HEROES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

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EDITED BY

H. W. MABIE

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

TO

"HEROES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

THE endeavour has been made in this volume to bring together the heroic men of different races, periods and types; and in the selection of material the most attractive, intelligent and authoritative literature has been drawn upon. In cases in which the material selected belongs distinctively to the best literature, no changes have been made, although narratives have been abbreviated; in cases in which the material has a historical rather than a distinctively literary quality, the text has been treated for "substance of doctrine," and omissions have been freely made, and connecting words, phrases and even sentences have been introduced to give the narrative clear connection and completeness. In the preparation of the material for the volume the intelligence and skill of Miss Kate Stephens have been so freely used that she is entitled to the fullest recognition as associate editor.

H. W. M.

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TO

"HEROES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

The editor and publishers wish to extend their thanks and acknowledgment to the firms who have kindly permitted the use of material in this volume:

To The Macmillan Co. for selections from "Heroes of Chivalry and Romance," "Stories of Charlemagne and the Peers of France," "Old English History," "The Crusaders," "Father Damien: A Journey from Cashmere to His Home in Hawaii"; to Thomas Nelson & Son for material from "Martyrs and Saints of the First Twelve Centuries"; to J. M. Dent & Co. for selections from "Stories from Le Morte d'Arthur and The Mabinogion" in the Temple Classics for Young People; to E. P. Dutton & Co. for material from "Chronicle of the Cid"; to Longmans, Green & Co. for material from "The Book of Romance"; to John C. Winston Co. for material from "Stories from History"; to Lothrop, Lee & Shepard for material from "The True Story of Abraham Lincoln."

CONTENTS

PERSEUS

ONCE upon a time there were two princes who were twins. Their names were Acrisius and Prœtus, and they lived in the pleasant vale of Argos, far away in Hellas. They had fruitful meadows and vineyards, sheep and oxen, great herds of horses feeding down in Lerna Fen, and all that men could need to make them blest: and yet they were wretched, because they were jealous of each other. From the moment they were born they began to quarrel; and when they grew up each tried to take away the other's share of the kingdom, and keep all for himself.

But there came a prophet to Acrisius and prophesied against him, and said, "Because you have risen up against your own blood, your own blood shall rise up against you; because you have sinned against your kindred, by your kindred you shall be punished. Your daughter Danae shall have a son, and by that son's hands you shall die. So the gods have ordained, and it will surely come to pass."

And at that Acrisius was very much afraid; but he did not mend his ways. He had been cruel to his own family, and, instead of repenting and being kind to them, he went on to be more cruel than ever: for

he shut up his fair daughter Danae in a cavern underground, lined with brass, that no one might come near her. So he fancied himself more cunning than the gods: but you will see presently whether he was able to escape them.

Now it came to pass that in time a son came to Danae: so beautiful a babe that any but King Acrisius would have had pity on it. But he had no pity; for he took Danae and her babe down to the seashore, and put them into a great chest and thrust them out to sea, for the winds and the waves to carry them whithersoever they would.

The northwest wind blew freshly out of the blue mountains, and down the pleasant vale of Argos, and away and out to sea. And away and out to sea before it floated the mother and her babe, while all who watched them wept, save that cruel father, King Acrisius.

So they floated on and on, and the chest danced up and down upon the billows, and the baby slept upon its mother's breast: but the poor mother could not sleep, but watched and wept, and she sang to her baby as they floated; and the song which she sang you shall learn yourselves some day.

And now they are past the last blue headland, and in the open sea; and there is nothing round them but the waves, and the sky, and the wind. But the waves are gentle, and the sky is clear, and the breeze is tender and low.

So a night passed, and a day, and a long day it was for Danae; and another night and day beside, till

Danae was faint with hunger and weeping, and yet no land appeared. And all the while the babe slept quietly; and at last poor Danae drooped her head and fell asleep likewise with her cheek against the babe's.

After a while she was awakened suddenly; for the chest was jarring and grinding, and the air was full of sound. She looked up, and over her head were mighty cliffs, all red in the setting sun, and around her rocks and breakers, and flying flakes of foam. She clasped her hands together, and shrieked aloud for help. And when she cried, help met her: for now there came over the rocks a tall and stately man, and looked down wonderingly upon poor Danae tossing about in the chest among the waves.

He wore a rough cloak of frieze, and on his head a broad hat to shade his face; in his hand he carried a trident for spearing fish, and over his shoulder was a casting-net; but Danae could see that he was no common man by his stature, and his walk, and his flowing golden hair and beard; and by the two servants who came behind him, carrying baskets for his fish. But she had hardly time to look at him before he had laid aside his trident and leapt down the rocks, and thrown his casting-net so surely over Danae and the chest, that he drew it, and her, and the baby, safe upon a ledge of rock.

Then the fisherman took Danae by the hand, and lifted her out of the chest, and said:

"O beautiful damsel, what strange chance has brought you to this island in so frail a ship? Who are

you, and whence? Surely you are some King's daughter and this boy somewhat more than mortal."

And as he spoke he pointed to the babe; for its face shone like the morning star.

But Danae only held down her head, and sobbed out:

"Tell me to what land I have come, unhappy that I am; and among what men I have fallen!"

And he said, "This isle is called Seriphos, and I am a Hellen, and dwell in it. I am the brother of Polydectes the King; and men call me Dictys the netter, because I catch the fish of the shore."

Then Danae fell down at his feet, and embraced his knees and cried:

"Oh, sir, have pity upon a stranger, whom a cruel doom has driven to your land; and let me live in your house as a servant; but treat me honourably, for I was once a king's daughter, and this my boy (as you have truly said) is of no common race. I will not be a charge to you, or eat the bread of idleness; for I am more skilful in weaving and embroidery than all the maidens of my land."

And she was going on; but Dictys stopped her, and raised her up, and said:

"My daughter, I am old, and my hairs are growing grey; while I have no children to make my home cheerful. Come with me then, and you shall be a daughter to me and to my wife, and this babe shall be our grandchild. For I fear the gods, and show

hospitality to all strangers; knowing that good deeds, like evil ones, always return to those who do them."

So Danae was comforted, and went home with Dictys the good fisherman, and was a daughter to him and to his wife.

Fifteen years were passed and gone and the babe was now grown to a tall lad and a sailor, and went many voyages after merchandise to the islands round. His mother called him Perseus; but all the people in Seriphos said that he was not the son of mortal man, and called him Zeus, the son of the king of the Immortals. For though he was but fifteen, he was taller by a head than any man in the island; and he was the most skilful of all in running and wrestling and boxing, and in throwing the quoit and the javelin, and in rowing with the oar, and in playing on the harp, and in all which befits a man. And he was brave and truthful, gentle and courteous, for good old Dictys had trained him well; and well it was for Perseus that he had done so.

Now one day at Samos, while the ship was lading, Perseus wandered into a pleasant wood to get out of the sun, and sat down on the turf and fell asleep. And as he slept a strange dream came to him—the strangest dream which he had ever had in his life.

There came a lady to him through the wood, taller than he, or any mortal man; but beautiful exceedingly, with grey eyes, clear and piercing, but strangely soft and mild. On her head was a helmet, and in her hand a spear. And over her shoulder,

above her long blue robes, hung a goat-skin, which bore up a mighty shield of brass, polished like a mirror. She stood and looked at him with her clear grey eyes; and Perseus saw that her eyelids never moved, nor her eyeballs, but looked straight through and through him, and into his very heart, as if she could see all the secrets of his soul, and knew all that he had ever thought or longed for since the day that he was born. And Perseus dropped his eyes, trembling and blushing, as the wonderful lady spoke.

"Perseus, you must do an errand for me."

"Who are you, lady? And how do you know my name?"

"I am Pallas Athené; and I know the thoughts of all men's hearts, and discern their manhood or their baseness. And from the souls of clay I turn away, and they are blest, but not by me. They fatten at ease, like sheep in the pasture, and eat what they did not sow, like oxen in the stall. They grow and spread, like the gourd along the ground; but, like the gourd, they give no shade to the traveller, and when they are ripe death gathers them, and they go down unloved into hell, and their name vanishes out of the land.

"But to the souls of fire I give more fire, and to those who are manful I give a might more than man's. These are the heroes, the sons of the Immortals who are blest, but not like the souls of clay. For I drive them forth by strange paths, Perseus, that they may fight the Titans and the monsters, the enemies of gods and men. Through

doubt and need, danger and battle, I drive them; and some of them are slain in the flower of youth, no man knows when or where; and some of them win noble names, and a fair and green old age; but what will be their latter end I know not, and none, save Zeus, the father of gods and men. Tell me now, Perseus, which of these two sorts of men seem to you more blest?"

Then Perseus answered boldly: "Better to die in the flower of youth, on the chance of winning a noble name, than to live at ease like the sheep, and die unloved and unrenowned."

Then that strange lady laughed, and held up her brazen shield, and cried: "See here, Perseus; dare you face such a monster as this, and slay it, that I may place its head upon this shield?"

And in the mirror of the shield there appeared a face and as Perseus looked on it his blood ran cold. It was the face of a beautiful woman; but her cheeks were pale as death, and her brows were knit with everlasting pain, and her lips were thin and bitter like a snake's; and, instead of hair, vipers wreathed about her temples, and shot out their forked tongues; while round her head were folded wings like an eagle's, and upon her bosom claws of brass.

And Perseus looked awhile, and then said: "If there is anything so fierce and foul on earth, it were a noble deed to kill it. Where can I find the monster?"

Then the strange lady smiled again, and said: "Not yet; you are too young, and too unskilled; for

this is Medusa the Gorgon, the mother of a monstrous brood."

And Perseus said, "Try me; for since you spoke to me a new soul has come into my breast, and I should be ashamed not to dare anything which I can do. Show me, then, how I can do this!"

"Perseus," said Athené, "think well before you attempt; for this deed requires a seven years' journey, in which you cannot repent or turn back nor escape; but if your heart fails you, you must die in the Unshapen Land, where no man will ever find your bones."

"Better so than live despised," said Perseus. "Tell me, then, oh tell me, fair and wise Goddess, how I can do but this one thing, and then, if need be, die!"

Then Athené smiled and said:

"Be patient, and listen; for if you forget my words, you will indeed die. You must go northward to the country of the Hyperboreans, who live beyond the pole, at the sources of the cold north wind, till you find the three Grey Sisters, who have but one eye and one tooth between them. You must ask them the way to the Nymphs, the daughters of the Evening Star, who dance about the golden tree, in the Atlantic island of the west. They will tell you the way to the Gorgon, that you may slay her, my enemy, the mother of monstrous beasts. Once she was a maiden as beautiful as morn, till in her pride she sinned a sin at which the sun hid his face; and from that day her hair was turned to vipers, and her

hands to eagle's claws; and her heart was filled with shame and rage, and her lips with bitter venom; and her eyes became so terrible that whosover looks on them is turned to stone; and her children are the winged horse and the giant of the golden sword; and her grandchildren are Echidna the witch-adder, and Geryon the three-headed tyrant, who feeds his herds beside the herds of hell. So she became the sister of the Gorgons, the daughters of the Queen of the Sea. Touch them not, for they are immortal; but bring me only Medusa's head."

"And I will bring it!" said Perseus; "but how am I to escape her eyes? Will she not freeze me too into stone?"

"You shall take this polished shield," said Athené, "and when you come near her look not at her yourself, but at her image in the brass; so you may strike her safely. And when you have struck off her head, wrap it, with your face turned away, in the folds of the goat-skin on which the shield hangs. So you will bring it safely back to me, and win to yourself renown, and a place among the heroes who feast with the Immortals upon the peak where no winds blow."

Then Perseus said, "I will go, though I die in going. But how shall I cross the seas without a ship? And who will show me my way? And when I find her, how shall I slay her, if her scales be iron and brass?"

Now beside Athené appeared a young man more light-limbed than the stag, whose eyes were

like sparks of fire. By his side was a scimitar of diamond, all of one clear precious stone, and on his feet were golden sandals, from the heels of which grew living wings.

Then the young man spoke: "These sandals of mine will bear you across the seas, and over hill and dale like a bird, as they bear me all day long; for I am Hermes, the far-famed Argus-slayer, the messenger of the Immortals who dwell on Olympus."

Then Perseus fell down and worshipped, while the young man spoke again:

"The sandals themselves will guide you on the road, for they are divine and cannot stray; and this sword itself the Argus-slayer, will kill her, for it is divine, and needs no second stroke. Arise, and gird them on, and go forth."

So Perseus arose, and girded on the sandals and the sword.

And Athené cried, "Now leap from the cliff and be gone."

But Perseus lingered.

"May I not bid farewell to my mother and to Dictys? And may I not offer burnt offerings to you, and to Hermes the far-famed Argus-slayer, and to Father Zeus above?"

"You shall not bid farewell to your mother, lest your heart relent at her weeping. I will comfort her and Dictys until you return in peace. Nor shall you offer burnt offerings to the Olympians; for your

offering shall be Medusa's head. Leap, and trust in the armour of the Immortals."

Then Perseus looked down the cliff and shuddered; but he was ashamed to show his dread. Then he thought of Medusa and the renown before him, and he leapt into the empty air.

And behold, instead of falling he floated, and stood, and ran along the sky. He looked back, but Athené had vanished, and Hermes; and the sandals led him on northward ever, like a crane who follows the spring toward the Ister fens.

So Perseus started on his journey, going dry-shod over land and sea; and his heart was high and joyful, for the winged sandals bore him each day a seven days' journey. And he turned neither to the right hand nor the left, till he came to the Unshapen Land, and the place which has no name.

And seven days he walked through it on a path which few can tell, till he came to the edge of the everlasting night, where the air was full of feathers, and the soil was hard with ice; and there at last he found the three Grey Sisters, by the shore of the freezing sea, nodding upon a white log of driftwood, beneath the cold white winter moon; and they chanted a low song together, "Why the old times were better than the new."

There was no living thing around them, not a fly, not a moss upon the rocks. Neither seal nor sea gull dare come near, lest the ice should clutch them in its claws. The surge broke up in foam, but it fell again in flakes of snow; and it frosted the hair of the

three Grey Sisters, and the bones in the ice cliff above their heads. They passed the eye from one to the other, but for all that they could not see; and they passed the tooth from one to the other, but for all that they could not eat; and they sat in the full glare of the moon, but they were none the warmer for her beams. And Perseus pitied the three Grey Sisters; but they did not pity themselves.

So he said, "Oh, venerable mothers, wisdom is the daughter of old age. You therefore should know many things. Tell me, if you can, the path to the Gorgon."

Then one cried, "Who is this who reproaches us with old age?" And another, "This is the voice of one of the children of men."

Then one cried, "Give me the eye, that I may see him"; and another, "Give me the tooth, that I may bite him." But Perseus, when he saw that they were foolish and proud, and did not love the children of men, left off pitying them. Then he stepped close to them, and watched till they passed the eye from hand to hand. And as they groped about between themselves, he held out his own hand gently, till one of them put the eye into it, fancying that it was the hand of her sister. Then he sprang back, and laughed, and cried:

"Cruel and proud old women, I have your eye; and I will throw it into the sea, unless you tell me the path to the Gorgon, and swear to me that you tell me right."

Then they wept, and chattered, and scolded; but in vain. They were forced to tell the truth, though, when they told it, Perseus could hardly make out the road.

"You must go," they said, "foolish boy, to the southward, into the ugly glare of the sun, till you come to Atlas the Giant, who holds the heaven and the earth apart. And you must ask his daughters, the Hesperides, who are young and foolish like yourself. And now give us back our eye, for we have forgotten all the rest."

So Perseus gave them back their eye. And he leaped away to the southward, leaving the snow and the ice behind. And the terns and the sea gulls swept laughing round his head, and called to him to stop and play, and the dolphins gambolled up as he passed, and offered to carry him on their back. And all night long the sea nymphs sang sweetly. Day by day the sun rose higher and leaped more swiftly into the sea at night, and more swiftly out of the sea at dawn; while Perseus skimmed over the billows like a sea gull, and his feet were never wetted; and leapt on from wave to wave, and his limbs were never weary, till he saw far away a mighty mountain, all rose-red in the setting sun. Perseus knew that it was Atlas, who holds the heavens and the earth apart.

He leapt on shore, and wandered upward, among pleasant valleys and waterfalls. At last he heard sweet voices singing; and he guessed that he was come to the garden of the Nymphs, the daughters of the Evening Star. They sang like

nightingales among the thickets, and Perseus stopped to hear their song; but the words which they spoke he could not understand. So he stepped forward and saw them dancing, hand in hand around the charmed tree, which bent under its golden fruit; and round the tree foot was coiled the dragon, old Ladon the sleepless snake, who lies there for ever, listening to the song of the maidens, blinking and watching with dry bright eyes.

Then Perseus stopped, not because he feared the dragon, but because he was bashful before those fair maids; but when they saw him, they too stopped, and called to him with trembling voices:

"Who are you, fair boy? Come dance with us around the tree in the garden which knows no winter, the home of the south wind and the sun. Come hither and play with us awhile; we have danced alone here for a thousand years, and our hearts are weary with longing for a playfellow."

"I cannot dance with you, fair maidens; for I must do the errand of the Immortals. So tell me the way to the Gorgon, lest I wander and perish in the waves."

Then they sighed and wept; and answered:

"The Gorgon! she will freeze you into stone."

"It is better to die like a hero than to live like an ox in a stall. The Immortals have lent me weapons, and they will give me wit to use them."

Then they sighed again and answered: "Fair boy, if you are bent on your own ruin, be it so. We

know not the way to the Gorgon; but we will ask the giant Atlas above upon the mountain peak." So they went up the mountain to Atlas their uncle, and Perseus went up with them. And they found the giant kneeling, as he held the heavens and the earth apart.

They asked him, and he answered mildly, pointing to the sea board with his mighty hand, "I can see the Gorgons lying on an island far away, but this youth can never come near them, unless he has the hat of darkness, which whosoever wears cannot be seen."

Then cried Perseus, "Where is that hat, that I may find it?"

But the giant smiled. "No living mortal can find that hat, for it lies in the depths of Hades, in the regions of the dead. But my nieces are immortal, and they shall fetch it for you, if you will promise me one thing and keep your faith."

Then Perseus promised; and the giant said, "When you come back with the head of Medusa, you shall show me the beautiful horror, that I may lose my feeling and my breathing, and become a stone for ever; for it is weary labour for me to hold the heavens and the earth apart."

Then Perseus promised, and the eldest of the Nymphs went down, and into a dark cavern among the cliffs, out of which came smoke and thunder, for it was one of the mouths of hell.

And Perseus and the Nymphs sat down seven days, and waited trembling, till the Nymph came up again; and her face was pale, and her eyes dazzled with the light for she had been long in the dreary darkness; but in her hand was the magic hat.

Then all the Nymphs kissed Perseus, and wept over him a long while; but he was only impatient to be gone. And at last they put the hat upon his head, and he vanished out of their sight.

But Perseus went on boldly, past many an ugly sight, far away into the heart of the Unshapen Land, till he heard the rustle of the Gorgons' wings and saw the glitter of their brazen talons; and then he knew that it was time to halt, lest Medusa should freeze him into stone.

He thought awhile with himself, and remembered Athené's words. He arose aloft into the air, and held the mirror of the shield above his head, and looked up into it that he might see all that was below him.

And he saw the three Gorgons sleeping. He knew that they could not see him, because the hat of darkness hid him; and yet he trembled as he sank down near them, so terrible were those brazen claws.

Two of the Gorgons were foul as swine, and lay sleeping heavily, with their mighty wings outspread; but Medusa tossed to and fro restlessly, and as she tossed Perseus pitied her. But as he looked, from among her tresses the vipers' heads awoke, and peeped up with their bright dry eyes, and showed their fangs, and hissed; and Medusa, as she

tossed, threw back her wings and showed her brazen claws.

Then Perseus came down and stepped to her boldly, and looked steadfastly on his mirror, and struck with Herpé stoutly once; and he did not need to strike again.

Then he wrapped the head in the goat-skin, turning away his eyes, and sprang into the air aloft, faster than he ever sprang before.

For Medusa's wings and talons rattled as she sank dead upon the rocks; and her two foul sisters woke, and saw her lying dead.

Into the air they sprang yelling, and looked for him who had done the deed. They rushed, sweeping and flapping, like eagles after a hare; and Perseus's blood ran cold as he saw them come howling on his track; and he cried, "Bear me well now, brave sandals, for the hounds of Death are at my heels!"

And well the brave sandals bore him, aloft through cloud and sunshine, across the shoreless sea; and fast followed the hounds of Death. But the sandals were too swift, even for Gorgons, and by nightfall they were far behind, two black specks in the southern sky, till the sun sank and he saw them no more.

Then he came again to Atlas, and the garden of the Nymphs; and when the giant heard him coming he groaned, and said, "Fulfil thy promise to me." Then Perseus held up to him the Gorgon's head, and he had rest from all his toil; for he became

a crag of stone, which sleeps forever far above the clouds.

Perseus thanked the Nymphs, and asked them, "By what road shall I go homeward again, for I have wandered far in coming hither?"

And they wept and cried, "Go home no more, but stay and play with us, the lonely maidens, who dwell for ever far away from gods and men."

But he refused, and they told him his road. And he leapt down the mountain, and went on, lessening and lessening like a sea gull, away and out to sea.

So Perseus flitted onward to the northeast, over many a league of sea, till he came to the rolling sand hills and the dreary Lybian shore.

And he flitted on across the desert: over rock ledges, and banks of shingle, and level wastes of sand, and shell drifts bleaching in the sunshine, and the skeletons of great sea monsters, and dead bones of ancient giants, strewn up and down upon the old sea floor. And as he went the blood drops fell to the earth from the Gorgon's head, and became poisonous asps and adders, which breed in the desert to this day.

Over the sands he went, till he saw the Dwarfs who fought with cranes. Their spears were of reeds and rushes, and their houses of the eggshells of the cranes; and Perseus laughed, and went his way to the northeast, hoping all day long to see the blue

Mediterranean sparkling, that he might fly across it to his home.

But now came down a mighty wind, and swept him back southward toward the desert. All day long he strove against it; but even the winged sandals could not prevail. So he was forced to float down the wind all night; and when the morning dawned there was nothing but the blinding sun in the blinding blue; and round him there was nothing but the blinding sand.

And Perseus said, "Surely I am not here without the will of the Immortals, for Athené will not lie. Were not these sandals to lead me in the right road? Then the road in which I have tried to go must be a wrong road."

Then suddenly his ears were opened, and he heard the sound of running water. And at that his heart was lifted up, though he scarcely dare believe his ears; and within a bowshot of him was a glen in the sand, and marble rocks, and date trees, and a lawn of gay green grass. And through the lawn a streamlet sparkled and wandered out beyond the trees, and vanished in the sand. And Perseus laughed for joy, and leapt down the cliff and drank of the cool water, and ate of the dates, and slept upon the turf, and leapt up and went forward.

Then he towered in the air like an eagle, for his limbs were strong again; and he flew all night across the mountain till the day began to dawn, and rosy-fingered Eos came blushing up the sky. And

then, behold, beneath him was the long green garden of Egypt and the shining stream of Nile.

And he saw cities walled up to heaven, and temples, and obelisks, and pyramids, and giant gods of stone. And he came down amid fields of barley and flax, and millet, and clambering gourds; and saw the people coming out of the gates of a great city, and setting to work, each in his place, among the water courses, parting the streams among the plants cunningly with their feet, according to the wisdom of the Egyptians. But when they saw him they all stopped their work, and gathered round him, and cried:

"Who art thou, fair youth? and what bearest thou beneath thy goat-skin there? Surely thou art one of the Immortals; for thy skin is white like ivory, and ours is red like clay. Thy hair is like threads of gold, and ours is black and curled. Surely thou art one of the Immortals"; and they would have worshipped him then and there; but Perseus said:

"I am not one of the Immortals; but I am a hero of the Hellens. And I have slain the Gorgon in the wilderness, and bear her head with me. Give me food, therefore, that I may go forward and finish my work."

Then they gave him food, and fruit, but they would not let him go. And when the news came into the city that the Gorgon was slain, the priests came out to meet him, and the maidens, with songs and dances, and timbrels and harps; and they would have brought him to their temple and to their King; but

Perseus put on the hat of darkness, and vanished away out of their sight.

And Perseus flew along the shore above the sea; and he went on all the day; and he went on all the night.

And at the dawn of day he looked toward the cliffs; and at the water's edge, under a black rock, he saw a white image stand.

"This," thought he, "must surely be the statue of some sea god; I will go near and see what kind of gods these barbarians worship."

But when he came near, it was no statue, but a maiden of flesh and blood; for he could see her tresses streaming in the breeze; and as he came closer still, he could see how she shrank and shivered when the waves sprinkled her with cold salt spray. Her arms were spread above her head, and fastened to the rock with chains of brass; and her head drooped on her bosom, either with sleep, or weariness, or grief. But now and then she looked up and wailed, and called her mother; yet she did not see Perseus, for the cap of darkness was on his head.

Full of pity and indignation, Perseus drew near and looked upon the maid. And, lifting the hat from his head, he flashed into her sight. She shrieked with terror, and tried to hide her face with her hair, for she could not with her hands; but Perseus cried:

"Do not fear me, fair one; I am a Hellen, and no barbarian. What cruel men have bound you? But first I will set you free."

And he tore at the fetters, but they were too strong for him; while the maiden cried:

"Touch me not; I am accursed, devoted as a victim to the sea gods. They will slay you, if you dare to set me free."

"Let them try," said Perseus; and drawing Herpé from his thigh, he cut through the brass as if it had been flax.

"Now," he said, "you belong to me, and not to these sea gods, whosoever they may be!" But she only called the more on her mother.

"Why call on your mother? She can be no mother to have left you here."

And she answered, weeping:

"I am the daughter of Cepheus, King of Iopa, and my mother is Cassiopœia of the beautiful tresses, and they called me Andromeda, as long as life was mine. And I stand bound here, hapless that I am, for the sea monster's food, to atone for my mother's sin. For she boasted of me once that I was fairer than the Queen of the Fishes; so she in her wrath sent the sea floods, and her brother the Fire King sent the earthquakes, and wasted all the land, and after the floods a monster bred of the slime who devours all living things. And now he must devour me, guiltless though I am—me who never harmed a living thing, nor saw a fish upon the shore but I gave it life, and threw it back into the sea; for in our land we eat no fish, for fear of their queen. Yet the priests

say that nothing but my blood can atone for a sin which I never committed."

But Perseus laughed, and said, "A sea monster? I have fought with worse than him: I would have faced Immortals for your sake: how much more a beast of the sea?"

Then Andromeda looked up at him, and new hope was kindled in her breast, so proud and fair did he stand with one hand round her, and in the other the glittering sword. But she only sighed, and wept the more, and cried:

"Why will you die, young as you are? Is there not death and sorrow enough in the world already? It is noble for me to die, that I may save the lives of a whole people; but you, better than them all, why should I slay you too? Go you your way; I must go mine." And then, suddenly looking up, she pointed to the sea, and shrieked:

"There he comes, with the sunrise, as they promised. I must die now. How shall I endure it? Oh, go! Is it not dreadful enough to be torn piecemeal, without having you to look on?" And she tried to thrust him away.

But he said: "I go; yet promise me one thing ere I go: that if I slay this beast you will be my wife, and come back with me to my kingdom in fruitful Argos. Promise me, and seal it with a kiss."

Then she lifted up her face, and kissed him; and Perseus laughed for joy, and flew upward, while Andromeda crouched trembling on the rock.

On came the great sea monster, coasting along like a huge black galley. His great sides were fringed with clustering shells and seaweeds, and the water gurgled in and out of his wide jaws.

At last he saw Andromeda, and shot forward to take his prey, while the waves foamed white behind him, and before him the fish fled leaping.

Then down from the height of the air fell Perseus like a shooting star; down to the crests of the waves, while Andromeda hid her face as he shouted; and then there was silence for a while.

At last she looked up trembling, and saw Perseus springing toward her; and instead of the monster a long black rock, with the sea rippling quietly round it.

Who then so proud as Perseus, as he leapt back to the rock, and lifted his fair Andromeda in his arms, and flew with her to the cliff top, as a falcon carries a dove?

Who so proud as Perseus, and who so joyful as all the Æthiop people? For they had stood watching the monster from the cliffs, wailing for the maiden's fate. And already a messenger had gone to Cepheus and Cassiopœia, where they sat in sackcloth and ashes on the ground, in the innermost palace chambers, awaiting their daughter's end. And they came, and all the city with them, to see the wonder, with songs and with dances, with cymbals and harps, and received their daughter back again, as one alive from the dead.

Then Cepheus said, "Hero of the Hellens, stay here with me and be my son-in-law, and I will give you the half of my kingdom."

"I will be your son-in-law," said Perseus, "but of your kingdom I will have none, for I long after the pleasant land of Greece, and my mother who waits for me at home."

Then Cepheus said, "You must not take my daughter away at once, for she is to us like one alive from the dead. Stay with us here a year, and after that you shall return with honour." And Perseus consented. So they went up to the palace; and when they came in, there stood in the hall Phineus, the brother of Cepheus, chafing like a bear robbed of her whelps, and with him his sons, and his servants, and many an armed man, and he cried to Cepheus:

"You shall not marry your daughter to this stranger of whom no one knows even the name. Was not Andromeda betrothed to my son? And now she is safe again, has he not a right to claim her?"

But Perseus laughed, and answered: "If your son is in want of a bride, let him save a maiden for himself."

Then he unveiled the Gorgon's head, and said, "This has delivered my bride from one wild beast; it shall deliver her from many." And as he spoke Phineus and all his men-at-arms stopped short, and stiffened each man as he stood; and before Perseus had drawn the goat-skin over the face again, they were all turned into stone. Then Perseus bade the people bring levers and roll them out.

So they made a great wedding feast, which lasted seven whole days, and who so happy as Perseus and Andromeda?

And when a year was ended Perseus hired Phœnicians from Tyre, and cut down cedars, and built himself a noble galley; and painted its cheeks with vermilion and pitched its sides with pitch; and in it he put Andromeda, and all her dowry of jewels, and rich shawls, and spices from the East; and great was the weeping when they rowed away. But the remembrance of his brave deed was left behind; and Andromeda's rock was shown at Iopa in Palestine till more than a thousand years were past.

So Perseus and the Phœnicians rowed to the westward, across the sea, till they came to the pleasant Isles of Hellas, and Seriphos, his ancient home.

Then he left his galley on the beach, and went up as of old; and he embraced his mother, and Dictys his good foster-father, and they wept over each other a long while, for it was seven years and more since they had met.

Then he went home to Argos, and reigned there well with fair Andromeda. But the will of the gods was accomplished towards Acrisius, his grandfather, for he died from the falling of a quoit which Perseus had thrown in a game.

Perseus and Andromeda had four sons and three daughters, and died in a good old age. And when they died, the ancients say, Athené took them up into the sky, with Cepheus and Cassiopœia. And

there on starlight nights you may see them shining still; Cepheus with his kingly crown, and Cassiopœia in her ivory chair, plaiting her star-spangled tresses, and Perseus with the Gorgon's head, and fair Andromeda beside him, spreading her long white arms across the heavens, as she stood when chained to the stone for the monster. All night long they shine, for a beacon to wandering sailors; but all day they feast with the gods, on the still blue peaks of Olympus.

HERCULES

MANY, many years ago in the far-off land of Hellas, which we call Greece, lived a happy young couple whose names were Alcmene and Amphitryon. Now Amphitryon, the husband, owned many herds of cattle. So also the father of Alcmene, who was King of Mycenae, owned many.

All these cattle grazing together and watering at the same springs became united in one herd. And this was the cause of much trouble, for Amphitryon fell to quarreling with the father of his wife about his portion of the herd. At last he slew his father-in-law, and from that day he fled his old home at Mycenae.

Alcmene went with her husband and the young couple settled at Thebes, where were born to them two boys—twins—which were later named Hercules and Iphicles.

From the child's very birth Zeus, the King of all heaven that is the air and clouds, and the father of gods and men—from the boy's very birth Zeus loved Hercules. But when Hera, wife of Zeus, who shared his honours, saw this love she was angry. Especially she was angry because Zeus foretold that Hercules should become the greatest of men.

Therefore one night, when the two babies were but eight months old, Hera sent two huge serpents to destroy them. The children were asleep in the great shield of brass which Amphitryon carried in battle for his defence. It was a good bed, for it was round and curved toward the centre, and filled with soft blankets which Alcmene and the maids of the house had woven at their looms. Forward toward this shield the huge snakes were creeping, and just as they lifted their open mouths above the rim, and were making ready to seize them, the twins opened their eyes. Iphicles screamed with fright. His cries wakened their mother, Alcmene, who called in a loud voice for help. But before Amphitryon and the men of the household could draw their swords and rush to the rescue, the baby Hercules, sitting up in the shield unterrified and seizing a serpent in each hand, had choked and strangled them till they died.

From his early years Hercules was instructed in the learning of his time. Castor, the most experienced charioteer of his day, taught him, Eurytus also, how to shoot with a bow and arrows; Linus how to play upon the lyre; and Eumolpus, grandson of the North Wind, drilled him in singing. Thus time passed to his eighteenth year when, so great already had become his strength and knowledge, he killed a fierce lion which had preyed upon the flocks of Amphitryon while they were grazing on Mount Cithaeron, and which had in fact laid waste many a fat farm of the surrounding country.

But the anger of Hera still followed Hercules, and the goddess sent upon him a madness. In this craze the hero did many unhappy deeds. For punishment and in expiation he condemned himself to exile, and at last he went to the great shrine of the god Apollo at Delphi to ask whither he should go and where settle. The Pythia, or priestess in the temple, desired him to settle at Tiryns, to serve as bondman to Eurystheus, who ruled at Mycenae as King, and to perform the great labours which Eurystheus should impose upon him. When these tasks were all accomplished, the inspired priestess added, Hercules should be numbered among the immortal gods.

THE FIRST LABOUR—WRESTLING WITH THE NEMEAN LION

The first task which Eurystheus required of Hercules was to bring him the skin of a lion which no arrow nor other weapon could wound, and which had long been a terror to the good people who lived in Nemea. Hercules set forth armed with bow and quiver, but paused in the outer wood of Nemea long enough to cut himself his famous club. There too he fell in with an honest countryman who pledged him to make a sacrifice to Zeus, the saviour, if he, Hercules, should return victorious; but if he were slain by the monstrous lion, then the countryman should make the sacrifice a funeral offering to himself as a hero.

So Hercules proceeded, far into a dense wood, deserted because all people feared the fierce beast it protected. On he went till after many days he sighted the lion at rest near the cave which was its den. Standing behind a tree of great girth, Hercules fitted and let fly an arrow. It struck and glanced, leaving the animal unharmed. Then he tried another shot, aiming at the heart. Again the arrow failed. But the lion was by this time roused, and his eyes shot fiery glances, and the heavy roar from his throat made the woods most horribly resound. Then the devoted Hercules seized his heavy wooden club, and rushing forward drove the lion by the suddenness and fierceness of his assault into his den. But the den had two entrances. Against one Hercules rolled huge stones, and entering the cave by the other he grasped the lion's throat with both hands, and thus held him struggling and gasping for breath till he lay at his feet dead.

Hercules swung the mighty bulk upon his shoulders and proceeded to seek the countryman with whom his pledge stood. So great had been his journey, and so hard his search, that he did not find the good man till the last of the thirty days. There he stood just on the point of offering a sheep to Hercules, supposing him dead. Together they sacrificed the sheep to Zeus instead, and Hercules, vigorous and victorious, bore the mighty lion's body to Eurystheus at Mycenae.

Entering the place and throwing the carcass down before the king, Hercules so terrified Eurystheus by this token of his wonderful strength

that the King forbade him ever again to enter the city. Indeed some say that the terror of Eurystheus was so great that he had a jar or vessel of brass secretly constructed underground which he might use as a safe retreat in case of danger. This "jar" was probably a chamber and its walls covered within with plates of brass. For now in our own day is seen there at Mycenae a room under the earth, and the nails which fastened the brass plates to the wall still remain. Ever after the conquest of this lion Hercules clothed himself with the skin.

THE SECOND LABOUR—DESTROYING THE LERNEAN HYDRA

The second task of Hercules was to destroy a hydra or water snake which dwelt in the marsh of Lerna, a small lake near Mycenae. The body of this snake was large and from its body sprang nine heads. Eight of these heads were mortal, but the ninth head was undying.

Hercules stepped into his chariot and his dear nephew Iolaus, who was permitted by the Delphic priestess to drive for him, took up the reins. The way to Lerna was pleasant. In spring-time crocuses and hyacinths sprang by the roadside, and in early summer the nightingales sang in the olive groves, vineyard and forest. That so great and horrible a monster could be near!

When Hercules and Iolaus came to Lerna they drew close to ground rising near a spring, and

Hercules dismounting and searching found the very hole into which the hydra had retired. Into this he shot fiery arrows. The arrows discomforting the snake it crawled forth and, darting at him furiously, endeavoured to twine itself about his legs. The hero began then to wield his mighty club. He crushed head after head upon the snake's body, but for every one crushed two sprang in its place.

At length the hydra had coiled so firmly round one leg, that Hercules could not move an inch from the spot. And now an enormous crab came from the water out of friendship for the hydra, and that too crept up to Hercules and, seizing his foot, painfully wounded him.

Swinging his club with heroic vigor Hercules beat the crab to death. Then he called to Iolaus to fire a little grove of trees near by. Iolaus at once set the fire, and when the saplings were well aflame he seized them and, standing by the hero, as fast as Hercules cut off a head of the hydra he seared the neck with a flaming brand. The searing prevented the heads from growing again. When all the eight mortal heads had thus been dispatched Hercules struck off the one said to be immortal and buried it in the roadway, setting a heavy stone above. The body of the hydra he cut up and dipped his arrows in the gall, which was so full of poison that the least scratch from such an arrow would bring certain death.

Eurystheus received the news of the destruction of the water snake with bad grace. He

claimed that Hercules had not destroyed the monster alone, but only with the assistance of Iolaus. All the people, however, rejoiced greatly, and they hastened to drain the marsh where the hydra had dwelt so that never again could such an enemy abide upon their lands.

THE THIRD LABOUR—CAPTURING THE ARCADIAN HIND

In the days in which Hercules lived, Arcadia was a beautiful country of cool, sweet-scented woods, clear mountain streams, and sloping meadow-sides from which rose every now and then the roof of a hunter's cottage or a shepherd's hutch. It was a country also peculiarly pleasing to Artemis, the goddess of the chase, and peculiarly also it was the haunt of all animals especially dear to the goddess.

A hind was there of such loveliness and grace that Artemis had marked her for her own, and given her a pair of golden horns so that she might be known from all other deer and her life thus preserved. For no good Hellen, or Greek, would slay for food any animal sacred to a god. This beautiful golden-horned hind Eurystheus ordered Hercules to bring to him alive, for the irreverence of the King did not go so far as to demand her dead.

So Hercules went forth for the hunting and, not wishing to wound the hind, pursued her for one entire year. Up hill he went, down many a mountain

dale, across many a gleaming river, through deep forest and open field, and always dancing before him were the golden tips of horns of the hind—near enough to be seen, too far to be seized. At last tired with the pursuit the lovely beast one day took refuge upon a mountain side, and there as she sought the water of a river, Hercules struck her with an arrow. The wound was slight, but it helped the hero to catch the creature, and to lift her to his shoulders. Thereupon, he started for the court of Eurystheus.

But the way was long, and it lay through a part of Arcadia where the bush was heavy, and forests were deep, and mountains were high, and while Hercules was pursuing his way and bearing his meek-eyed burden, he one day met the fair goddess to whom the hind was sacred. Her brother, the beautiful god Apollo, was with her.

Artemis seeing her captured deer cried to the hero, "Mortal, oho! thus wilt thou violate a creature set aside by the gods?" "Mighty Artemis and huntress," answered Hercules, "this hind I know is thine. A twelve-month have I chased and at last caught her. But the god Necessity forced me! Oh, immortal one, I am not impious. Eurystheus commanded me to catch the hind and the priestess of Apollo enjoined me to observe the King's command."

When Artemis understood how Hercules was bondman she dismissed her anger, and sent him forward with kind words, and thus he brought the

golden-horned hind to Mycenae and sent it in to the King.

THE FOURTH LABOUR—CAPTURING THE BOAR OF ERYMANTHUS

In the northwestern part of the famed Arcadia where the golden-horned hind roamed was a range of mountains called Erymanthus. Over the high tops of this range wandered also a wild beast, but unlike the lovely hind he was fierce and terrible of aspect and deadly in encounter. He was known as the boar of Erymanthus. This tusked and terrible being the King of Mycenae, Eurystheus, commanded the mighty Hercules, his bondman, to bring alive to him.

Again Hercules set out, and again he fared over hill and across bright waters, and as he went the birds sang spring songs to him from vine and tree shade, and yellow crocuses carpeted the earth. In his journey he came one day to the home of Pholus, a centaur, who dwelt with other centaurs upon the side of a mountain. Now the centaurs were, of all the dwellers of that distant land, most unlike us modern folks. For report has it that they were half that noble creature man, and half that noble creature horse: that is to say, they were men as far as the waist, and then came the body of the horse with its swift four feet. There are those, indeed, who claim that the centaurs were men and rode their mountain ponies so deftly that man and horse seemed one whole creature. Be that as it may, upon this mountain side the centaur

Pholus dwelt with others of his kind, and there to visit with him came Hercules.

The centaur with his hospitable heart and own hands prepared a dinner of roast meat for the hungry traveller, and as they sat at the board in genial converse they had much enjoyment. But Hercules was also thirsty, and the sparkling water from the mountain spring seemed not to satisfy him. He asked the centaur for wine. "Ah, wine, my guest-friend Hercules," answered Pholus, "I have none of my own. Yonder is a jar of old vintage, but it belongs to all the centaurs of our mountain and I cannot open it." "But friend Pholus," said Hercules pressingly, "I would I had a little for my stomach's sake."

Now the centaur had a kind heart as we have said, and he rejoiced that Hercules had come, and to give the hero his desires he opened the jar. The wine was made from grapes that grew under the fair skies of Arcadia and its fragrance was like a scent of lilies or of roses, and when the soft winds entered the door, near which Hercules sat drinking, it seized the perfume and bore it over the mountain side. Now hear of all the mischief a little wine may make.

The fragrance in the air told the centaurs, wherever each happened to be, that their wine jar had been opened, and they rushed to its resting place perhaps to defend it from any wayfaring thief, perhaps to help drink it, we do not know. But each came angrily to the mouth of the cave of Pholus and all were armed with stones and staves which they

had seized as they hastened onward. When they first entered with raging cries and threatening gesture Hercules grasped the brands burning on the hospitable hearth and drove them back. As others pressed behind them the hero drew forth his arrows poisoned with the gall of the Lernean hydra, and sent among them many a shaft. Thus they fought retreating and, they fleeing and Hercules pursuing, came finally to the dwelling of Chiron, most famed of all the centaurs and a teacher of Hercules in his youth, teacher of his great art of surgery.

The wine raging in the veins of Hercules made him for the moment forgetful of all the good Chiron had bestowed upon him, and still letting fly his poisonous arrows he, aiming at another, hit the noblest of the centaurs. Grief seized Hercules when he saw what he had done and he ran and drew out the arrow and applied a soft ointment which Chiron himself had taught him to make. But it was in vain, for the centaur, inspiring teacher and famed for his love of justice as he was, soon gave up the ghost.

Saddened at his own madness Hercules now returned to the cave of his guest-friend Pholus. There among others his host lay, and stark dead. He had drawn an arrow from the body of one who had died from its wound, and, while examining it and wondering how so slight a shaft could be so fatal, had accidentally dropped it out of his hand. It struck his foot and he expired that very moment.

Hercules paid all funeral honour to his friends and afterward departing from the unhappy neighbourhood took up his search of the boar.

Heavy snows were lying on the crests of Erymanthus when Hercules came upon the tracks of the wild creature, and following patiently finally reached his lair. There the boar stood, his tusks pointed outward ready for attack, his eyes snapping vindictively. He was indeed a terrible thing to see.

Hercules, instead of shooting at the animal, began to call, and shouting with loud cries he so confused the boar that he ran into the vast snowdrift standing near by. Thereupon the hero seized and bound him with a wild grapevine he had brought for the purpose. And so swinging him over his shoulder he took his way toward Mycenae.

The King Eurystheus was terribly frightened at the very prospect of having the boar to keep, and when he heard Hercules was coming to town with the animal on his shoulders he took to the brazen underground chamber, which he had built, when Hercules came in with the body of the Nemean lion. There he stayed for several days, according to a good old historian, Diodorus, who in writing of the King told that he was so great a coward.

THE FIFTH LABOUR—CLEANSING THE STABLES OF AUGEAS

Although Eurystheus was seized with tremor at the coming of Hercules with the Erymanthian boar, still he continued relentless, and demanded the performance of the next task, which was nothing less than the cleaning out in one day of stables where numerous cattle had been confined for many years. These noisome stalls belonged to Augeas, a King of Elis and a man rich in herds—so rich indeed that as the years passed and his cattle increased he could not find men enough to care for his kine and their house. Thus the animals had continued, and had so littered their abiding place that it had become well nigh intolerable and a source of disease and even of pestilence to the people.

When Hercules came to King Augeas he said nothing to him of the command Eurystheus had laid upon him, but looking through the stables which covered a space of many meadows he spoke of the cattle and the evil condition of their housing. "The moon-eyed kine will do better in clean stables," said the wise Hercules, "and if thou wilt pledge me a tenth of thy herds I will clean out thy stalls in a day." To this Augeas delightedly agreed and, speaking as they were in the presence of the young son of the King, Hercules called upon the prince to witness the pact.

Now Hercules in going about the great stables had noticed that at the upper end of their building flowed a swift river, and at the lower end was a second swift stream. When therefore Augeas had pledged himself to the work, Hercules, beginning early next day, took down the walls at the upper end of the stalls and the walls at the lower end. Then with his own mighty hands he dug channels and canals and led the waters of the upper swift-flowing river into the heavily littered floor of the stalls. And the waters rose and pushed the litter before them and made one channel into the lower river, and then another and another and so, working through the hours of the day, the upper river scoured the stables clean and carried the refuse to the lower river. And the lower river took the burden and carried it out to the salt sea, which is ever and always cleaning and purifying whatever comes to its waters. And when night fell there stood the hero Hercules looking at his work—the filthy stables of Augeas cleaned.

When next day Hercules asked for the tenth of the herds which the King had pledged, Augeas refused to stand by his agreement. He had learned that this labour of cleaning his stables had been imposed upon Hercules, and he claimed he should pay nothing for it; in fact, he denied he had promised anything, and offered to lay the matter before judges. The cause therefore was tried, and at the trial the young son of the King, who had witnessed the pact, testified to the truth of Hercules' claim. This so enraged his father that in most high-handed manner he banished both his son and the

hero from Elis without waiting for the judgment of the court. Hercules returned to Mycenae. But again the cowardly and contemptible Eurystheus refused to count this labour, saying Hercules had done it for hire.

THE SIXTH LABOUR—SHOOTING THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS

Far in the famed land of Arcadia is a beautiful lake known so many years ago, as in the time of Hercules, and even by us in our day, as Lake Stymphalus. It is a lake of pure sweet water and it lies, as such waters lie in our own country, high up in mountains and amid hillsides covered with firs and poplars and clinging vines and wild blossoms.

In our day the lake is a resort for gentle singing birds, but in the time of Hercules other birds were there also. The other birds were water fowls, and they had gathered at Lake Stymphalus because they had been driven out of their old home by wolves, who alone were hungrier and more destructive than they. These fowls had claws of iron, and every feather of theirs was sharper than a barbed arrow, and so strong and fierce and ravenous they were that they would dart from the air and attack hunters, yea, and pecking them down would tear and strip their flesh till but a bony skeleton remained of that which a few minutes before had been a strong, active, buoyant man seeking in the chase food for his hearthside.

To make way with this horrid tribe of the air was the sixth command Eurystheus laid upon Hercules. Toward Lake Stymphalus therefore turned our hero. Again he walked Arcadian waysides, and again as he fared the spring sun shone above, and the birds sang welcome, and the narcissus lifted its golden cup, and as he went his heart rejoiced in his life, whatever the difficulty of his labour, and in the beauty of the world before his eyes. And as he walked also he thought of how he should accomplish the great undertaking upon which he was bent.

While thus deliberating the grey-eyed goddess of wisdom, Athené, came to him—just as this goddess even in our day comes to those who think—and she suggested to his mind that he should scare the fowl from their retreat by brazen rattles. The goddess did even more than put the notion of using a rattle in the mind of Hercules. It is said she actually brought him one, a huge, bronze clapper made for him by the forger of the gods, limping Hephæstus.

Hercules took this rattle and mounting a neighbouring height shook it in his great hands till every hill echoed and the very trees quivered with the horrid sound. And the man-eating birds? Not one remained hidden. Each and every one rose terrified in the air, croaking and working its steely talons and sharp-pointed feathers in dire fear.

Now from his quiver the hero fast picked his barbed arrows, and fast he shot and every shot

brought to his feet one of the terrible man-eaters, till at last he had slain every one. Or, if indeed, any of the tribe had escaped, they had flown far away, for never after, in all the long history of Lake Stymphalus, have such creatures appeared again above its fair waters.

So ended the sixth labour of Hercules.

THE SEVENTH LABOUR—CAPTURING THE CRETAN BULL

Just as Zeus who, as we said in the beginning, was King of all heaven that is the air and clouds, so Posidon was King of the sea. With his queen, Amphitrite, he lived far down underneath the waves, and dwelt in a palace splendid with all the beautiful things of the deep.

In the midst of the blue waters of the Mediterranean where Posidon had his home, lies an island called Crete, and long ago in the days when Hercules laboured, a King, whose name was Minos, ruled over this land. The island is long and narrow and has much sea coast, and because of this fact King Minos stood in intimate relations with the god of the sea.

Now one day in an especial burst of friendliness, Minos vowed to sacrifice to Posidon whatever should come out of the salt waters. The god in pleasure at the vow, and to test mayhap the devotion of Minos, sent at once a beautiful bull

leaping and swimming through the waves. When the creature had come to the rocky coast and made land, its side shone with such beauty, and its ivory-white horns garlanded with lilies set so like a crown above its graceful head that Minos and all the people who saw it marvelled that anywhere could have grown such a bull. And a sort of greed and deceit seized Minos as he gazed, and for his sacrifice to Posidon he resolved to use another bull. And so he ordered his herdsman to take this fair creature that had come from the sea and to put it among his herd, and also to bring forth another for the offering.

Because of this avarice of Minos the god below the waves was angry and he made the bull wild and furious, so that no herdsman dared approach to feed or care for it. For his seventh task Eurystheus commanded Hercules to fetch him this mad bull of Crete.

Hercules accordingly boarded one of the ships that plied in that far-off day, as well as in this time of ours, between the rocky coast of Crete and the fair land of Hellas, and in due time the hero came to Minos' court. "I have come, sire," said Hercules, "for the mad bull that terrifies thy herdsmen and is rumoured beyond capture." "Ay, young man," cried the king, "thou hast come for my bull and my bull shalt thou have. When thou hast taken it, it is thine," and the King laughed grimly, for the strength and fury of the creature he deemed beyond any man's control.

Hercules sought the grove where Posidon's gift had strayed from its fellows, and there deftly seizing it by the horns, he bound its feet with stout straps of bull's hide and its horns he padded with moss of the sea from which it came, and so having made it powerless he lifted it to his shoulders and carried it to the shore. A swift black ship was just spreading sail from Crete, and entering upon it the hero soon ended his journey and laid his capture before Eurystheus.

A day or two later Hercules loosed the bull, which, after wandering through the woodlands of Arcadia, crossed the isthmus and came to the plains of Marathon, whence, after doing much damage, it swam off to sea and was never heard of after.

So far we have told how Hercules accomplished seven of the tasks laid upon him. Space does not permit us to recount in detail the other five. The eighth task was to bring to Eurystheus the man-eating mares of the King of Windy Thrace. The ninth task was to fetch a girdle which Ares, god of war, had given the Queen of the Amazons—an exceedingly difficult labour, for the Amazons were a nation of women-warriors renowned for valour. For the tenth task Eurystheus demanded the purple oxen of a famous giant who dwelt on an island far out in the ocean. The eleventh task was to bring apples from the garden of the Hesperides—golden apples guarded by a dragon with a hundred heads, no one of which ever closed its eyes in sleep. And the twelfth and last task, which

was to free the mighty Hercules from his bondage to cowardly Eurystheus, was to fetch Cerberus, the three-headed dog, who guarded the entrance to Hades, the unseen abode of departed spirits.

Each and every one of these labours the strong hero accomplished. Having won his freedom and gained the honours promised by the priestess at Delphi many years before, Hercules worked many a noble deed and finally in reward for his much enduring and his aid to mortals, he was carried upon a thunder cloud to the upper air, and entered into the very gates of heaven.

DANIEL

IT PLEASED Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom.

And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the King should have no damage.

Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the King thought to set him over the whole realm.

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the King, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O King, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O King, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Wherefore King Darius signed the writing and the decree.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

Then they came near, and spake before the King concerning the King's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions? The King answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Then answered they and said before the King, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity

of Judah, regardeth not thee, O King, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

Then the King, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

Then these men assembled unto the King, and said unto the King, Know, O King, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the King establisheth may be changed.

Then the King commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the King spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the King sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

Then the King went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

Then the King arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the King spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

Then said Daniel unto the King, O King, live for ever.

My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me: and also before thee, O King, have I done no hurt.

Then was the King exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.