

into a spider, and condemned her to weave and spin without ceasing,—a warning to all conceited mortals.

Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, was widely worshiped. Temples and altars without number were dedicated to her service, the most celebrated of all being the Parthenon at Athens. Naught but the ruins of this mighty pile now exist; but they suffice to testify to the beauty of the edifice, which served, in turn, as temple, church, mosque, and finally as powder magazine.

Worship of
Minerva.

“Fair Parthenon! yet still must Fancy weep
For thee, thou work of nobler spirits flown.
Bright, as of old, the sunbeams o'er thee sleep
In all their beauty still—and thine is gone!
Empires have sunk since thou wert first revered,
And varying rites have sanctified thy shrine.
The dust is round thee of the race that rear'd
Thy walls; and thou—their fate must soon be thine!”

HEMANS.

Statues of Minerva—a beautiful, majestic woman, fully clothed and armed—were very numerous. The most celebrated of all, by the renowned Greek sculptor Phidias, measured full forty feet in height. Festivals were celebrated in honor of Minerva wherever her worship was held,—some, the Greek Panathenæa, for instance, only every four years; others, such as the Minervalia and Quinquatria, every year. At these festivals the Palladium, a statue of the goddess, said to have fallen from heaven, was carried in procession through the city, where the people hailed its appearance with joyful cries and songs of praise.

CHAPTER V.

APOLLO.

THE most glorious and beautiful among all the gods was Apollo (Phœbus, Sol, Helios, Cynthius, Pytheus), god of the sun, of medicine, music, poetry, and all fine arts.

“Bright-hair'd Apollo!—thou who ever art
A blessing to the world—whose mighty heart
Forever pours out love, and light, and life;
Thou, at whose glance, all things of earth are rife
With happiness; to whom, in early spring,
Bright flowers raise up their heads, where'er they cling
On the steep mountain side, or in the vale
Are nestled calmly. Thou at whom the pale
And weary earth looks up, when winter flees,
With patient gaze: thou for whom wind-stripped trees
Put on fresh leaves, and drink deep of the light
That glitters in thine eye: thou in whose bright
And hottest rays the eagle fills his eye
With quenchless fire, and far, far up on high
Screams out his joy to thee, by all the names
That thou dost bear—whether thy godhead claims
Phœbus or Sol, or golden-hair'd Apollo,
Cynthian or Pythian, if thou dost follow
The fleeing night, oh, hear
Our hymn to thee, and willingly draw near!”

PIKE.

Apollo was the son of Jupiter and Latona, or Leto, the goddess of dark nights. Juno's jealousy had been aroused by Jupiter's preference for her rival. To avenge herself, she banished

Latona to earth, and declared that if any one, mortal or immortal, showed her any pity or gave her any assistance, he would incur her lasting resentment.

After long, painful wanderings on earth, poor Latona, weary and parched with thirst, drew near a small pool by the wayside to refresh herself; but, urged by Juno, some reapers bade her pass on, and then, seeing she paid no heed to their commands, they sprang into the shallow waters, and stirred up the mud at the bottom until it was quite unpalatable. With tear-dimmed eyes, Latona prayed these cruel men might never leave the spot whereon they now stood; and Jupiter, in answer to her prayer, immediately transformed them into huge green frogs, which creatures have since then showed great preference for muddy pools.

Driven on once more by Juno's unrelenting hatred, Latona finally came to the seashore, where she stretched out imploring hands to Neptune, who sent a dolphin to bear her in safety to the floating island of Delos, raised in her behalf from the depths of the sea. The rocking motion, however, proving disagreeable to the goddess, Neptune chained the island fast in the Ægean Sea; and there in that delightful climate, justly praised by poets, were born to Jupiter and Latona twin children, Apollo and Diana, the divinities of the sun and moon.

Apollo, having attained manhood, could not avoid the usual lot of the gods, as well as of mortal men,—the pangs of love.

Story of
Coronis. They were first inspired by Coronis, a fair maiden,
who kindled within his breast an ardent flame.

The sun god wooed the girl warmly and persistently, and at length had the deep satisfaction of seeing his affections returned. His bliss, however, proved but fleeting; for Coronis, reasoning, that, if one lover were so delightful, two would be doubly so, secretly encouraged another suitor.

“Flirted with another lover
(So at least the story goes)
And was wont to meet him slyly,
Underneath the blushing rose.”

SAXE.

Although so cleverly managed, these trysts could not escape the bright eyes of Apollo's favorite bird, the snowy raven,—for such was his hue in those early times,—so *he* flew off in haste to his master to report the discovery he had made. Desperate with love and jealousy, Apollo did not hesitate, but, seizing his bow and deadly arrows, shot Coronis through the heart.

The deed was no sooner accomplished, than all his love returned with tenfold power; and, hastening to Coronis' side, he vainly tried all his remedies (he was god of medicine) to recall her to life.

“The god of Physic
Had no antidote; alack!
He who took her off so deftly
Couldn't bring the maiden back!”

SAXE.

Bending over the lifeless body of his beloved one, he bewailed his fatal haste, and cursed the bird which had brought him the unwelcome tidings of her faithlessness.

“Then he turned upon the Raven,
‘Wanton babbler! see thy fate!
Messenger of mine no longer,
Go to Hades with thy prate!

“Weary Pluto with thy tattle!
Hither, monster, come not back;
And—to match thy disposition—
Henceforth be thy plumage black!”

SAXE.

The only reminder of this unfortunate episode was a young son of Apollo and Coronis, Æsculapius (Asklepios), who was carefully instructed by Apollo in the healing art. The disciple's talent was so great, that he soon rivaled his master, and even, it is said, recalled the dead to life. Of course, these miracles did not long remain concealed from Jupiter's all-seeing eye; and he, fearing lest the people would

Æsculapius.

forget him and worship their physician, seized one of his thunderbolts, hurled it at the clever youth, and thus brought to an untimely end his brilliant medical career.

“Then Jove, incensed that man should rise
From darkness to the upper skies,
The leech that wrought such healing hurled
With lightning down to Pluto's world.”

VIRGIL (Conington's tr.).

Æsculapius' race was not entirely extinct, however, for he left two sons — Machaon and Podalirius, who inherited his medical skill — and a daughter, Hygeia, who watched over the health of man.

Maddened with grief at the unexpected loss of his son, Apollo would fain have wreaked his vengeance upon the Cyclopes, the authors of the fatal thunderbolt; but ere he could execute his purpose, Jupiter interfered, and, to punish him, banished him to earth, where he entered the service of Admetus, King of Thessaly. One consolation alone now remained to the exiled god, — his music. His dulcet tones soon won the admiration of his companions, and even that of the king, who listened to his songs with pleasure, and to reward him gave him the position of head shepherd.

Admetus and
Alcestis.

“Then King Admetus, one who had
Pure taste by right divine,
Decreed his singing not too bad
To hear between the cups of wine:

“And so, well pleased with being soothed
Into a sweet half sleep
Three times his kingly beard he smoothed
And made him viceroy o'er his sheep.”

LOWELL.

Time passed. Apollo, touched by his master's kindness, wished to bestow some favor in his turn, and asked the gods to grant Admetus eternal life. His request was complied with, but only on

condition, that, when the time came which had previously been appointed for the good king's death, some one should be found willing to die in his stead. This divine decree was reported to Alcestis, Admetus' beautiful young wife, who in a passion of self-sacrifice offered herself as substitute, and cheerfully gave her life for her husband. But immortality was too dearly bought at such a price; and Admetus mourned until Hercules, pitying his grief, descended into Hades, and brought her back from the tomb.

“Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated Corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?”

WORDSWORTH.

Apollo, after endowing Admetus with immortality, left his service, and went to assist Neptune, who had also been banished to earth, to build the walls of Troy. Scorning to perform any menial tasks, the God of Music seated himself near by, and played such inspiring tunes that the stones waltzed into place of their own accord.

The walls of
Troy.

Then, his term of exile being ended, he returned to heaven, and there resumed his wonted duties. From his exalted position he often cast loving glances down upon men, whose life he had shared for a short time, whose every privation he had endured; and, in answer to their prayers, he graciously extended his protection over them, and delivered them from misfortunes too numerous to mention. Among other deeds done for men was the slaying of the monster serpent Python, born from the slime and stagnant waters which remained upon the surface of the earth after the Deluge. None had dared approach the monster; but Apollo fearlessly drew near, and slew him with his golden shafts. The victory over the terrible Python won for Apollo the surname of Pytheus (the Slayer), by which appellation he was frequently invoked.

Apollo slays
Python.

This annihilation of Python is, of course, nothing but an alle-



(66)

APOLLO BELVEDERE.
(Vatican, Rome.)

gory, illustrating the sun's power to dry up marshes and stagnant pools, thus preventing the lurking fiend malaria from making further inroads.

Apollo has always been a favorite subject for painters and sculptors. The most beautiful statue of him is the Apollo Belvedere, which represents him at the moment of his conquest of the Python.

Although successful in war, Apollo was very unfortunate indeed in friendship. One day he came down to earth to enjoy the society of a youth of mortal birth, named Hyacinthus. To pass the time agreeably, the friends Apollo and Hyacinthus. began a game of quoits, but had not played long, before Zephyrus, god of the south wind, passing by, saw them thus occupied. Jealous of Apollo, for he too loved Hyacinthus, Zephyrus blew Apollo's quoit aside so violently that it struck his playmate, and felled him to the ground. Vainly Apollo strove to check the stream of blood which flowed from the ghastly wound. Hyacinthus was already beyond aid, and in a few seconds breathed his last in his friend's arms. To keep some reminder of the departed, Apollo changed the fallen blood drops into clusters of flowers, ever since called, from the youth's name, hyacinths; while Zephyrus, perceiving too late the fatal effect of his jealousy, hovered inconsolable over the sad spot, and tenderly caressed the dainty flowers which had sprung from his friend's lifeblood.

"Zephyr penitent,
Who now, ere Phœbus mounts the firmament,
Fondles the flower."

KEATS.

To divert his mind from the mournful fate of Hyacinthus, Apollo sought the company of Cyparissus, a clever young hunter; but this friendship was also doomed to a sad end, Apollo and Cyparissus. for Cyparissus, having accidentally killed Apollo's pet stag, grieved so sorely over this mischance, that he pined away, and finally died. Apollo then changed his lifeless clay into a

cypress tree, which he declared should henceforth be used to shade the graves of those who had been greatly beloved through life.

Some time after this episode, Apollo encountered in the forest a beautiful nymph by the name of Daphne, the daughter of the river god Peneus. Love at first sight was the immediate consequence on Apollo's part, and he longed to speak to the maid and win her affections. He first tried to approach her gently, so as not to frighten her; but, before he could reach her side, she fled, and he, forgetful of all else, pursued her flying footsteps. As he ran, he called aloud to Daphne, entreating her to pause were it only for a moment, and promising to do her no harm.

Apollo and
Daphne.

"Abate, fair fugitive, abate thy speed,
Dismiss thy fears, and turn thy beauteous head;
With kind regard a panting lover view;
Less swiftly fly, less swiftly I'll pursue:
Pathless, alas! and rugged is the ground,
Some stone may hurt thee, or some thorn may wound.

"You fly, alas! not knowing whom you fly;
No ill-bred swain, nor rustic clown, am I."

PRIOR.

The terrified girl paid no heed to promises or entreaties, but sped on until her strength began to fail, and she perceived, that, notwithstanding her utmost efforts, her pursuer was gaining upon her. Panting and trembling, she swerved aside, and rushed down to the edge of her father's stream, calling out loudly for his protection. No sooner had she reached the water's edge, than her feet seemed rooted to the ground. A rough bark rapidly inclosed her quivering limbs, while her trembling hands were filled with leaves. Her father had granted her prayer by changing her into a laurel tree.

Apollo, coming up just then with outstretched arms, clasped nothing but a rugged tree trunk. At first he could not realize that the fair maiden had vanished from his sight forever; but,



APOLLO AND DAPHNE.—Bemini.
(Villa Borghese, Rome.)

(69)

when the truth dawned upon him, he declared that from henceforth the laurel would be considered his favorite tree, and that prizes awarded to poets, musicians, etc., should consist of a wreath of its glossy foliage.

"I espouse thee for my tree:
Be thou the prize of honor and renown;
The deathless poet, and the poem, crown;
Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
And, after poets, be by victors worn."

OVID (Dryden's tr.).

This story of Apollo and Daphne was an illustration of the effect produced by the sun (Apollo) upon the dew (Daphne). The sun is captivated by its beauty, and longs to view it more closely; the dew, afraid of its ardent lover, flies, and, when its fiery breath touches it, vanishes, leaving nothing but verdure in the selfsame spot where but a moment before it sparkled in all its purity.

The ancients had many analogous stories, allegories of the sun and dew, amongst others the oft-quoted tale of Cephalus and Procris. Cephalus was a hunter, who fell in love with and married one of Diana's nymphs, Procris. She brought him as dowry a hunting dog, Lelaps, and a javelin warranted never to miss its mark. The newly married pair were perfectly happy; but their content was viewed with great displeasure by Eos (Aurora), goddess of dawn, who had previously tried, but without success, to win Cephalus' affections, and who now resolved to put an end to the bliss she envied.

All day long Cephalus hunted in the forest, and, when the evening shadows began to fall, joined his loving wife in their cozy dwelling. Her marriage gifts proved invaluable, as Lelaps was swift of foot, and tireless in the chase. One day, to test his powers, the gods from Olympus watched him course a fox, a special creation of theirs; and so well were both animals matched in speed and endurance, that the chase bade fair to end only with the death of one or both of the participants. The gods, in

their admiration for the fine run, declared the animals deserved to be remembered forever, and changed them into statues, which retained all the spirited action of the living creatures.

In the warm season, when the sun became oppressive, Cephalus was wont to rest during the noon hour in some shady spot, and as he flung himself down upon the short grass he often called for a breeze, bidding it cool his heated brow.

"A hunter once in that grove reclin'd,
To shun the noon's bright eye,
And oft he woo'd the wandering wind,
To cool his brow with its sigh.
While mute lay ev'n the wild bee's hum,
Nor breath could stir the aspen's hair,
His song was still, 'Sweet air, oh come!'
While Echo answer'd, 'Come, sweet air!'"

MOORE.

Eos heard of this habit, and was fully aware that he merely addressed the passing wind; nevertheless she sought Procris, and informed her that her husband was faithless, and paid court to a fair maid, who daily met him at noonday in the forest solitudes. Procris, blinded by sudden jealousy, gave credit to the false story, and immediately resolved to follow her husband.

The morning had well-nigh passed, and the sun was darting its perpendicular rays upon the earth, when Cephalus came to his usual resort, near which Procris was concealed.

"Sweet air, oh come!" the hunter cried; and Procris, cut to the heart by what she considered an infallible proof of his infidelity, sank fainting to the ground. The rustle caused by her swoon attracted Cephalus' attention. Under the mistaken impression that some wild beast was lurking there, ready to pounce upon him, he cast his unerring javelin into the very midst of the thicket, and pierced the faithful bosom of his wife. Her dying moan brought him with one bound to her side; ere she breathed her last, an explanation was given and received; and Procris died with the blissful conviction that her husband had not

deserved her unjust suspicions, and that his heart was all her own.

There are, of course, many other versions of these selfsame myths; but one and all are intended to illustrate the same natural phenomena, and are subject to the same interpretation.

Apollo's principal duty was to drive the sun chariot. Day after day he rode across the azure sky, nor paused on his way till he reached the golden boat awaiting him at the end of his long day's journey, to bear him in safety back to his eastern palace.

"Helios all day long his allotted labor pursues;
No rest to his passionate heart and his panting horses given,
From the moment when roseate-fingered Eos kindles the dews
And spurns the salt sea-floors, ascending silvery the heaven,
Until from the hand of Eos Hesperos, trembling, receives
His fragrant lamp, and faint in the twilight hangs it up."

OWEN MEREDITH.

A fair young maiden, named Clytie, watched Apollo's daily journey with strange persistency; and from the moment when he left his palace in the morning until he came to the far western sea in the evening, she followed his course with loving eyes, thought of the golden-haired god, and longed for his love. But, in spite of all this fervor, she never won favor in Apollo's eyes, and languished until the gods, in pity, changed her into a sunflower.

Even in this altered guise, Clytie could not forget the object of her love; and now, a fit emblem of constancy, she still follows with upturned face the glowing orb in its daily journey across the sky.

"No, the heart that has truly lov'd never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close;
As the sunflower turns on her god when he sets
The same look which she turn'd when he rose."

MOORE.

A young shepherd, lying in the cool grass one summer afternoon, became aware of a distant sound of music, so sweet, so

thrilling, that he fairly held his breath to listen. These weird, delightful tones were produced by Minerva, who, seated by the banks of a small stream, was trying her skill on the flute. As she bent over the limpid waters, she suddenly beheld her puffed cheeks and distorted features, and impetuously threw the instrument into the water, vowing never to touch it again.

Apollo and
Marsyas.

"Hence, ye banes of beauty, hence!
What? shall I my charms disgrace
By making such an odious face?"

MELANIPIDES.

The sudden break in the entrancing music caused the youth, Marsyas, to start from his abstraction and look about him. He then perceived the rejected flute sailing gently down the stream past his feet. To seize the instrument and convey it to his lips was the work of an instant; and no sooner had he breathed into it, than the magic strain was renewed. No recollection of his pastoral duties could avail to tear Marsyas away from his new-found treasure; and so rapidly did his skill increase, that he became insufferably conceited, and boasted he could rival Apollo, whom he actually challenged to a musical contest.

Intending to punish him for his presumption, Apollo accepted the challenge, and selected the nine Muses—patronesses of poetry and music—as umpires. Marsyas was first called upon to exhibit his proficiency, and charmed all by his melodious strains.

"So sweet that alone the south wind knew,
By summer hid in green reeds' jointed cells
To wait imprisoned for the south wind's spells,
From out his reedy flute the player drew,
And as the music clearer, louder grew,
Wild creatures from their winter nooks and dells,
Sweet furry things with eyes like starry wells,
Crept wanderingly out; they thought the south wind blew.

With instant joyous trust, they flocked around
His feet who such a sudden summer made,
His eyes, more kind than men's, enthralled and bound
Them there."

H. H.

The Muses bestowed much deserved praise, and then bade Apollo surpass his rival if he could. No second command was necessary. The god seized his golden lyre, and poured forth impassioned strains. Before pronouncing their decision, the Muses resolved to give both musicians a second hearing, and again both strove; but on this occasion Apollo joined the harmonious accents of his godlike voice to the tones of his instrument, causing all present, and the very Muses too, to hail him as conqueror.

"And, when now the westering sun
Touch'd the hills, the strife was done,
And the attentive Muses said:
'Marsyas, thou art vanquished!'"

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

According to a previous arrangement,—that the victor should have the privilege of flaying his opponent alive,—Apollo bound Marsyas to a tree, and slew him cruelly. As soon as the mountain nymphs heard of their favorite's sad death, they began to weep, and shed such torrents of tears, that they formed a new river, called Marsyas, in memory of the sweet musician.

The mournful termination of this affair should have served as a warning to all rash mortals. Such was not the case, however;

Apollo
and Pan.

and shortly after, Apollo found himself engaged in another musical contest with Pan, King Midas' favorite flute player. Upon this occasion Midas himself retained the privilege of awarding the prize, and, blinded by partiality, gave it to Pan, in spite of the marked inferiority of his playing. Apollo was so incensed by this injustice, that he determined to show his opinion of the dishonest judge by causing generous-sized ass's ears to grow on either side of his head.

"The god of wit, to show his grudge,
Clapt asses' ears upon the judge;
A goodly pair, erect and wide,
Which he could neither gild nor hide."

SWIFT.

Greatly dismayed by these new ornaments, Midas retreated into the privacy of his own apartment, and sent in hot haste for a barber, who, after having been sworn to secrecy, was admitted, and bidden to fashion a huge wig, which would hide the deformity from the eyes of the king's subjects. The barber acquitted himself deftly, and, before he was allowed to leave the palace, was again charged not to reveal the secret, under penalty of immediate death.

But a secret is difficult to keep; and this one, of the king's long ears, preyed upon the poor barber's spirits, so that, incapable of enduring silence longer, he sallied out into a field, dug a deep hole, and shouted down into the bosom of the earth,—

"'King Midas wears
(These eyes beheld them, these) such ass's ears!'"

HORACE.

Unspeakably relieved by this performance, the barber returned home. Time passed. Reeds grew over the hole, and, as they bent before the wind which rustled through their leaves, they were heard to murmur, "Midas, King Midas, has ass's ears!" and all who passed by caught the whisper, and noised it abroad, so that the secret became the general topic of all conversations.

As Apollo had frequent opportunities of meeting the Muses, it is not to be wondered at that he fell a victim to the charms of the fair Calliope, who, in her turn, loved him passionately, and even wrote verses in his honor. This being the state of her feelings, she readily consented to their union, and became the proud mother of Orpheus, who inherited his parents' musical and poetical gifts.

Orpheus and
Eurydice.