

**STORIES OF
THE ANCIENT GREEKS**



THE GODS OF GREECE

**STORIES OF
THE ANCIENT GREEKS**

**BY
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illustrated by
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**YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA**

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ISBN-10: 1-59915-269-X

ISBN-13: 978-1-59915-269-1

Yesterday's Classics, LLC
PO Box 3418
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

PREFACE

THE tales in this book are old; some of them, it may be, are even older than we suppose. But there is always a new generation to whom the ancient stories must be told; and the author has spent pleasant hours in trying to retell some of them for the boys and girls of to-day.

He remembers what joy it was to him to read about the Greek gods and heroes; and he knows that life has been brighter to him ever since because of the knowledge thus gained and the fancies thus kindled. It is his hope to brighten, if possible, other young lives by repeating for them the immortal fictions and the deathless histories which have been delivered to new audiences for thousands of years.

He feels that he has received valuable help from the keen insight and fine taste of Mr. George A. Harker, whose original drawings adorn and illuminate the volume. The spirit of the book speaks in those animated pictures where action and feeling are so clearly shown.

These stories belong to no one individual; they are the heritage of the race. To help the children of the present time to enter upon this priceless heritage is the aim and desire of

—THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLE OF OLD GREECE

GREECE is a country of clear blue skies, of sunlit, dancing seas, of tall mountains tipped with snow. At no place within its borders can you be more than forty miles from the sea or ten miles from the mountains.

The rivers hurry down the hill-sides, and no boat sails on their swift current. The winters are very cold, the summers are scorching hot. In the spring the land is beautiful with flowers; in the fall it is rich with ripened fruit and grain. Near the sea-coast grow grapes, olives, figs, oranges, and melons. Farther up among the hills barley and wheat and oak trees are found; higher yet are pine trees and beech trees, and still higher is the line where snow does not melt even in summer.

Eastward from Greece, the sea is full of islands, some large, others small. They also were settled by the Greeks. In the old days each of these was a kingdom by itself. Some were the homes of pirates who lived by robbing the vessels which came and went upon the sea. In others lived the merchants whose ships these pirates robbed.

As the Greeks increased in numbers they sailed from island to island, and reached the coast of Asia Minor. There they built cities which afterwards became rich and famous.

Westward an open sea lies between Greece and Italy. Colonies crossed that water, and settled on the shores beyond the sea. South of Italy lies the large island of Sicily, which also became the home of Greeks who built the famous city of Syracuse.

The first people who made their homes in Greece were called Pelasgians. We know very little about them, except that they must have come from Asia, for in the center of that continent was the earliest home of men. When that region became too crowded the young and strong journeyed east, west, north, and south, looking for new places in which to settle.

At some time, we do not know when, but long before history began to be written, a wandering tribe entered Greece. We cannot tell whether they arrived by sea or land, but very likely it was by sea. They found fertile soil, large forests, and mountains in which were copper, silver, and iron. It is said that they already knew how to farm and that they built cities.

Soon there was the old trouble—not room enough. The young people hitched their oxen to carts, in which they put their few bits of furniture, their children, and the weaker wives, and moved on to find new homes. This happened many times until Greece was dotted all over with small villages.

The rest of the world was also in motion. Other tribes came into this country of Greece and made themselves masters of its farms and towns. The people who had once been the free owners of the land now became slaves, and had to work without pay for others.

Long afterwards the country was called Hellas, and the people were known as Hellenes.

The mountain ranges in Greece run, some north and south, others east and west, so that there are many little valleys, shut away from each other by the high hills.

These valleys were settled by different tribes, among whom there was often war, though they were related to one another and spoke the same language. Those who had homes among the mountains lived by hunting, and on the milk and flesh of their sheep and goats. Those who found more fertile plains became farmers, and raised grain and fruit. Those who lived near the sea became fishermen and sailors.

So they lived for many hundreds of years before any history was written or read. All that time war was going on, cities were building, states were being founded, little vessels were sailing on the narrow seas from island to mainland, men were gradually learning the arts of civilization.

In those dim times cities were begun which afterwards became famous. Three of these were most important, Sparta, Athens, and Thebes. Sparta was the capital of a little district called Laconia or Lacedæmonia.

Athens was the chief city of Attica, and Thebes was the capital of Bœotia.

Sparta had no walls. Every citizen was a soldier, and stood ready to fight for his country night or day.

The people of Thebes and its neighborhood were considered dull and stupid by those who lived in other states.

Athens became the most splendid city in Greece. Her citizens loved everything beautiful. Year after year they built temples and monuments, carved statues, painted pictures, studied poetry, music, and the art of public speaking, and delighted in learning something new.

In the heart of Greece, deep among the mountains, lay the beautiful valley of Arcadia. The people were hunters and shepherds; simple, even rude in their manners, but happy in watching their flocks, and in dancing at their village festivals. They worshiped the god Pan, but beat his image if they had bad luck in hunting.

Some of the Greeks were fierce fighters, others were deep thinkers. For two hundred and fifty years the history of their little country is the history of the world. Their stories have gone into the literature of all Western nations, and nobody can claim to be well-educated who does not know something of them.

This little book is written that children may learn a few of the fables and some of the facts which are part of the treasure of the world. The facts are given

as they are told by Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch. No doubt in the course of years fancy has mingled with fact so that the clear truth is hard to find.

It is hoped that this little volume may serve as an introduction to further study for those who have the opportunity, and that the recollection of its contents may give life-long pleasure to such as do not pursue their studies beyond the grammar grade.

NOTE.—In this book will be found many proper names which are strange to young readers. A list of such names, with their pronunciation has been placed at the end of the volume.

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PART I
MYTHOLOGICAL STORIES



CHAPTER I

THE GODS OF GREECE

THE Greeks believed that the world was round and flat. Its outer border was the great river, Ocean. The Mediterranean Sea was in the center of this circle.

Far to the North lived the Hyperboreans in a beautiful land where cold winds did not blow and snow never fell. These people were not obliged to work, and they had no enemies with whom to fight. Sickness and old age did not trouble them. Their lives were happy and tranquil.

In the distant South were the Æthiopians, who were so good and happy that the gods often went to visit them.

In the far-off West were the Fortunate Isles, or “Islands of the Blessed,” where everything was charming, and where a few people, beloved by the gods, lived for ever without pain or sorrow.

The Greeks thought there were many gods, most of whom lived above the clouds on top of Olympus, a mountain in Thessaly. They had bodies like men and

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women, but they were larger, stronger, and usually handsomer than human beings.

The king of all the gods, and the father of many of them, was called Zeus. The Latin name for this god is Jupiter. He was the ruler of the weather. At his command the clouds gathered, rain or snow fell, gentle winds blew, or storms roared. He darted lightning across the sky and hurled thunderbolts upon the world.

The tallest trees and highest mountain peaks were sacred to him.

He was also the god of justice, and sent his servants, the Furies, to punish men and women who did wrong.

His wife was Hera, who in Latin is called Juno. She was very handsome and stately. Her eyes were large and dark, so that one poet called her "ox-eyed." She was proud and quarrelsome and ready to harm those who made her angry.

This couple had several children. One of them, Hephæstus, the Latin Vulcanus, is said by some to have been born lame. Others say that his father in a fit of anger threw him out of heaven. He fell for a long summer day, and when he reached the island of Lemnos he had little life remaining in him, and limped forever after. He was the blacksmith god, who built houses for the other gods and made the scepter of Zeus, the arrows used by Apollo and Artemis, and other wonderful things. He was good-natured and fond of fun, but not foolish. Volcanoes were called his earthly workshops.

THE GODS OF GREECE

His wife was Aphrodite, the Latin Venus, the loveliest of all the goddesses, who was said to have been born from the foam of the sea. She was the ruler of love and beauty. Wherever she went soft and gentle breezes followed her, and flowers sprang up where her feet touched. She made some people happy, but for others she caused much grief and trouble.

One day Zeus had a terrible headache. Hephæstus, with an ax, split open his father's aching head. The goddess Athene, the Latin Minerva, sprang out, full grown and dressed in armor. She became the goddess of wisdom, and also took care of cities. She never married but lived alone in her house upon Mount Olympus.

Phœbus, the Latin Apollo, was the god who ruled the sun. He loved music and poetry.

Artemis, the Latin Diana, was his twin sister. She had charge of the moon and was the friend of the hunters.

Hermes, the Latin Mercurius, whence our Mercury, was handsome and swift, the messenger of the gods. Under his care were merchants, travelers, and public speakers. He wore a low-crowned hat with wings, and wings grew from his ankles. In his hand, he carried a wand around which snakes twined. He was very cunning and full of tricks.

Ares, the Latin Mars, was the god of war, finding pleasure in battle and death.

Hestia, the Latin Vesta, was the sister of Zeus. She was the goddess of the fireside and watched over the

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homes of men. She never married, but Zeus gave her a seat in the center of his palace and sent her the sweetest morsels at every feast. On earth she was worshiped as the oldest and best of the gods. In her temple a sacred fire was kept forever burning, watched by unmarried women, who were called "Vestal Virgins."

These ten gods formed the "Great Council" of Olympus. They lived in their own houses of brass, built by Hephæstus, but every day they went to the palace of Zeus and feasted on ambrosia and nectar. Hebe, the beautiful daughter of Zeus and Hera, waited upon the table. After her marriage to Heracles her place was taken by Ganymede, a beautiful Trojan boy, whom Zeus in the form of an eagle carried away to heaven. At the feasts Apollo played on his lyre and the Muses sang. The Muses were nine sisters, who lived on Mount Parnassus. They had charge of poetry, history, music, tragedy, comedy, dancing, love-songs, hymns, and astronomy.

The ruler of the sea was Poseidon, whose Latin name was Neptune. Under the waves he had a shining palace, the work of Hephæstus.

Demeter, the Latin Ceres, was goddess of the earth, especially of harvests of grain. Dionysus, or Bacchus, was the god of vineyards and wine, and was particularly adored by the Greeks. Eros, the Latin Cupid, the little god of love, was the son of Venus. Eos was the goddess of the dawn. Iris was the messenger of Hera, and the road by which she traveled from heaven

THE GODS OF GREECE

to earth was the rainbow, which vanished when her errand was done.

There were three Fates, who spun the thread of human life and cut it off at their pleasure.

There were three Graces, who favored everything beautiful and charming in manners and dress.

There were also three Furies, who had snakes for hair and were frightful to look at. It was their duty to follow wicked men and women and punish them with dreadful whips.

Nemesis, like the Furies, pursued those who had done wrong, particularly those who had insulted the gods. Wherever she went trouble and sorrow followed.

Momus was the god of laughter, Morpheus of sleep, and Plutus of riches. Plutus was blind and could not see those to whom he gave his gifts. When he approached men he limped slowly along. When he left them he flew away.

All these went and came as they pleased, being sometimes in the sky, sometimes on the earth. They did not always do right, and they often quarreled and fought among themselves. Although they could not be killed, they could be wounded. Then *ichor* instead of blood flowed from their veins. They took much interest in human affairs; they had their favorites whom they helped, and their enemies whom they tried to harm.

CHAPTER II

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

THE Greeks believed that this earth, on which we live, was once a great heap of matter, in which land and water and air were all mixed together. There was no light or life anywhere except among the gods in heaven.

After a while the gods agreed to put this heap into shape and order. They separated the air from the earth and water. The air being lightest flew up, and formed the sky. The earth being heavy sank down, but the water flowed all around it and held it up, so that it should not sink entirely away.

Then the gods gave form to the earth. They lifted up the mountains, and that left valleys. They dug paths for the rivers; they set islands in the sea, they made the world look as it now does.

They also fashioned the sun and moon and stars, and these gave light. The mountains were soon covered with young trees; grass and flowers grew on the plains; fish were in the sea, birds flew in the air, and animals moved about on the dry land.

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

All these living creatures were made by two lower gods called Titans. Their names were Prometheus and Epimetheus. They also created man, nobler than the animals, because he walks upright and looks toward heaven, while the other creatures walk on four feet and look downward to the ground.

Epimetheus did the work, and Prometheus was the overseer. The animals had different gifts. The ox was very strong, the horse could run fast, the owl was wise, the fox was cunning, the eagle had wings, lions and bears had teeth and claws to fight with, the snake had poison to kill its victims or its enemies.

Birds had feathers, and beasts had fur, or wool, or hair, to keep them warm. Even oysters and clams had little houses of shell in which they could shut themselves up tight. But man had no feathers, or fur, or wool, or shell, and not a great deal of hair. When his turn came to receive some special gift there was nothing for him. Though he was noblest of all creatures he was really weakest and most helpless of all.

The two Titan brothers stood and looked at each other. "What shall we do now?" said Epimetheus. "Everything has been given out."

"Is nothing left?" said Prometheus.

"Nothing at all," answered his brother.

They looked all around, but no help came. Then they looked up at the shining sun.

"Oh, I know!" said Prometheus. "Stay here and wait for me."

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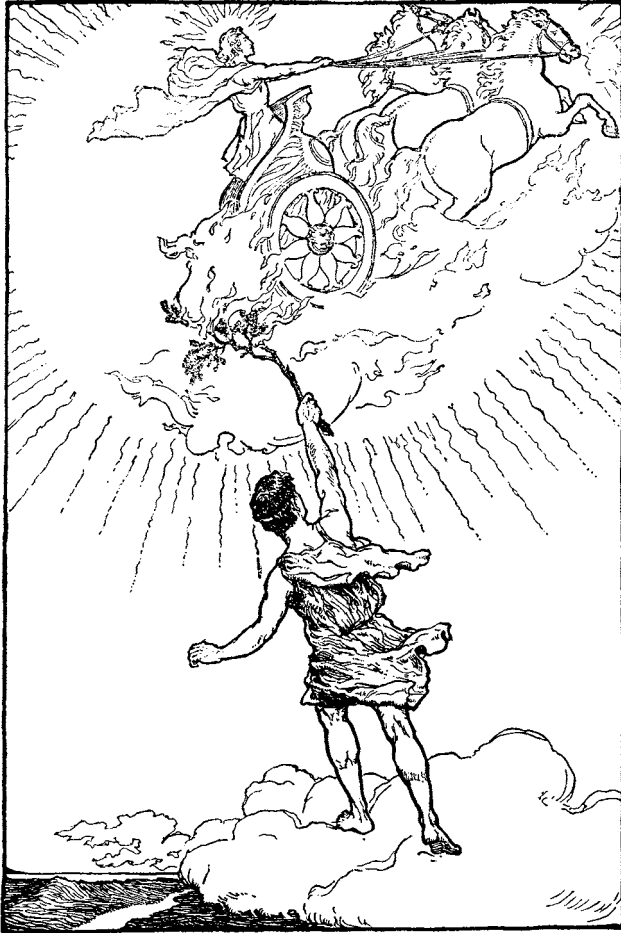
“Where are you going?” asked his brother.

“You will know when I come back,” answered Prometheus.

Then he went to the highest mountain and climbed to its top. There Athene, the goddess of wisdom, met him and helped him the rest of the way up to the sky. On the mountain top he had broken a branch from a pine tree. This he took with him, and as the sun came driving by in his chariot of fire, Prometheus touched the branch to the burning wheels. The green leaves snapped and crackled in the flame, the pitchy wood took fire. Prometheus hurried back from the sky and ran down the mountain. All the way he took care to keep the branch burning.

When he reached Epimetheus, he said, “Hurry and get a pile of branches. Here is a fire from heaven. This shall be our one best gift to man. By this he shall conquer all the other creatures and be master of earth and sea and air.”

Epimetheus ran and gathered branches and piled them in a heap. Prometheus threw his torch among them. The twigs caught fire at once, and soon there was a bright, roaring cheerful, comfortable blaze. Then the brothers called the man and said, “Come here and be warm;” for the night was falling, and the air was growing chilly. The man stretched out his hands toward the fire and laughed. “This is not a plaything,” said the Titans, “You must keep it as your servant, and be very careful that you never let it become your master. Use



FIRE FROM HEAVEN

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it rightly, and it will make you ruler over everything in the world.”

So the man was glad, and kept the fire burning. When the winter came he did not have to travel south, like the birds, or go to sleep in a hollow tree, like the bears. He made a fire in his hut, and was comfortable there. Soon he learned to cook his food instead of eating it raw. He found stones which would melt, and which we call ores,—lead ore, tin ore, zinc ore, copper ore, gold ore, silver ore. He melted gold and silver, and with stone hammers pounded out rings and bracelets and earrings, which he wore. He melted copper and zinc together and made bronze. This he hammered into spear heads, which he fastened on long sticks. Then he could fight the lion and the bear, keeping out of reach of their claws. With these spears he could also catch fish. Afterwards he made bronze hooks for fishing. He learned the use of the bow, and tipped his arrows with bronze. So he could shoot flying birds, or running deer, or crawling snakes. He made bronze bits for horses, and axes for cutting down trees, and plowshares for tilling the ground. Thus he had much better tools of every kind than the stones he used at first.

Long afterwards men found out how to melt and shape iron, which was better and more useful than bronze. So the fire from heaven gave men mastery over every animal, and made them rulers of the earth.

CHAPTER III

THE MAGIC BOX

SO far, man lived alone upon the earth. He gathered some animals about him,—the horse to ride, the ox for the plow, the dog for friendship. But none of these could talk to him. They had voices and made noises, but they could not speak as he could. He was lonely in his wide and beautiful world.

Zeus, the father of the gods, called his family together. “Look down to earth,” he said. “Do you see that creature walking upright there?”

They answered, “Yes, great Father! We see him.”

“He is lonely,” said Zeus. “Let us give him a companion. He is man. I will form a woman to be with him, and each of you shall give her something that shall be a part of her life.”

The gods and goddesses were pleased. Zeus created the woman, but she had yet no life. Aphrodite bent down and kissed her on cheeks and lips. A lovely flush appeared on her face, her mouth became rosy and smiling, she had received the gift of beauty.

Athene drew near, and gently laid her hand

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upon the woman's brow. "My gift is wisdom," she said. "This woman shall be wise to spin, to weave, to do all manner of household work, and to train up children in goodness."

The shining god Apollo came up, and touched her lips and her fingers.

"I give her the power of music," he declared. "She shall be able to sing sweet songs of love and home and hope and heaven. From reeds and strings she shall be able to draw pleasant sounds to cheer man when he is tired, and to comfort him when he is sad."

Then Ares, the god of war, looked at her and said, "She will not be a fighter herself, but she shall be the cause of many wars. That is my gift. I have no other."

Hephæstus, the blacksmith, limped up and said, "I will put iron in her blood. That will make her strong to bear trouble and endure hardship. Smaller and finer than man, she shall be more patient and steadfast than he."

Eros brought for his gift a warm and tender heart. "She is lovely and shall be loving," he said.

Last of all came Hermes, the swift-running god. His eyes twinkled as he touched her ears, her eyes and her nose.

"My gift is curiosity. To see everything, to hear everything, and to know everything, that shall be her wish," he said. Then he touched her tongue, but did not say anything more.

THE MAGIC BOX

Zeus stretched forth his golden scepter, and laid it lightly upon her head.

“Arise, woman!” he exclaimed. She arose and stood upon her feet.

“The gods have given you their gifts,” he declared.

“Your name shall be Pandora,” which means “All-gifts.”

“Hermes,” he called, “take this woman down to earth and give her to man, to be his companion for better and for worse, for sorrow and for joy. Take with you also this box, her wedding present, which must never be opened. Go, perform your duty.”

Hermes took Pandora by the hand, and soon they were on the earth. They entered the man’s hut, and Hermes said, “This is your wife, sent you by Zeus. Her name is Pandora. Here is your wedding present, this box which must never be opened. Farewell.”

The man was very happy with his new companion. She was beautiful, kind, gentle, and cheerful. He showed her his knives and hammers, axes and saws, his bow and spear, arrows and fishhooks, his plow and hoe, and everything that he had made of bronze. She told him how to make a distaff and spindle for spinning, and how to build a loom for weaving. She asked him to make hairpins for her hair, and needles to sew with, and knitting needles that she might knit stockings and caps.

When the man went out to work she stayed in the

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house. In one corner of the room stood the magic box, her wedding present. If she was spinning or weaving, or sewing or knitting, she was always looking at that. It was of ivory, beautifully carved.

She often said, "I do wonder what it holds. It is so handsome outside that the inside must be very lovely."

Sometimes she laid down her work and went to the box. She looked at it with her eyes, listened at it with her ears, sniffed at it with her nose. But she could never be sure that there was any sound or any odor. She began to be worried. The gift of Hermes was giving her a great deal of trouble.

Often at night she would wake up and say to her husband, "I do wonder what is in the box."

He would answer, "It is not to be opened. Go to sleep. I am tired."

But she could not rest day or night. Always she wondered what was in that strange box. Why was it given if it must never be opened?

At last she could bear it no longer. She lifted the lid just a little. There was a stir and rush in the box, the lid was thrown wide open, and out flew a multitude of things with wings. They seemed like wasps and hornets and stinging insects, but they were worse. They were trouble, sorrow, sickness, distress, pain, anger, envy, hatred, malice, falsehood, everything ugly and dreadful.

Pandora clapped down the lid, too late. These



PANDORA AND HER BOX

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creatures buzzed in her ears, settled in her hair, filled the hut, and flew out of the window over all the world.

Pandora sank down, crying as if her heart would break. Then she heard a knocking in the box, and a little voice saying, "Let me out."

She raised the lid, and a charming little creature came out of the box.

"Poor Pandora!" she said. "My name is Hope. I will stay with you and comfort you. You can never get rid of the trouble you have caused by opening the box, but I was sent to cheer you and to help you bear your trials."

That was all the good that Pandora got from the magic box. When everything else was against her she still had hope.

CHAPTER IV

THE VOICES OF THE GODS

WHEN the people wished to know the will of the gods they inquired at places called “oracles.” The most famous of these was at Delphi. There was an opening in the ground, out of which came a strange gas or vapor. Over this place a temple was built and dedicated to Apollo. A priestess lived there, and when people desired to have their fortune told she breathed the vapor, and what she said afterwards was thought to be the answer of the god. But it was hard to understand, and the priests had to explain it to the visitors. Usually it could be taken in two or three ways, so that, whatever happened, the oracle would be right.

Once the people of Athens asked what they should do in a time of great danger. The oracle told them to trust to their wooden walls. Some hurried to the ships and escaped, but others trusted in the wooden walls on the Acropolis, the citadel of Athens, and fought bravely there, only to be defeated.

This is the way in which the oracle at Delphi was discovered. Some goatherds, feeding their flocks on

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Mount Parnassus, found that when the animals ate near a certain place they seemed to go crazy, and ran about bleating until they fell down in a fit. The men, looking for the cause of this, found a long, deep crack in the side of the mountain. One of them bending over and looking down breathed the vapor which came from the opening. He threw up his arms, ran among his fellow-herdsmen with a wild look on his face, and shouted out strange words which no one understood. Then he fell down weak and trembling, and could not rise for some time. His friends were frightened, and, since they could not explain the matter, they thought it must be the breath of some god that had driven him wild. It was decided at last that this god must be Apollo. A temple was built, and a priestess, called the Pythoness, was appointed. She washed at the fountain of Castalia, put a laurel wreath on her head, and sat on a tripod, or three-footed chair, near the opening. Visitors asked their questions, and she answered in the name of the god.

There was an oracle of Zeus at Dodona. It is said that two black doves flew from Egypt into Greece. One alighted on an oak tree in Dodona, and said to the people, "Here shall be the oracle of the mighty Zeus. You who would know the will of the father of the gods and men come here and listen. He will speak and you shall learn."

The other dove flew to the Libyan oasis, and alighted on the roof of the temple of Jupiter, speaking the same words to the people there. After that, in both

THE VOICES OF THE GODS

these places, the leaves of the trees whispered, and the priests explained what they said.

The oracle of Trophonius was in Bœotia. He and his brother were architects, and built a treasure-house for a king. They set a stone in one of the walls in such a way that they could move it whenever they liked, and so go in and take the money and jewels without exciting suspicion. The king was astonished to find his treasure disappearing, though all the locks were fast and the seals unbroken. He set a trap in the treasury, and the brother was caught. Trophonius could not get him out, so he cut off his brother's head and took it with him, going out by way of the secret stone. Soon after the earth opened and swallowed up the "Master-Thief," as he has been called.

A great drought fell on Bœotia, and the people went to Delphi for help. They were told to consult the oracle of Trophonius at Lebadea. No oracle was found there until one man noticed a swarm of bees flying into an opening in the ground. Following them he heard a voice that told him what he wished to know.

Those who visited that oracle had to go down a narrow passage into a cave, and only by night. Coming out they must walk backward. They were always low-spirited after such a visit, so that when any one was sad and gloomy, people said, "He must have been to the oracle of Trophonius."

CHAPTER V

DEUCALION'S FLOOD

THE Greek poets say that the first men lived in happiness and innocence for many years. That was the Golden Age. After it came the Silver Age, when men were not quite so happy or so good. The Brazen Age followed, with everything growing worse and worse. Then came the Iron Age, and wickedness and wrong were everywhere. Nobody was happy; love was dead; cruelty, murder, robbery, and war filled the whole world.

Zeus, king of heaven, called a meeting of the gods. They went to his palace, and he told them of the wickedness of mankind.

“The sins of men rise up like a black cloud,” he said. “There are no songs of praise, only cries of the unhappy. No smoke of sacrifice ascends, but the smell of burning homes comes up and spreads itself through heaven. Men hate one another and do not love the gods. I will destroy this wicked race, and bring a better people upon the earth.”

At first he thought he would send lightning and

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burn up all; then he considered that water might serve him better. He sent out the stormy winds, and the sky grew black with heavy clouds from which rain poured down. He called on his brother Poseidon to unchain the ocean, and soon its waters rolled high over the shores. The rivers rose, the ground rocked with earthquakes. Temples and houses fell, valleys filled with water, beasts and men were swept away. Villages vanished, cities were seen no more; only the mountains appeared, and on their tops and sides animals and human beings were gathered trembling. The wolf stood by the lamb but did not harm it; the lion crowded close against the deer, and both were alike afraid. Men did not strike each other; they lifted up their hands in prayer to the gods. Women did not look into mirrors; they looked to heaven for pity and help.

The waters rose higher. The animals were gone, so were all the men who did not have boats. The waves were high and fierce. They dashed the boats against the rocks, and they sank.

Only one mountain stood out of the water. That was Parnassus. Only one boat floated on the sea, and in it were a man and his wife, Deucalion and Pyrrha. They had been good when everybody else was bad, and Zeus had taken care of them through the storm and the flood.

The winds fell, the rain stopped, the boat rested on the mountain side. Ocean drew back his waves, the valleys were filled with roaring rivers that carried away

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the water to the sea. Deucalion and Pyrrha stepped out of the boat and stood upon the ground.

“O, wife,” the good man said, “I am afraid we are alone in the world! All our friends and neighbors are gone. There is nobody to help us, or tell us what to do! No! I am wrong in saying that. There are yet the gods and we will ask their advice.”

They went down the mountain a little way to a place where they knew there had been an oracle. The cave was there, but no altar burned, and no priest stood near.

They went into the cave and knelt down. “O goddess!” they said, “thou dwellest in the dark, yet seest all things. Behold two sorrowful creatures who are left alone in a drowned world! We have nothing, we know nothing. We pray to thee, O goddess! Tell us what we ought to do.”

A strange, solemn voice answered, “Cover your heads. Loosen your girdles. Go down the mountain, and, as you go down cast your mother’s bones behind you.”

They were frightened and did not understand. How could they find their mother’s bones when everything had been swept away in the dreadful flood? They were no wiser than they had been, until Deucalion thought, “Why, the earth is our great mother, to be sure. Her bones,—why, those must be the stones. Let us see if that is what the oracle means.”

They covered their heads and loosened their

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belts, and went down the mountain. As they went they stooped and picked up stones and threw them back over their shoulders. Presently they heard a sound of running feet and of voices. They looked back. Young men were following Deucalion, holding out their hands to him and calling him "Bab-ba!" Young girls were running hard after Pyrrha, trying to catch her dress, and murmuring "Mam-ma!"

Deucalion threw another stone, and watched to see what would happen. Another young man started up to run and call. Pyrrha threw again, and a new young woman joined the company of girls.

The old people went down into the valley, and by the time they reached it they had a large family of grown-up children, whom they taught to build houses, to plow the ground, to plant vines, to weave and sew, and to talk the Greek language. So the world was peopled again, and all the Greeks look back to Deucalion and his wife as their great ancestors.

PART II
HISTORICAL STORIES



CHAPTER XXXIII

THE SPLENDID CITY

ATHERNS is a very old city. Cecrops, who came from Egypt, is said to have founded it. The fables tell us that he was half man and half dragon, and though we know this is not true it may be true that there was a man named Cecrops and that he did begin to build the city. At first it was called after him, Cecropia, but the people were so fond of the goddess Athene that its name was changed to Athens.

The fables say that Poseidon, the god of the sea, wanted the men of the city to worship him. So he struck the rock, and a beautiful horse appeared. Then Athene struck the ground, and an olive tree sprung up. Cecrops said, "O goddess, your gift is best! The city will always honor and worship you."

Athens stands in the central plan of Attica, three miles back from the sea. All around the plain are mountains except for the south, which is open to the sea.

There are four hills in the city, the Acropolis, the Areopagus, the Pynx, and the Museum. The Acropolis

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is the highest, rising one hundred and fifty feet above the plain. It is very steep on every side except the west, which has a slope not easy to climb. The flat top is about one thousand feet long and five hundred feet broad.

West from the Acropolis stands the Areopagus, or the Hill of Mars, where the courts of justice were held. Sixteen steps cut in the rock lead up from the market place to the top, where the Council used to meet. Around three sides of the top, benches are cut out of the solid rock. The fourth side looks to the south and is open. On the west side is a raised block on which the criminal used to stand. Another such block is on the eastern side, and there the accuser stood.

The Pnyx is a lower hill, where public meetings were held at daybreak to avoid the heat. There were only a few wooden benches there. The people stood or sat on the bare rocks.

The Museum was where the poet Musæus was buried.

The first houses were built on the Acropolis. Afterwards men set up their dwellings on the plain below. But the Acropolis was always the citadel or fortress, the strongest part of the city.

Pisistratus was the first to think of making the Acropolis beautiful. He erected three temples and other public buildings. Xerxes, the king of the Persians, when he invaded the land, found this height surrounded by a palisade of logs, which he burned with everything else on the hill. After that no dwellings, but many splendid temples and monuments, were built there. More and

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more were added through fifty years in the days of Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles. Athens had then become the most magnificent city in Greece.

On the Acropolis stood three temples devoted to Athene. One held an image of the goddess made of olive wood, which was said to have fallen from heaven, and was the most sacred thing in Athens. This was called Athene Polias, and every four years a grand procession marched up the hill to put upon the statue an elegant new robe which the women had embroidered.

The plain on which the lower part of the city stood is rocky and barren. However, a line of olive trees reached from the river Cephissus to the sea. The air is very clear and pure, so that the people lived much out of doors. At sunset the hills around glow with different colors, violet, rose, and molten gold.

Three miles from Athens was the harbor called the Piræus. It had three openings, made narrow by walls built out into the water so that not more than two large boats could pass at once. In time of war these openings were closed by chains stretched across them. Long walls, fourteen or fifteen feet thick, were built all the way from the city down to the water's edge, and the citizens took great pride in their strength.

The Piræus was really the name of three places,—first the peninsula or point of land itself, second the harbor and third the town which grew up around the harbor. Themistocles built the walls around the port, and Pericles continued them all the way up to the city.

Lysander, the Spartan conqueror, pulled them

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down, but they were rebuilt. Many years afterwards, when the Romans came and conquered, they tore down the walls and forts and left Athens without protection.

Even then, when she had no power in the war, she was still honored as the most learned city in the world. For hundreds of years it was the fashion for young men to go there for education in philosophy, literature, and art. The Romans admired the splendid city and did much to add to its beauty.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE BOY AND THE FOX

ALTHOUGH Sparta was one of the smallest of the Greek states, it became one of the most famous. This was because one of its great men, Lycurgus, gave it laws of unusual excellence. That he might do this, he traveled in many countries and noticed everything that was best in their government.

When he went home again he drew up the constitution, a body of laws obedience to which made the Spartans brave, strong, patient, and victorious.

He found that a few citizens owned all the land, while many had no estate. By his rules the land was equally divided so that every family had a small farm. Each farm would yield, in a year, about seventy bushels of grain for a man and twelve bushels for his wife, besides olives for oil and grapes for wine. In that way nobody could become very rich, and nobody had any excuse for being a beggar.

Lycurgus then tried to divide among the people all the money, jewelry, handsome dresses, and rich furniture that were in the country. But those who owned

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such things would not give them up. So he tried another way to keep everybody poor. He would not allow any gold or silver coins to be used. The only money the Spartans had was iron, and that was very cheap, so that a man wishing to carry a hundred dollars with him must own or hire a cart and a yoke of oxen. That put a stop to nearly all stealing, for robbers could not easily escape with their ill-gotten gains.

Yet on the other hand the Spartan children were taught to steal anything they could carry. Lycurgus said the habit would be useful in time of war. When they were in an enemy's country the Spartan soldiers could in that way get food and money. To them the only disgrace in stealing was in being found out.

Lycurgus did not wish his people to be friendly with strangers. Foreigners were not invited to come and do business in Sparta or to live there. Spartans were not to be merchants, or traders, or travelers. They were to stay at home and be good citizens and soldiers. The only time for travel was when they went out to fight their enemies.

Every child, when only a few days old, was carried before a company of wise old men. They looked at it carefully. If it was deformed, or if it seemed sickly, it was not allowed to live. Every Spartan was expected to be strong and well. Only plain and wholesome food was eaten. Nothing rich or dainty was allowed.

Little boys stayed at home with their mothers until they were seven years old. Then the state took charge of them and trained them in gymnastics and

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in the art of war. Their daily exercise was jumping, running, wrestling, playing at quoits and with lances. They were treated roughly and cruelly, but they were taught not to complain. They were not thought to be men until they were thirty years old; from that time until they were sixty years old they were obliged to serve the state. Only the women, the children under seven and the men over sixty ate at home. All others, even though married, had to eat at the public tables. They sat down in companies of fifteen persons, and the same kind of food was served to all. The favorite dish was a "black broth," which only Spartans liked.

In their festivals the Spartans had three choirs, one of old men, one of young men, and one of boys. The old men sang,

"Once in battle bold we shone."

The young men chanted,

"Try us; our vigor is not gone."

Then the boys ended with the chorus,

"The palm remains for us alone."

The Spartans had slaves called Helots, who did all the rough and coarse work. They were permitted to get drunk, and when they were in that condition Spartan fathers called their sons and said, "See! Thus slaves may drink and thus they may behave, but such a condition and such action are not for freemen or the sons of freemen."

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Spartan women were taught to be almost as fierce and warlike as the men. When the young men were going to war, each mother gave her son a shield and said, "Come back with this or on it." If he was defeated and lost his shield, above all if he threw it away and ran from the field, he was forever disgraced. Those who were killed in battle were laid, each upon his shield, by his comrades, and carried home in honor as heroes.

It is very strange that when they marched to fight they did not blow trumpets. They charged to the soft, sweet music of flutes. It was their boast that they did not need loud noise to make them brave.

Their character is shown in the story of the boy and the fox. The little fellow on his way to school saw some fox cubs playing together. They belonged to a man who was fond of pets. The boy picked one up and hiding it under his coat went on to school. The fox, restless and angry, began to gnaw the boy's flesh just above the heart. The child studied his lessons without a word or cry, though he grew pale and weak. Suddenly he sank down upon the ground, and when the teacher went to him and opened his coat, the fox jumped out and ran away. But the boy was dead. He could steal and suffer and die rather than be found out. That was the Spartan idea of manliness.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE OLYMPIC GAMES

THE Greeks were very fond of athletic games. The greatest of these were held once every four years at a place called Olympia.

How early these games began to be celebrated nobody knows. They had fallen out of use for some time when Iphitus, a friend of Lycurgus and king of Elis, gave them a new start. From that time on for hundreds of years they were very popular.

They began on the day of the first full moon after the 21st of June. Four days were given to the games; on the fifth day there were processions, sacrifices, and banquets in honor of those who had won the prizes.

All wars were stopped for the whole month in which the games took place. It was to be a time of peace and pleasure for everybody.

No Barbarian, or slave, or man who had broken the laws, could take part. The Greeks called all foreigners, Barbarians. Women were not allowed even to see the games. If any woman did so, she was thrown from

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the top of a high rock. Women, however, could send chariots to the races, and sometimes won a prize.

There were twenty-four different events, divided among the four days. Eighteen were for men, six for boys.

First was a foot race, second a double foot race twice around the ring, third a still longer race. The fourth event was wrestling, the fifth was the pentathlon, which included a long jump, a foot race, throwing the quoit, throwing the spear, and wrestling. Sixth came boxing, seventh a chariot race for four horses, eighth the pancratium, which was boxing and wrestling, ninth a horse race, tenth and eleventh a foot race and wrestling for boys. The twelfth was the pentathlon for boys. Then there were chariot races with mules, with two horses, with four colts, with two colts, a foot race of heavy-armed soldiers, and pancratium, or boxing and wrestling, for boys.

Sometimes there were only two judges, sometimes eight, or ten, or even twelve. It was their duty to see that all the laws of the games were kept and to give the prizes. They wore purple robes and had reserved seats in the best place. They took solemn oath to be just and fair.

In foot races, running, leaping, boxing, and wrestling, the poorest citizens could take part as freely as the richest. But every one who entered had spent ten months in careful training, and faithfully promised to do everything fairly and to use no tricks or deceptions.

Owners of chariots were not obliged to drive,

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but could hire men for that purpose. Alcibiades once sent seven chariots and won three prizes.

The prizes were only wreaths of wild olive, cut from a sacred tree that grew near by. Palm branches were also placed in the hands of the victors.

When a man or a boy won a prize, his name, the name of his father and of his country were called out by heralds. He was invited to the great banquet given by the people of Elis to the winners. He was considered to have honored his city, and when he went home a procession met him, and songs in praise of him were sung.

A statue of him was carved from stone and set up in the highest place at Olympia. This was not a city, but a spot full of temples and altars to the gods and statues of the victors in the games.

People journeyed to these exhibitions from all parts of Greece and from many foreign lands. Deputies were sent from different cities, each of whom tried to dress more splendidly and to make a finer display than his neighbor.

A great deal of business was done in buying and selling. All kinds of goods could be bought there, and it was like a huge fair.

Painters showed their pictures, and poets and historians read their works before the crowd. This helped to educate the people, who had not many books, and who would rather listen than read for themselves.

Those were times of great enjoyment, and the

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Greeks took much pleasure in them. The year of the games and the three following years were called an Olympiad, and time was measured by them. Events were said to have happened in the fifth, or twentieth, or fiftieth, or any other Olympiad.

Other games like these were held in different parts of Greece at various times, but none of them were so splendid or so interesting as the Olympic games.

CHAPTER XXXVI

TWO GREAT LAWGIVERS

LIFE in Greece grew busy and earnest. Changes of every kind took place. The people were not satisfied to be governed by a few men; they themselves wished to share in the government. There were no written laws, but everything was done according to old custom.

About six hundred years before Christ, Draco, the greatest man of the nobility, was chosen to write down a system of laws by which all people were to be ruled. In those laws nearly every crime was punished with death. There was no difference between the punishment of a man who stole a loaf of bread and that of a murderer. It was a common saying that Draco wrote his laws, not in ink, but in blood. The people were not satisfied with these laws, and a greater and wiser lawgiver was found.

This was Solon, who belonged to a rich family in Athens. He received all the education of the time at the gymnasium and in the schools. His one great desire was to learn; and after leaving school he traveled as a merchant on his own ship, that he might see the world

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and find out all he could about its people. He loved his country, and all his studies were intended to help him give to his native land more freedom and greater power.

Some years before Solon's time the island of Salamis had rebelled against Athens and put itself under the protection of Megara. Several times the Athenians had sent ships and men to conquer the island, but they had always been defeated. The people were so ashamed of this that they passed a law that any man who proposed an expedition against Salamis should be put to death.

Solon was angry. He was a poet, and he wrote a poem of a hundred lines upon the loss of the island. To escape death he pretended to be crazy and rushed into the market place with wild looks and disordered garments. A crowd gathered around him, and he began to recite his poem. His voice, his looks, his manner, and his words aroused the Athenians to fury. These were the closing lines of the poem:—

“Up! and to Salamis on! Let us fight for the beautiful island,
Angrily down to the dust casting the yoke of our shame.”

When he had finished the men of Athens rushed from the market place, crowded on board the ships, sailed to Salamis, and conquered it again for Athens.

Solon was then the popular hero and favorite. His word was law. To bring the people into closer friendship he ordered a change in worship. Until then Apollo had been the god of the nobility, and they alone

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had the right to worship him. Solon consecrated to him the city and the state. Every house was made sacred to that god, and a statue of him was set up in every street. New prayers and hymns were written to be used in the religious services. Fires were lighted upon the altars, and the citizens, putting laurel wreaths upon their heads, marched in procession to the temples. They said to one another, "We are all brothers; let us live like brothers in friendship and love."

Solon might now have made himself the only ruler of Attica and Athens, but that was not his wish. He drew up a system of laws which he thought would help the state to be happy, peaceful, and successful.

Times had been hard in Athens. Many people had fallen into debt, and some had become so poor that they had been sold as slaves. Solon made a law that no citizen should own another, and that no one should be sold into slavery because he was poor. Thus thousands were set free, and thousands more were saved from misery.

He lowered the rate of interest and altered the value of the currency, so that if a man owed a hundred dollars he could pay his debt with seventy-three dollars. The state was to forgive all who owed it money and to free them from the burden of such debts.

He set aside all the laws of Draco, except those which punished murder. He divided the citizens into four classes, according to the land they owned. Only the first class, who were richest in land, could hold high office in the state or in the army. The second and third

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classes might have some of the lower offices, and their taxes were made very light. In war, men of the second class must serve as cavalry, of the third class as heavy-armed foot soldiers. Men of the fourth class could not hold office, but they paid no taxes. They had a right to vote at the public meetings where officers were elected and new laws were passed. In war they were sailors, or light-armed foot soldiers. In that way every freeman helped to govern and to defend the state.

Solon also changed the laws of the family. No man had a right to sell his child, or to drive him away from home while under age. If the father would not educate the child, he was not allowed to receive any help from him when his son had grown to be a man.

He did not permit any Athenian to make or sell ointment, for he said that such a business was unmanly. Very expensive dress was forbidden, and only a certain sum of money could be spent for a wedding or a funeral, or for a monument over the dead. Wild crying for those who died came into fashion, but Solon said it was useless and foolish and could no longer be allowed.

All these laws were put into writing and placed on pillars upon the citadel, or highest point of the city, that everybody might read them. These pillars were of wood, as tall as a man, and shaped like a pyramid.

Then Solon ordered a general peace. Those who had been banished from the city were invited to return; no man was to be called a rebel or a traitor; the past was to be forgotten; kindness and helpfulness were to be the rule of life.

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When his year of office was over, Solon went away for ten years and traveled into Egypt and Asia. Kings and princes were glad to see him and talk with him, for all said that he was the greatest lawmaker in the world.