

Their names were Hades, or Pluto, and Poseidon. These three brothers rebelled against their father Cronos, and conquered him, and then divided his kingdom among themselves,—Zeus taking Olympus; Poseidon choosing to be ruler of the sea; and Pluto having to take as his share all that was left, those regions underneath the earth which were called the lower world.

If you remember, the Greeks thought that the world was flat like a plate, so that under it there would be quite as much room as above it; and here all those who died—that is, all those who ceased to live above the earth—went, and over them Pluto, or Hades, reigned. So his was a great kingdom,—perhaps larger than that of either of his brothers, but dark and gloomy.

These three brothers also had a sister, Demeter by name, and they assigned to her to rule over the fruitful earth. She was the goddess especially dear to the farmers, for she made their fields fertile, and the crops to grow by which they lived.

Besides these great gods there were lesser ones, who were supposed to live in trees and fountains, and were known as nymphs and satyrs. The satyrs were very amusing. They had heads like men, with long pointed ears, and legs and tails like goats, and used to play very many pranks to amuse gods and men.

There were still other gods. Often a great hero

who had done some brave deed in war, or had rendered some great service to man, was made a god and worshiped when he died. Such a one was Hercules, who was the strongest of men, and who performed wonderful feats.

A Greek child could not so much as play at a game, could not cut a whip, or bathe in a stream, without feeling that he was in the presence of some god who might be very angry with him if he did the slightest wrong.

XL. PHAËTHON.

PHŒBUS, the sun god, had a son named Phaëthon. Now Phaëthon had grown up to be quite a large boy, but still did not know his father, because Phœbus was away all day driving the sun chariot through the heavens. He never missed a day; for if he had, all the earth would have been in darkness, and everybody would have said, “Where is the sun?”

Awful things might have happened. Phœbus knew this, and was very careful. So the light of the sun god’s chariot always shone on the earth all day long, except once in a while when his sister Artemis drove the moon chariot across his path, between him and the earth. This men called an eclipse, but it never lasted long.

Thus Phœbus was kept busy all day, and could never see his children. He could not take them riding with him in his chariot, for that would have been dangerous; and at night he had to go to Olympus to dine with the gods, and consult with them afterward. So the little boy Phaëthon had never seen his father.

One day Phaëthon's schoolmates were boasting about their fathers and the wonderful things they could do. Phaëthon at first said nothing, and one of the boys turned to him and said, "You have no father."

"I have indeed," said Phaëthon; "my father is Phœbus, the great sun god. That is he driving his chariot through the heavens now," and he pointed up to the sun.

The boys all laughed at this, and did not believe it. "If he is your father," said they, "why do you not take a ride with him?"

At this Phaëthon was very angry, and ran home in great distress to his mother, and said, "Mother, is not Phœbus, the sun god, my father? The boys say he is not."

"Surely he is," said the mother, "and it is time that you saw him; so I will send you on a journey to him, for the sun rises in the eastern land just next to ours."

At this Phaëthon was delighted, and told the boys, "I am going to visit my father in the land where the



ARTEMIS.

JEAN ANTOINE HOUDON.

"Artemis was the goddess of hunting and of the moon." (Page 262).

sun rises ;" but they laughed at him. "Wait until you see me driving the chariot of the sun myself, then you will believe me." So off he set upon his journey, full of eager hope, and anxious to see his father.

The palace of the sun was the most beautiful ever built. It was made by Hephæstus, the architect among the gods. It was built on tall columns covered with gold and jewels. The ceilings were made of ivory, and the doors of silver. The most beautiful scenes were painted and carved on the ceilings and walls; there was a golden sea, with beautiful fishes, and with sea nymphs floating on the waves and riding on the backs of dolphins; there were pictures of the earth, with forests and towns, flowers and fields; and there was carved a picture of the heavens, filled with glittering stars.

How do you suppose Phaëthon felt as for the first time he beheld this beautiful palace, and knew that it was his father's?

But he went boldly in, and kept on his way until he came to where Phœbus was sitting on the sun throne, with Day and Month and Year and the Hours, Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, waiting around him. Phœbus smiled kindly at the boy, and said, "What brings you here, my son?"

"O Phœbus, my father, Light of the world!" said Phaëthon, "give me some proof that you are my

father, I pray, that I may convince the boys who laughed at me!"

"Indeed I will," said Phœbus. "Ask what you want, and I will do it for you."

At this promise, Phaëthon was delighted, and a bold thought entered his mind. "Let me, then," he said, "drive your chariot for one day!"

His father, though his countenance was as bright as the sun, almost grew pale at this request; it was more than he had expected his son to ask.

"O my boy!" he said, "I beg you not to urge this; you do not know what you ask. Not even the gods can drive my chariot. Zeus himself, though with his right hand he can hurl the thunderbolts, could not drive my steeds.

"The road is high and steep, and runs among terrible monsters,—the bull and the archer, the lion and the scorpion, and the great crab. Besides, the circle of the heavens turns under it, which makes it hard to sit in the seat; then the horses are so fiery that they breathe fire through their nostrils. I am afraid you will imperil earth and heaven, and lose your own life; for I have promised, and must do it if you insist. Ask anything else you will, and I will do it."

But Phaëthon, like many another boy, said: "Oh, I can drive the horses, and you have promised; do not fret for me. You have forgotten what a boy can

do." So Phoebus was obliged sadly to consent, and told the Hours to harness the horses and get the chariot ready.

The chariot was the most wonderful one ever made; even Hephæstus, who built it, never made anything more beautiful. It was all of gold and silver, with diamonds and other precious stones set about it. Never were such horses! They sped away faster than the wind, and they breathed fire as they went.

But the time had come. The stars were slowly led away by the day star; Eos, the rosy-fingered goddess of the morning, rolled away the crimson clouds which are the doors of the east, and everything was ready for the coming of the sun. Phoebus put the rays on the head of the boy, and told him how to drive: "Hold on tight," he said, "and do not use the whip, lest the horses run away. Be careful that you do not drive too high, for you might scorch the heavens, the dwellings of the gods; nor too low, for you might burn up the earth. The middle course is the safest and best."

Phaëthon smiled at this advice of his father. "Oh, I know how to drive," he said, and sprang into the chariot, took the reins, and called out to the eager horses. They rushed forth, and soon left the eastern clouds behind them. They noticed that the chariot seemed light, and the hand that held the reins

"Eos, the rosy-fingered goddess of the morning, rolled away the crimson clouds which are the doors of the east, and everything was ready for the coming of the sun." (Page 272.)

AURORA.



G. D. H. LANT.

unsteady; and away they sped, paying no attention to the feeble pulls of Phaëthon upon the reins.

Up and down, high in the heavens and close to the earth they ran. The great and little bears were so scorched that they thought their end had come. The scorpion, frightened and angered, stretched his two great claws towards him. Phaëthon lost control completely, and dropped the reins over the golden dash-board, and the horses plunged on. So near did they come to the earth that great cities and forests were burned, and mountains — even Olympus, the dwelling-place of the gods — were scorched.

The world was on fire, rivers were dried up; then the people of Ethiopia became black, and have been so ever since. The plains in Central Africa became so dry that they never produced vegetation afterwards, and the Great Desert of Sahara still remains a proof of Phaëthon's folly.

Then the Earth cried out to Zeus: "O ruler of the gods! why do you allow us to perish? What have I and my children done to deserve this punishment, this great heat? What has your brother who rules in the ocean done that he should be deserted? Even Atlas, who holds up the heavens, is ready to faint. Unless you save us, all this earth will be chaos again."

Then Zeus, seeing that he must quickly act or the earth would be destroyed, stood upon the tower from

which he sends out the clouds and hurls the thunderbolts, and drove a shaft of lightning straight at the unhappy Phaëthon, who, helpless and half dead with fright, was clinging to the chariot, himself all scorched by the intense heat he had caused. He fell into the River Po, where the nymphs cooled his burning frame, and the horses, overcome by the lightning, stopped for a moment until Phœbus reached them and resumed the reins.

XLI. PERSEPHONE.¹

YOU remember that Pluto, brother of Zeus, was god of the lower world, the kingdom of darkness known as Hades and Tartarus.

Demeter, the goddess of the fruitful fields, had a beautiful daughter named Persephone. She was still but a child, a lovely young girl, who used to play in the fields, her mother's realm, gathering lilies and violets and scattering them about her.

Now, Aphrodite was very proud of the fact that she and her son Eros ruled almost all of the universe, that very few of gods or men escaped their control, and she did not like it that Persephone, though still young, had never loved any one or been loved by any one except her mother.

One day she saw Pluto, the god of Tartarus,

¹ Per-seph'o-ne (Per-sef'o-ne).

riding in his chariot, drawn by black horses, and she said to her son Eros: "Persephone despises our power; let us make her the victim of this black monarch. We will make him fall in love with her, seize her, and carry her off to Tartarus, and there marry her and make her his queen. Do you only do your part, and we shall rule below the world as well as above it."

So Eros laid an arrow on his bow, and as the black monarch came riding by, shot it straight at his heart. When one's heart was pierced by Eros's arrow he did not die, but merely fell in love with the first object he saw, which in this case was the beautiful young Persephone, who was in the field near by gathering flowers.

Pluto immediately loved her violently. He stopped his horses in the meadow, rushed from his chariot, and seized the frightened girl in his arms. She was almost overcome with fear, and struggled and cried out for her mother, Demeter; but Demeter was far away, and did not hear her daughter cry, nor know that she was helpless in the hands of the powerful god; so he carried her to his chariot, while her flowers fell out upon the ground by the way.

The goddess of the River Cyane, who loved and pitied the poor girl, tried to stop his passage; but he struck the bank with his scepter, and the earth opened and let him through it down to Tartarus.

There he married the beautiful Persephone, and made her queen of all his gloomy realm.

When Demeter came back and missed her daughter, she was wild with grief, and searched for her all the world over. Eos, when she came to let in the morning, found her searching; and Hesperus, when he shut out the sun and led in the stars for the evening, never failed to see and pity this sad, bereaved mother. But it was all in vain. The daughter could not be found.

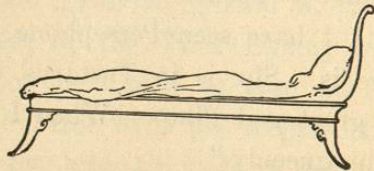
One day during her travels she came to the River Cyane. The river goddess who had opposed the passage of Pluto wished to tell Demeter where Persephone had gone, but was afraid of Pluto's anger if she did so. So she took up the girdle of Persephone, which the poor girl had dropped in her flight, and threw it at the feet of the mother. Demeter, seeing this, knew that she must have gone under the earth, and began to blame the land.

"No more," said she, "shall you enjoy my favors." So the seed failed to sprout, the cattle perished, people starved. Then Arethusa, the nymph of a fountain on that land, said to Demeter: "Goddess, do not blame the land; it is true your daughter passed through it, but it opened only at the will of a powerful god. I have seen Persephone, and can tell you where she is. She is in Tartarus, where she is queen of the great god Pluto. When I saw her, she looked sad but queenly."

When Demeter heard this she was overcome with grief, and hurried up to heaven to tell her brother, King Zeus, of her troubles, and to ask his aid in regaining her daughter. He promised to help her, and told Hermes to go down and see if Pluto would release his bride, that she might go to dwell with her mother.

Hermes put on his cap and winged sandals, and quicker than a flash was at the gates of Tartarus. Then, although the keeper tried to prevent him, he rushed through and hastened to the palace of Pluto and into the presence of the great god, where he announced that he was come from Zeus to ask the release of Persephone.

Pluto said that he would let her go if she had eaten nothing since she came to his realm. Poor Persephone! She had eaten some seeds from a pomegranate that Pluto had given her. This was enough; she could not go. But Pluto was not altogether heartless, though his kingdom was dark and gloomy; and he finally agreed that she should spend two thirds of the time on earth with her mother, and the remainder of the year in Tartarus with him.



XLII. THE BEGINNINGS OF THINGS.

THE Greeks used to wonder, as many people have wondered since, how everything began, — how the gods themselves began, who were the first men and how they came, and what there was before the world was made. And they had stories to explain it all.

They said that in the beginning there was nothing solid, nothing had any shape. All space was filled with small particles, like mist or dust floating about, and all was dark. This was called chaos.

Then some god separated the flying particles of mist into parts, made them solid, and so arranged them that the world appeared. He hollowed out the ocean bed and filled it with water, built up the mountains of rocks, dug channels for the rivers and set the water flowing, laid out the sandy deserts, covered the plains with rich earth and started the flowers and the grass and the woods growing. Then he put fish into the water, and birds and beasts on the land; but still there was no one to control them.

Now, Prometheus¹ was one of the old race of Titans, the same race to which Cronos, the father of Zeus and of all the gods, belonged. He and his brother Epimetheus² were greatly interested in this

¹ Pro-me'-theus (Pro-me'thuse).

² Ep-i-me'-theus (Ep-i-me'thuse).

new earth, and saw that it needed a ruler. So Prometheus took some earth, kneaded it in some water, molded it into the shape of one of the gods, as you mold objects from clay in your school, stood it upright, gave it life, and called it man.

But, though man was more beautiful to look upon than any of the other beings on the earth, and was wiser, he was very much weaker than many of the animals, and Prometheus saw that since his new man was to live with these great beasts, he must have some gift greater than any which they had,— something which he could use in many ways.

So Prometheus went up to heaven and asked Athené, who was the wise goddess, to help him with her advice. She told him to take a hollow reed and go quietly up to the fiery chariot of Phoebus, the sun god, and to steal some fire in his reed. This he did, and took the fire down to earth and gave it to man. Then man was able to care for himself, to protect himself against the cold and the beasts, to cook his food, to dig into the earth and get metal, and, by melting it, to mold it into articles for his use.

Indeed, he had the greatest gift that Prometheus could possibly have given him, and Zeus was very angry when he heard about it. He was afraid that man would some time make him trouble if he had this great power; so he caught Prometheus and bound



ATHENE.

PHIDIAS.

"Athené was the goddess of wisdom, a very noble and stately goddess." (Page 260.)

him fast upon a mountain, where he was sorely punished, until, many years afterwards, Hercules released him. But, though Zeus punished Prometheus, he did not try to take away fire from man; so we still have this blessing, which came first directly from the sun.

James Russell Lowell, in his fine poem, "Prometheus," puts these words of defiance to Zeus in the mouth of the suffering Titan:—

"I am that Prometheus who brought down
The light to man, which thou, in selfish fear,
Hadst to thyself usurped, — his by sole right,
For Man hath right to all save Tyranny, —
And which shall free him yet from thy frail throne."

The gods were greatly pleased with this new being, man, upon the earth, so like themselves. But Zeus saw that he must be lonely, and sent him as a companion a lovely woman, whom he called Pandora. He gave her a box full of marriage gifts which had been made up for her by all the gods, each god putting in something.

So there was upon the new world a man and a woman, and they were very happy; and soon their children grew up around them, until the earth had many people. And there was no one who wished to harm any one else. This time was ever afterwards known as the Golden Age.

Thus, the Greeks believed, the earth was made and filled with people.

XLIII. THE QUARREL OF THE GODDESSES.

ONCE there was a wedding between a celebrated king named Peleus and a nymph named Thetis. Peleus was a friend of many of the gods, and so he decided to ask them all to his wedding; but, by some oversight in sending out his invitations, Eris, the goddess of strife, did not receive one, and she was very angry, and determined to ruin the wedding feast. So she took a golden apple and wrote on it in large letters these words: "For the most beautiful goddess," and threw it into their midst.

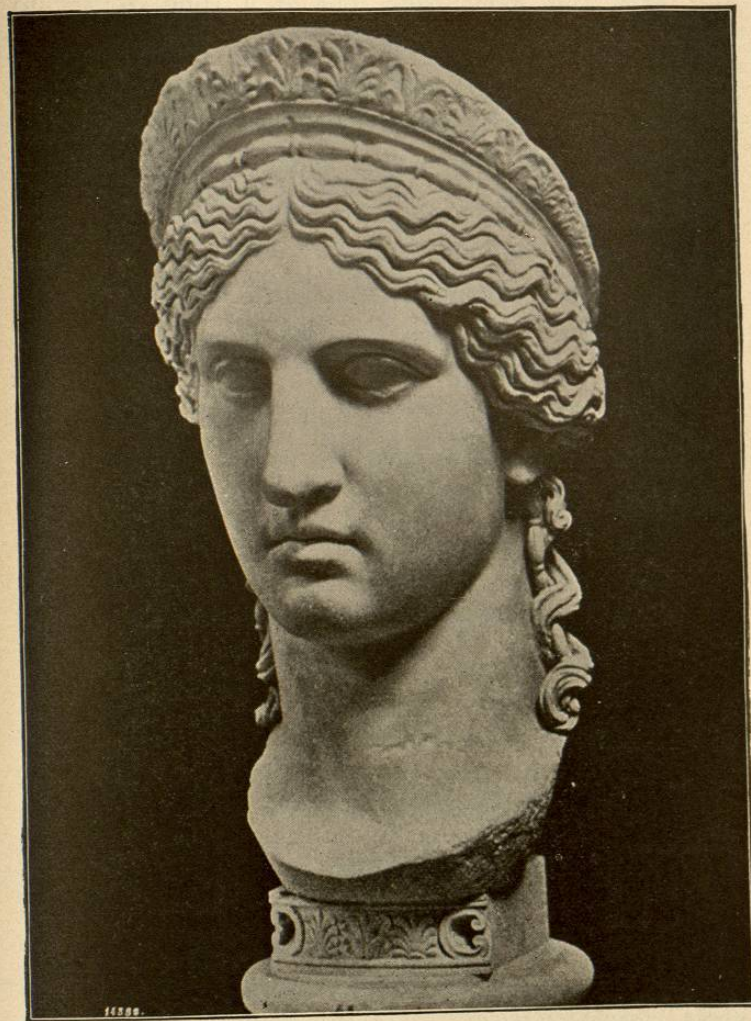
The goddesses all sprang for it, each hoping that it was for her. When they saw the inscription, one by one, all but three, modestly withdrew their claims. These three were Athene, goddess of wisdom, Aphrodite, goddess of love, and Hera, queen of heaven and King Zeus's wife. Of these not one would yield to the others, each insisting that she was the most beautiful.

Finally they asked Zeus to decide who was to have the golden apple; but he was too shrewd for that. He knew that the two defeated ones would not be satisfied; so he said that they were all so beautiful that he could not tell. "But," he added, "I will tell you who can decide for you."

“On Mount Ida, near the eastern end of the Great Sea, is a young man named Paris, the handsomest of all young men on the earth. He is the son of King Priam of Troy. Before he was born, a prophethess said that he would be a firebrand to burn up the city; so his father sent him, when a baby, out into the woods on Mount Ida, to perish. There a shepherd found him, took him to his home, and raised him as a shepherd boy, naming him Paris. He grew up to be the handsomest man in the world, a great favorite with women, and a judge of beauty. He will answer your question, and tell you truly who should have the golden apple.”

So these three goddesses went quickly in their golden chariots to Mount Ida, where they found the young Paris tending his sheep. As they came to him he rose from the ground very gracefully, and, blushing a little, asked them what they wanted; for he thought they were three beautiful women, and did not know that they were goddesses. They told him that they had come to ask him to decide which of them was the most beautiful. “Surely, ladies,” said he, “I cannot decide that; you are all so beautiful.”

But they insisted; so he said that he would take time to consider, and tell them on the morrow. This was what the goddesses wanted, too; so, after he had looked at them carefully, they went away,



HERA.

“Hera, queen of heaven, and King Zeus’s wife.” (Page 283.)

but later each came back, one at a time, to try to persuade Paris to give her the prize. Hera promised him, if he would decide for her, all the riches he could wish, and that he might be king of Asia. Athene promised him great glory and renown as a soldier. But Aphrodite, who knew him best, told him if he would decide for her he should have the most beautiful woman in the world for his wife.

It did not take Paris long to decide, and when they came together in the morning he said, "Aphrodite is the most beautiful, and she shall have the golden apple." You may be sure that the other goddesses did not like this; and when, afterwards, Paris found out who his father was, and went to live with him in the palace of the king at Troy, the angry goddesses determined that, to spite Paris, Troy should be destroyed.

XLIV. THE TROJAN WAR.

THE most beautiful woman in the world was the wife of Menelaus,¹ king of one of the countries of Greece. Her name was Helen. Because of her beauty, before her marriage all the princes of Greece had sought her hand; but before she made her choice they solemnly promised that whomsoever she might

¹ Men-e-lā'-us.

choose, the rest would always defend her from all harm. She then chose Menelaus, and became his queen.

Paris, then a prince in the palace of his father at Troy, was told by Aphrodite that the beautiful Helen was the woman she had promised him, and she advised him to go to the kingdom of Menelaus and take her, by force if necessary. He went, and as soon as he saw Helen he wickedly determined to steal her and carry her away to Troy.

Then, with the aid of Aphrodite, he disguised himself to look like Menelaus, who was away from home, and went to Helen and told her that she was to go with him on a long journey by sea. She believed him to be Menelaus and went with him without question, and he took her across the sea to Troy, and then, when it was too late for her to go back, removed his disguise.

When Menelaus came home and found that his queen was missing, he at once called together all the princes of Greece who had promised to defend Helen, told them what had happened, and urged them to fulfill their promises. They consented, and each agreed to furnish an army to make war on Troy and bring back Helen to her husband.

In a short time a great army was gathered; their leaders were noble heroes, brave in war and wise in council. Besides Menelaus, there was his brother