	उधारकर्त्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.	दिनांक Date	उधारकर्त्ता की संख्या Borrower's No.

808.8
Mac
v.1

111793

अवाप्ति सं०
ACC. No. ~~20200~~

वर्ग सं.
Class No.

पुस्तक सं.
Book No.

लेखक
Author..Mackenzie..D..A.

शीर्षक
Title....The world's heritage.

808.8
Mac
V.1

~~20200~~

LIBRARY
LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI
National Academy of Administration
MUSSOORIE

Accession No. 111793

1. Books are issued for 15 days only but may have to be recalled earlier if urgently required.
2. An over-due charge of 25 Paise per day per volume will be charged.
3. Books may be renewed on request, at the discretion of the Librarian.
4. Periodicals, Rare and Reference books may not be issued and may be consulted only in the Library.
5. Books lost, defaced or injured in any way shall have to be replaced or its double price shall be paid by the borrower.