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# OVID



# METAMORPHOSES

**Ovid**

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# INTRODUCTION.

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P. Ovidius Naso—commonly known as Ovid—was born at Sulmo, about, ninety miles from Rome, in the year 43 B.C. His father belonged to an old equestrian family, and at an early age brought his son to Rome, where he was educated under the most distinguished masters. Very little is known of the poet's life, except that which is gathered from his own writings. After finishing his education at home he visited Athens, in company with the poet Macer, for the purpose of completing his studies, and before returning visited the magnificent cities of Asia Minor and spent nearly a year in Sicily.

Although as a young man Ovid showed a natural taste and inclination for poetical composition, he was by no means encouraged to indulge in this pursuit. His father thought that the profession of law was much more apt to lead to distinction and political eminence than the vocation of a poet. He therefore dissuaded his son from writing poetry and urged him to devote himself to the legal profession. Compliance with his father's wishes led him to spend much time in the forum, and for a while poetry was abandoned. Upon attaining his majority, he held several minor offices of state; but neither his health nor his inclinations would permit him to perform the duties of public life. Poetry was his love, and in spite of the strong objections of his father, he resolved to abandon the law courts and devote himself to a more congenial occupation. He sought

the society of the most distinguished poets of the day, and his admiration for them amounted almost to reverence. He numbered among his intimate friends the poets Macer, Propertius, Ponticus and Bassus, while Æmilius Macer, Virgil's contemporary, used to read his compositions to him, and even the fastidious Horace, it is said, occasionally delighted the young man's ear with the charm of his verse.

Ovid was married three times. His first wife he married when little more than a boy, and the union does not seem to have been a happy one, though it was probably due to no fault of the wife. His second wife seems also to have been of blameless character, but his love for her was of short duration. His third wife was a lady of the great Fabian house and a friend of the Empress Livia. She appears to have been a woman in every way worthy of the great and lasting love which the poet lavished upon her to the day of his death.

Up to the age of fifty Ovid had lived a life of prosperity and happiness. Though not a wealthy man, his means were such as to permit him to indulge in the luxuries of refined life, and his attainments as a poet had surrounded him with a circle of most desirable friends and admirers. He had even obtained the favor and patronage of the royal family. About the year 8 A.D. he, however, incurred the great displeasure of Augustus, and was ordered by him to withdraw from Rome and dwell in the colony of Tomi, on the shore of the Euxine sea. Leaving behind him a wife to whom he was devotedly attached he obeyed the edict of his emperor and entered upon an exile from which he was destined never to return. He died in banishment at Tomi in the year 18 A.D.

The exact reason for Ovid's banishment has never been clear, though there have been many conjectures as to the cause. About two years previous to his exile Ovid had published a composition which had greatly displeased Augustus, on account of its immoral tendency. Almost coincident with this publication was the discovery of the scandal relating to Julia, daughter of the emperor. It is probable that the proximity of these two events tended to intensify the imperial displeasure, and when some time later there was made public the intrigue of the emperor's granddaughter, the indignation of Augustus gave itself vent in the banishment of Ovid.

The writings of Ovid consist of the *Amores* in three books; the *Heroic Epistles*, twenty-one in number; the *Ars Amatoria*; the *Remedia Amoris*; the *Metamorphoses*, in fifteen books; the *Fasti*, in six books; the *Tristia*, in five books; the *Epistles*, in four books, and a few minor poems. In the following pages will be found a translation of the *Metamorphoses*.

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

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

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

The Metamorphoses of Ovid have been frequently translated into the English language. On referring to Mr. Bohn's excellent Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Classics and their Translations, we find that the whole of the work has been twice translated into English Prose, while five translations in Verse are there enumerated. A prose version of the Metamorphoses was published by Joseph Davidson, about the middle of the last century, which professes to be "as near the original as the different idioms of the Latin and English will allow;" and to be "printed for the use of schools, as well as of private gentlemen." A few moments' perusal of

this work will satisfy the reader that it has not the slightest pretension to be considered a literal translation, while, by its departure from the strict letter of the author, it has gained nothing in elegance of diction. It is accompanied by “critical, historical, geographical, and classical notes in English, from the best Commentators, both ancient and modern, beside a great number of notes, entirely new;” but notwithstanding this announcement, these annotations will be found to be but few in number, and, with some exceptions in the early part of the volume, to throw very little light on the obscurities of the text. A fifth edition of this translation was published so recently as 1822, but without any improvement, beyond the furbishing up of the old-fashioned language of the original preface. A far more literal translation of the Metamorphoses is that by John Clarke, which was first published about the year 1735, and had attained to a seventh edition in 1779. Although this version may be pronounced very nearly to fulfil the promise set forth in its title page, of being “as literal as possible,” still, from the singular inelegance of its style, and the fact of its being couched in the conversational language of the early part of the last century, and being unaccompanied by any attempt at explanation, it may safely be pronounced to be ill adapted to the requirements of the present age. Indeed, it would not, perhaps, be too much to assert, that, although the translator may, in his own words, “have done an acceptable service to such gentlemen as are desirous of regaining or improving the skill they acquired at school,” he has, in many instances, burlesqued rather than translated his author. Some of the curiosities of his version will be



found set forth in the notes; but, for the purpose of the more readily justifying this assertion, a few of them are adduced: the word "nitidus" is always rendered "neat," whether applied to a fish, a cow, a chariot, a laurel, the steps of a temple, or the art of wrestling. He renders "horridus," "in a rude pickle;" "virgo" is generally translated "the young lady;" "vir" is "a gentleman;" "senex" and "senior" are indifferently "the old blade," "the old fellow," or "the old gentleman;" while "summa arx" is "the very tip-top." "Misera" is "poor soul;" "exsilio" means "to bounce forth;" "pellex" is "a miss;" "lumina" are "the peepers;" "turbatum fugere" is "to scower off in a mighty bustle;" "confundor" is "to be jumbled;" and "squalidus" is "in a sorry pickle." "Importuna" is "a plaguy baggage;" "adulterium" is rendered "her pranks;" "ambages" becomes either "a long rabble of words," "a long-winded detail," or "a tale of a tub;" "miserabile carmen" is "a dismal ditty;" "increpare hos" is "to rattle these blades;" "penetralia" means "the parlour;" while "accingere," more literally than elegantly, is translated "buckle to." "Situs" is "nasty stuff;" "oscula jungere" is "to tip him a kiss;" "pingue ingenium" is a circumlocution for "a blockhead;" "anilia instrumenta" are "his old woman's accoutrements;" and "repetito munere Bacchi" is conveyed to the sense of the reader as, "they return again to their bottle, and take the other glass." These are but a specimen of the blemishes which disfigure the most literal of the English translations of the Metamorphoses.

In the year 1656, a little volume was published, by J[ohn] B[ulloker,] entitled "Ovid's Metamorphosis, translated

grammatically, and, according to the propriety of our English tongue, so far as grammar and the verse will bear, written chiefly for the use of schools, to be used according to the directions in the preface to the painfull schoolmaster, and more fully in the book called, 'Ludus Literarius, or the Grammar school, chap. 8.'" Notwithstanding a title so pretentious, it contains a translation of no more than the first 567 lines of the first Book, executed in a fanciful and pedantic manner; and its rarity is now the only merit of the volume. A literal interlinear translation of the first Book "on the plan recommended by Mr. Locke," was published in 1839, which had been already preceded by "a selection from the Metamorphoses of Ovid, adapted to the Hamiltonian system, by a literal and interlineal translation," published by James Hamilton, the author of the Hamiltonian system. This work contains selections only from the first six books, and consequently embraces but a very small portion of the entire work.

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

considered likely to throw any light upon the Mythology and history of Greece and Rome.

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

## **A SYNOPTICAL VIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL TRANSFORMATIONS MENTIONED IN THE METAMORPHOSES.**

### **BOOK I.**

Chaos is divided by the Deity into four Elements: to these their respective inhabitants are assigned, and man is created from earth and water. The four Ages follow, and in the last of these the Giants aspire to the sovereignty of the heavens; being slain by Jupiter, a new race of men springs up from their blood. These becoming noted for their impiety, Jupiter not only transforms Lycaon into a wolf, but destroys the whole race of men and animals by a Deluge, with the exception of Deucalion and Pyrrha, who, when the waters

have abated, renew the human race, by throwing stones behind them. Other animated beings are produced by heat and moisture: and, among them, the serpent Python. Phœbus slays him, and institutes the Pythian games as a memorial of the event, in which the conquerors are crowned with beech; for as yet the laurel does not exist, into which Daphne is changed soon after, while flying from Phœbus. On this taking place, the other rivers repair to her father Peneus, either to congratulate or to console him; but Inachus is not there, as he is grieving for his daughter Io, whom Jupiter, having first ravished her, has changed into a cow. She is entrusted by Juno to the care of Argus; Mercury having first related to him the transformation of the Nymph Syrinx into reeds, slays him, on which his eyes are placed by Juno in the tail of the peacock. Io, having recovered human shape, becomes the mother of Epaphus.

## **BOOK II.**

Epaphus, having accused Phaëton of falsely asserting that Phœbus is his father, Phaëton requests Phœbus, as a proof of his affection towards his child, to allow him the guidance of the chariot of the Sun for one day. This being granted, the whole earth is set on fire by him, and the Æthiopians are turned black by the heat. Jupiter strikes Phaëton with a thunderbolt, and while his sisters and his kinsman Cyenus are lamenting him, the former are changed into trees, and Cyenus into a swan. On visiting the earth, that he may repair the damage caused by the conflagration, Jupiter sees Calisto, and, assuming the form of Diana, he debauches her. Juno, being enraged, changes Calisto into a bear; and her

own son Arcas being about to pierce her with an arrow, Jupiter places them both among the Constellations. Juno having complained of this to Oceanus, is borne back to the heavens by her peacocks, who have so lately changed their colour; a thing which has also happened to the raven, which has been lately changed from white to black, he having refused to listen to the warnings of the crow (who relates the story of its own transformation, and of that of Nyctimene into an owl), and having persisted in informing Phœbus of the intrigues of Coronis. Her son Æsculapius being cut out of the womb of Coronis and carried to the cave of Chiron the Centaur, Ocyrrhoë, the daughter of Chiron, is changed into a mare, while she is prophesying. Her father in vain invokes the assistance of Apollo, for he, in the guise of a shepherd, is tending his oxen in the country of Elis. He neglecting his herd, Mercury takes the opportunity of stealing it; after which he changes Battus into a touchstone, for betraying him. Flying thence, Mercury beholds Herse, the daughter of Cecrops, and debauches her. Her sister Aglauros, being envious of her, is changed into a rock. Mercury returns to heaven, on which Jupiter orders him to drive the herds of Agenor towards the shore; and then, assuming the form of a bull, he carries Europa over the sea to the isle of Crete.

### **BOOK III.**

Agenor commands his son Cadmus to seek his sister Europa. While he is doing this, he slays a dragon in Bœotia; and having sowed its teeth in the earth, men are produced, with whose assistance he builds the walls of Thebes. His

first cause of grief is the fate of his grandson Actæon, who, being changed into a stag, is torn to pieces by his own hounds. This, however, gives pleasure to Juno, who hates not only Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, and the favourite of Jupiter, but all the house of Agenor as well. Assuming the form of Beroë, she contrives the destruction of Semele by the lightnings of Jupiter; while Bacchus, being saved alive from his mother's womb, is brought up on the earth. Jupiter has a discussion with Juno on the relative pleasures of the sexes, and they agree to refer the question to Tiresias, who has been of both sexes. He gives his decision in favour of Jupiter, on which Juno deprives him of sight; and, by way of recompense, Jupiter bestows on him the gift of prophesy. His first prediction is fulfilled in the case of Narcissus, who, despising the advances of all females (in whose number is Echo, who has been transformed into a sound), at last pines away with love for himself, and is changed into a flower which bears his name. Pentheus, however, derides the prophet; who predicts his fate, and his predictions are soon verified; for, on the celebration of the orgies, Bacchus having assumed a disguise, is brought before him; and having related to Pentheus the story of the transformation of the Etrurian sailors into dolphins, he is thrown into prison. On this, Pentheus is torn in pieces by the Bacchanals, and great respect is afterwards paid to the rites of Bacchus.

#### **BOOK IV.**

Still Alcithoë and her sisters, neglecting the rites, attend to their spinning, during the festivities, and pass the time in telling stories; and, among others, that of Pyramus and

Thisbe, by whose blood the mulberry is turned from white to black, and that of the discovery of the intrigues of Mars and Venus, on the information of the Sun. They also tell how the Sun assumed the form of Eurynome, that he might enjoy her daughter Leucothoë; how Clytie, becoming jealous of her sister, was transformed into a sun-flower; and how Salmacis and Hermaphroditus had become united into one body. After this, through the agency of Bacchus, the sisters are transformed into bats, and their webs are changed into vines. Ino rejoicing at this, Juno, in her hatred and indignation, sends one of the Furies to her, who causes her to be struck with insanity, on which she leaps into the sea, with her son Melicerta in her arms; but by the intercession of Venus, they become sea Deities, and their Sidonian attendants, who are bewailing them as dead, are changed into rocks. Cadmus, afflicted at this fresh calamity, retires from Thebes, and flies to Illyria, together with his wife, where they are both transformed into serpents. Of those who despise Bacchus, Acrisius alone remains, the grandfather of Perseus, who, having cut off the head of the Gorgon Medusa, serpents are produced by her blood. Perseus turns Atlas into a mountain, and having liberated Andromeda, he changes sea-weed into coral, and afterwards marries her.

## **BOOK V.**

A tumult arising during the celebration of the nuptials, Phineus claims Andromeda, who has been betrothed to him; and together with Præetus, he and Polydectes are turned into stone. Pallas, who has aided Perseus, now leaves him, and

goes to Helicon, to see the fountain of Hippocrene. The Muses tell her the story of Pyreneus and the Pierides, who were transformed into magpies after they had repeated various songs on the subjects of the transformation of the Deities into various forms of animals; the rape of Proserpine, the wanderings of Ceres, the change of Cyane into a fountain, of a boy into a lizard, of Ascalaphus into an owl, of the Sirens into birds in part, of Arethusa into a spring, of Lyncus into a lynx, and of the invention of agriculture by Triptolemus.

## **BOOK VI.**

Influenced by the example of the Muses, Pallas determines on the destruction of Arachne. She enters with her into a contest for the superiority in the art of weaving. Each represents various transformations on her web, and then Arachne is changed into a spider. Niobe, however, is not deterred thereby from preferring her own lot to that of Latona; on account of which, all her children are slain by Apollo and Diana, and she is changed into a rock. On learning this, while one person relates the transformation by Latona of the Lycian rustics into frogs, another calls to mind how Marsyas was flayed by Apollo. Niobe is lamented by Pelops, whose shoulder is of ivory. To console the Thebans in their afflictions, ambassadors come from the adjacent cities. The Athenians alone are absent, as they are attacked by hordes of barbarians, who are routed by Tereus, who marries Progne, the daughter of Pandion. Tereus coming a second time to Athens, takes back with him to his kingdom Philomela, his wife's sister; and having committed violence



on her, with other enormities, he is transformed into a hoopoe, while Philomela is changed into a nightingale, and Progne becomes a swallow. Pandion, hearing of these wondrous events dies of grief. Erectheus succeeds him, whose daughter, Orithyia, is ravished by Boreas, and by him is the mother of Calais and Zethes, who are of the number of the Argonauts on the following occasion.

## **BOOK VII.**

Jason, by the aid of Medea, having conquered the bulls that breathe forth flames, having sowed the teeth of a serpent, from which armed men are produced, and having lulled the dragon to sleep, recovers the Golden Fleece. Medea, accompanying Jason to Greece, restores Æson to youth by the aid of drugs; and promising the same to Pelias, having first, as a specimen, changed a ram into a lamb, by stratagem she kills him. Passing through many places made remarkable by various transformations, and having slain her children, she marries Ægeus, when Theseus returns home, and narrowly escapes being poisoned by her magic potions. Minos interrupts the joy of Ægeus on the return of his son, and wages war against him; having collected troops from all parts, even from Paros, where Arne has been changed into a jackdaw. Minos endeavours to gain the alliance of Æacus, who, however, refuses it, and sends the Myrmidons, (who have been changed into ants from men after a severe pestilence), under the command of Cephalus to assist Ægeus. Cephalus relates to Phocus, the son of Æacus, how, being carried off by Aurora and assuming another shape, he had induced his wife Procris to prove faithless; and how he

had received from her a dog and a javelin, the former of which, together with a fox, was changed into stone; while the latter, by inadvertence, caused the death of his wife.

## **BOOK VIII.**

In the mean time Minos besieges Megara. Scylla, becoming enamoured of him, betrays her country, the safety of which depends upon the purple lock of her father Nisu. Being afterwards rejected by Minos, she clings to his ship, and is changed into a bird, while her father becomes a sea eagle. Minos returns to Crete, and having erected the Labyrinth with the assistance of Dædalus, he there encloses the Minotaur, the disgrace of his family, and feeds it with his Athenian captives. Theseus being one of these, slays the monster: and having escaped from the Labyrinth by the aid of Ariadne, he takes her with him, but deserts her in the isle of Dia, where Bacchus meets with her, and places her crown among the Constellations. Dædalus being unable to escape from the island of Crete, invents wings and flies away; while Icarus, accompanying his father, is drowned. The partridge beholds the father celebrating his funeral rites, and testifies his joy: Perdix, or Talus, who had been envied by Minos for his ingenuity, and had been thrown by him from the temple of Minerva, having been transformed into that bird. Theseus, having now become celebrated, is invited to the chase of the Calydonian boar, which Atalanta is the first to wound. Meleager slays the monster; and his death is accelerated by his mother Althæa, who places in the fire the fatal billet. Returning from the expedition, Theseus comes to Acheloüs, and sees the islands called the Echinades, into

which the Naiads have been transformed. Pirithoüs denies the possibility of this; but Lelex quotes, as an example, the case of Baucis and Philemon, who were changed into trees, while their house became a temple, and the neighbouring country a pool of water. Acheloüs then tells the story of the transformations of Proteus and of Metra, xii and how Metra supported her father Erisichthon, while afflicted with violent hunger.

## **BOOK IX.**

Acheloüs then relates his own transformations, when he was contending with Hercules for the hand of Deïanira. Hercules wins her, and Nessus attempts to carry her off: on which Hercules pierces him with one of his arrows that has been dipped in the blood of the Hydra. In revenge, Nessus, as he is dying, gives to Deïanira his garment stained with his blood. She, distrusting her husband's affection, sends him the garment; he puts it on, and his vitals are consumed by the venom. As he is dying, he hurls his attendant Lychas into the sea, where he becomes a rock. Hercules is conveyed to heaven, and is enrolled in the number of the Deities. Alcmena, his mother, goes to her daughter-in-law Iole, and tells her how Galanthis was changed into a weasel; while she, in her turn, tells the story of the transformation of her sister Dryope into the lotus. In the meantime Iolaüs comes, whose youth has been restored by Hebe. Jupiter shows, by the example of his sons Æacus and Minos, that all are not so blessed. Miletus, flying from Minos, arrives in Asia, and becomes the father of Byblis and Caunus. Byblis falls in love with her brother, and is transformed into a

fountain. This would have appeared more surprising to all, if Iphis had not a short time before, on the day of her nuptials, been changed into a man.

## **BOOK X.**

Hymenæus attends these nuptials, and then goes to those of Orpheus; but with a bad omen, as Eurydice dies soon after, and cannot be brought to life. In his sorrow, Orpheus repairs to the solitudes of the mountains, where the trees flock around him at the sound of his lyre; and, among others, the pine, into which Atys has been changed; and the cypress, produced from the transformation of Cyparissus. Orpheus sings of the rape of Ganymede; of the change of Hyacinthus, who was beloved and slain by Apollo, into a flower; of the transformation of the Cerastæ into bulls; of the Propœtides, who were changed into stones; and of the statue of Pygmalion, which was changed into a living woman, who became the mother of Paphos. He then sings, how Myrrha, for her incestuous intercourse with her father, was changed into the myrrh tree; and how Adonis (to whom Venus relates the transformation of Hippomenes and Atalanta into lions) was transformed into an anemone.

## **BOOK XI.**

Orpheus is torn to pieces by the Thracian women; on which, a serpent, which attacks his face, is changed into stone. The xiii women are transformed into trees by Bacchus, who deserts Thrace, and betakes himself to Phrygia; where Midas, for his care of Silenus, receives the power of making gold. He loathes this gift; and bathing in the river Pactolus,

its sands become golden. For his stupidity, his ears are changed by Apollo into those of an ass. After this, that God goes to Troy, and aids Laomedon in building its walls. Hercules rescues his daughter Hesione, when fastened to a rock, and his companion Telamon receives her as his wife; while his brother Peleus marries the sea Goddess, Thetis. Going to visit Ceyx, he learns how Dædalion has been changed into a hawk, and sees a wolf changed into a rock. Ceyx goes to consult the oracle of Claros, and perishes by shipwreck. On this, Morpheus appears to Halcyone, in the form of her husband, and she is changed into a kingfisher; into which bird Ceyx is also transformed. Persons who observe them, as they fly, call to mind how Æsacus, the son of Priam, was changed into a sea bird, called the didapper.

## **BOOK XII.**

Priam performs the obsequies for Æsacus, believing him to be dead. The children of Priam attend, with the exception of Paris, who, having gone to Greece, carries off Helen, the wife of Menelaüs. The Greeks pursue Paris, but are detained at Aulis, where they see a serpent changed into stone, and prepare to sacrifice Iphigenia to Diana; but a hind is substituted for her. The Trojans hearing of the approach of the Greeks, in arms await their arrival. At the first onset, Cygnus, dashed by Achilles against a stone, is changed by Neptune into the swan, a bird of the same name, he having been vulnerable by no weapon. At the banquet of the chiefs, Nestor calls to mind Cæneus, who was also invulnerable; and who having been changed from a woman into a man, on being buried under a heap of trees, was transformed into

a bird. This Cæneus was one of the Lapithæ, at the battle of whom with the Centaurs, Nestor was present. Nestor also tells how his brother, Periclymenus, was changed into an eagle. Meanwhile, Neptune laments the death of Cygnus, and entreats Apollo to direct the arrow of Paris against the heel of Achilles, which is done, and that hero is slain.

### **BOOK XIII.**

Ajax Telamon and Ulysses contend for the arms of Achilles. The former slays himself, on which a hyacinth springs up from his blood. Troy being taken, Hecuba is carried to Thrace, where she tears out the eyes of Polymnestor, and is afterwards changed into a bitch. While the Gods deplore her misfortunes, Aurora is occupied with grief for the death of her xiv son Memnon, from whose ashes the birds called Memnonides arise. Æneas flying from Troy, visits Anius, whose daughters have been changed into doves; and after touching at other places, remarkable for various transformations, he arrives in Sicily, where is the maiden Scylla, to whom Galatea relates how Polyphemus courted her, and how he slew Acis. On this, Glaucus, who has been changed into a sea Deity, makes his appearance.

### **BOOK XIV.**

Circe changes Scylla into a monster. Æneas arrives in Africa, and is entertained by Dido. Passing by the islands called Pitheciusæ, where the Cecropes have been transformed from men into apes, he comes to Italy; and landing near the spot which he calls Caicta, he learns from Macareus many particulars respecting Ulysses and the incantations of Circe,

and how king Picus was changed into a woodpecker. He afterwards wages war with Turnus. Through Venulus, Turnus asks assistance of Diomedes, whose companions have been transformed into birds, and he is refused. Venulus, as he returns, sees the spot where an Apulian shepherd had been changed into an olive tree. The ships of Æneas, when on fire, become sea Nymphs, just as a heron formerly arose from the flames of the city of Ardea. Æneas is now made a Deity. Other kings succeed him, and in the time of Procas Pomona lives. She is beloved by Vertumnus, who first assumes the form of an old woman; and having told the story of Anaxarete, who was changed into a stone for her cruelty, he reassumes the shape of a youth, and prevails upon the Goddess. Cold waters, by the aid of the Naiads become warm. Romulus having succeeded Numitor, he is made a Deity under the name of Quirinus, while his wife Hersilia becomes the Goddess Hora.

## **BOOK XV.**

Numa succeeds; who, on making inquiry respecting the origin of the city of Crotona, learns how black pebbles were changed into white; he also attends the lectures of Pythagoras, on the changes which all matter is eternally undergoing. Egeria laments the death of Numa, and will not listen to the consolations of Hippolytus, who tells her of his own transformation, and she pines away into a fountain. This is not less wonderful, than how Tages sprang from a clod of earth; or how the lance of Romulus became a tree; or how Cippus became decked with horns. The Poet concludes by passing to recent events; and after shewing how

*Æsculapius* was first worshipped by the Romans, in the sacred isle of the Tiber, he relates the Deification of Julius Cæsar and his change into a Star; and foretells imperishable fame for himself.



# BOOK THE FIRST.

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## THE ARGUMENT.

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

## FABLE I.

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

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

because in the same body the cold was striving with the hot, the moist with the dry, the soft with the hard, things having weight with *those* devoid of weight.

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

## **EXPLANATION.**

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

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

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

## **FABLE II.**

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

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

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

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

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

*But* an animated being, more holy than these, more fitted to receive higher faculties, and which could rule over the

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

### **EXPLANATION.**

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

Some writers have labored to prove that this Prometheus, of the heathen Mythology, was a Scriptural character. Bochart believes him to have been the same with Magog, mentioned in the book of Genesis. Prometheus was the son of Iapetus, and Magog was the son of Japhet, who, according to that learned writer, was identical with Iapetus. He says,