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# BACCHÆ AND HERACLIDÆ

OF

## EURIPIDES,

A

LITERALLY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,

FROM THE TEXT OF DINDORF,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

*Critical Notes,*

FROM THE BEST COMMENTATORS.

BY A

MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

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THE BACCHÆ  
OF  
EURIPIDES.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BACCHUS.  
CHORUS.  
TIRESIAS.  
CADMUS.  
PENTHEUS.  
SERVANT.  
MESSENGER.  
ANOTHER MESSENGER.  
AGAVE<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Agave was the mother of Pentheus, mentioned by Horace :

“ Quid, caput abscissum demens cum portat Agave  
Gnati infelicis, sibi tum furiosa videtur !”

Sat. ii. 3, 303.



## THE ARGUMENT.

BACCHUS, having been made a god, when Pentheus was unwilling to admit his orgies into his kingdom, having excited to madness the sisters of his mother,—I mean of Semele,—compelled them to tear Pentheus to pieces. The same subject is handled by Æschylus, in the *Pentheus*; the name alone has been changed by Euripides. The Chorus consists of Bacchanalian women; and the scene of the play is in the district of Thebes<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> “The *Bacchæ* exhibits the tumultuous enthusiasm of the Bacchanalian worship with great impressiveness to the senses, and much living reality. The stubborn unbelief of Pentheus, his infatuation, and fearful punishment by the hand of his own mother, form a daring picture. The stage effect must have been extraordinary. Imagine the Chorus, with flying hair and garments, tambourines, cymbals, &c., in their hands, as the *Bacchæ* are represented on bas-relief, storming in the orchestra, and executing their inspired dance amidst the din of music, which in other cases was quite unusual, as the choral odes were performed with no other accompaniment than that of a flute, and with a solemn step.

And on this occasion indeed this luxuriance of ornament, which Euripides everywhere seeks, was quite in place. When, therefore, certain modern critics rank this piece very low, I cannot help thinking that they do not rightly know what they would have. On the contrary, I cannot but admire the harmony and unity of its composition, qualities of so rare occurrence in this poet,—his abstinence from all foreign matter, so that the effects and motives all flow from one source and tend to one end. Next to the *Hippolytus*, I would assign to this play the first place among the extant works of Euripides.”—SCHLEGEL, on *Dramatic Literature*.



# THE BACCHÆ

OF

EURIPIDES.

1—14

BACCHUS. I, the son of Jupiter, Bacchus, am come to this land of the Thebans, whom formerly Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, brought forth, being delivered by the lightning-bearing flame<sup>1</sup>. And having taken in exchange for my godhead a mortal form, I am present at the streams of Dirce and the water of Ismenus. And I see the tomb of my thunder-stricken mother here near the palace, and the ruins of the house smoking, and the still living flame of the divine fire, the everlasting insult of Juno to my mother. But I praise Cadmus, who has made this place consecrated, the shrine of his daughter; and I have covered it round with the grape-bearing leaf of the vine. And having left the wealthy<sup>2</sup> lands of the Lydians and Phrygians, and the sunny

<sup>1</sup> Semele requested of Jupiter that he would come to her clad in the same majesty as he approached Juno with. She was burnt with the lightnings he bore in his right hand, and Bacchus was taken from her womb, and sewn up in Jupiter's

thigh till the time of his birth came.

<sup>2</sup> The Lydians are called *πολύχρυσοι*, from the two rivers, Hermus and Paetolus, flowing through Lydia, each of which was said to roll down gold in its waves.

plains of the Persians, and the Bactrian walls ; and having come over the stormy land of the Medes, and the happy Arabia, and all Asia which lies on the coast of the salt sea, having fair-towered cities full of Greeks and barbarians mingled together ; . . and there having danced and established my sacred rites, that I might be a god manifest to men, I have come to this city, first of the Grecian cities, and I have raised my shout in Thebes, first of this land of Greece, putting a deer-skin on my body, and a thyrsus in my hand, a weapon covered with ivy, because the sisters of my mother, whom it became least of all to do so, said that I, Bacchus, was not born of Jove ; but that Semele, having conceived of some mortal, imputed the sin of her bed to Jove, it being a trick of Cadmus ; on which account they affirmed that Jupiter had slain her, because she spoke falsely of her marriage. Therefore have I now driven them from the house with frenzy, and they dwell in the mountain, insane in their minds ; and I have compelled them to have the dress of my mysteries. And all the female race of the Cadmeans, as many as are women, have I driven in frenzy from the house. And they, mingled with the sons of Cadmus, sit on the roofless rocks under the green pines ;—for this city must know, even though it be unwilling, that it is not initiated into my mysteries, and that I am acting in defence of my mother, Semele, in appearing to mortals as a god whom she bore to Jove. Cadmus then gave<sup>3</sup> his honour and power to Pentheus, the son of his daughter, who fights against the gods as far as I am concerned, and drives me from

<sup>3</sup> The force of *δίδωμι* is, that he gave them to Pentheus, who has them still.

sacrifices, and in her prayers makes no mention of me ; on which account I will show him and all the Thebans that I am a god. And having arranged matters here well, manifesting myself, I will move to another land. But if the city of the Thebans should in anger seek by arms to bring down the Bacchæ from the mountain, I will add myself to the Mænades <sup>4</sup> as their general. On which account I have assumed a mortal form, and changed my shape into the nature of a man. But, O ye who have left Tmolus, the bulwark of Lydia ; ye women, my company, whom I have brought from among foreigners, as assistants and companions to me ; take your drums, your native instruments in the Phrygian cities, the invention of the mother Rhea <sup>5</sup>, and myself, and coming clash them around this royal palace of Pentheus, that the city of Cadmus may see it. And I, with the Bacchæ, going where they are to the glens of Cithæron, will share their dances.

CHORUS. Coming from the land of Asia, having left the sacred Tmolus, I labour a sweet labour and a toil easily borne for Bromius <sup>6</sup>, celebrating the god Bacchus. Who is in the way ? who is in the way ? who is in the halls ? Let him depart. And let every one be purified as to his mouth speaking propitious things ; for now I will celebrate Bacchus according to established hymns :—Blessed is he, whoever being modest, knowing the sacred rites of the gods, keeps his life pure, and

<sup>4</sup> The Bacchæ are called Mænades, from *μαινομαι*, to be mad.

<sup>5</sup> Rhea, called also Cybele, was reputed the mother of all the gods,—so Virgil calls her, “qualis Berecynthia mater

*Læta deùm partu, centum complexa nepotes, Omnes Cœlicolas, omnes supera alta tenentes.*”—*Æn.* vi. 787.

<sup>6</sup> Bromius was a name of Bacchus, from *βρόμος*, a noise, a shout.

has his soul initiated into the Bacchic company, honouring Bacchus in the mountains with holy purifications, and reverencing the mysteries of the mighty mother Cybele, and waving the thyrsus<sup>7</sup>, and being crowned with ivy, serves Bacchus! Go, ye Bacchæ; go, ye Bacchæ, conducting Bromius, a god, the son of a god, from the Phrygian mountains to the wide streets of Greece! Bacchus! Bromius! whom formerly being in the pains of travail, the thunder of Jove flying to her, his mother cast from her womb, leaving life by the stroke of the thunderbolt. And immediately Jupiter, the son of Saturn, received him in a chamber fitted for birth; and covering him in his thigh, keeps him with golden clasps hidden from Juno. And he brought him forth when the Fates had perfected the horned<sup>8</sup> god, and crowned him with garlands of snakes, from whence the thyrsus-bearing Mænades are wont to cover their prey with their hair. O Thebes, nurse of Semele, crown thyself with ivy, flourish, flourish with the green yew bearing sweet fruit, and dance in honour of Bacchus crowned in branches of oak or pine, and cover your garments of spotted deer-skin with fleeces of white sheep, and behave holily with the insulting<sup>9</sup> wands, immediately all the earth shall dance. It is Bromius who leads the bands to the mountain, to the mountain

<sup>7</sup> The thyrsus was the wand or sceptre sacred to Bacchus, entwined with ivy or vine leaves. Horace speaks of it:

“parce Liber, Parce, gravi metuende thyrsos.”—*Od.* ii. 19, 8.

And Ovid:

“Pampineâ tetigisse Bicorniger hastâ Creditur.”

<sup>8</sup> Bacchus is represented by the ancients as having horns. So Sappho says to Phaon:

“Accedant capiti cornua, Bacchus eris.”—*Ov. Her. S. Ph.* 26.

<sup>9</sup> Barnes says the thyrsi were called insulting because the Bacchanalians with them struck every one whom they met.



where the female crowd abides, far from the distaff and the shuttle, driven mad by Bacchus. O habitation of the Curetes, and divine Crétan caves, nurses of Jupiter, where the Corybantes with the triple helmet invented for me in their caves this circle covered with hide<sup>10</sup>; and with the sweet-voiced breath of Phrygian pipes they mingled a constant sound of Bacchus, and put the instrument in the hand of Rhea, sweetly sounding in harmony with the songs of the Bacchæ. And hard by the frantic satyrs performed the sacred rites of the mother goddess. And they added the dances of the Trieterides<sup>1</sup>, in which Bacchus rejoices; glad in the mountains, when after the bounding dance he falls on the plain, having a sacred garment of deer-skin, preparing a sacrifice of goats<sup>2</sup>, a raw delight, on his way to the Phrygian the Lydian mountains; and the leader is Bromius, Evøe<sup>3</sup>! but the plain flows with milk, and flows with wine, and flows with the nectar of bees; and the smoke is as of Syrian frankincense. But Bacchus bearing a flaming fire of pine on his thyrsus, rushes

<sup>10</sup> The Curetes and Corybantes were inhabitants of Crete, where Jupiter, when an infant, was protected from the rage of Saturn; and to drown his infant cries the Curetes invented drums and cymbals, and as the bees followed the sound, they fed Jupiter with their honey:

“Pro quâ mercede, canoros Curetum sonitus, crepitantiaque æra secutæ, Dictæo regem cœli pavere sub antro.”—VIRG. G. iv. 152.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Virgil, *Æn.* iv. 301:

“Commotis excita sacris

Thyas ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho Orgia.”

<sup>2</sup> The goat was sacrificed to Bacchus because he eat the vine:

“Quem cernens aliquis dentes in vite prementem Talia non tacito dicta dolore dedit: Rode, caper, vitem; tamen hinc, cum stabis ad aram, In tua quod fundi cornua possit, erit.”—Ov. Fasti.

<sup>3</sup> Evøe! an exclamation in honour of Bacchus, from which his name of Evius is derived:

“Evøe! recenti mens trepidat metu.”—Hor. Od. ii. 19.

about exciting in his course the wandering Choruses, and inflaming them with shouts, throwing his delicate hair loose in the air,—and with his songs he shouts out such things as this : O go forth, ye Bacchæ ; O go forth, ye Bacchæ, delight of the golden Tmolus. Sing Bacchus in tune with your loud drums, Evœe, celebrating the god Evius in Phrygian cries and shouts. When the sweet sacred pipe sounds a sacred playful sound accordant with the frantic wanderers, to the mountain, to the mountain—and the Bacchanalian rejoicing at the same time, as a foal with its mother at pasture, moves its swift foot in the dance.

**TIRESIAS.** Who at the door will call Cadmus from the house, the son of Agenor, who having left the city of Sidon, built this city of the Thebans ? Let some one go, tell him that Tiresias seeks him ; but he himself knows on what account I come, and what agreement I, being old, have made with him, who is older ; to twine the thyrsi, and to wear the skins of deer, and to crown the head with the ivy branches.

**CADMUS.** O dearest friend ! how I, being in the house, rejoiced hearing your voice, the wise voice of a wise man ; and I am come prepared, having this equipment of the god ; for we must extol him, who is the son of my daughter, Bacchus, who has appeared as a god to men, as much as we can. Which way shall I dance, whither direct the foot, and wave the hoary head ? Do you lead me, you, an old man ! O Tiresias, direct me, an old man ; for you are wise. As I shall never tire, neither night nor day, beating the earth with the thyrsus. Gladly we forget that we are old.

**TI.** You have the same feelings indeed as I ; for I too feel young, and will attempt the dance.

CA. Then we will go in chariots to the mountain.

TI. But so the god would not have equal honour.

CA. I, an old man, will lead you, an old man.

TI. The god will guide us thither without trouble.

CA. But shall we alone of the city dance in honour of Bacchus?

TI. Ay, for we alone are wise, but the rest foolish.

CA. We are long getting there; but take hold of my hand.

TI. See, take hold, and join your hand to mine.

CA. I do not despise the gods, being a mortal.

TI. We do not speculate about the gods too closely: our ancestral traditions, and those which we have kept from our birth, no argument will overthrow them; not if any one were to find out wisdom with the highest genius. Some one will say that I do not reverence old age, being about to dance, having crowned my head with ivy; for the god has not made any distinction as to whether it becomes the young man to dance, or the old man; but wishes to have a common honour from all; but does not at all wish to be extolled by the mob.

CA. Since you, O Tiresias, do not see this light, I will be to you an interpreter. Hither is Pentheus coming in haste to the house, the son of Echion, to whom I give power over the land. How flurried he is! what strange thing will he say?

PENTHEUS. I was at a distance from this land, and I hear of strange evils in the city, that women have left our palace in crazy Bacchic rites; and that they are rushing about in the shady mountains, honouring with dances this new god Bacchus, whoever he may be; and that full goblets stand in the middle of their company, and that flying different ways into privacy, they admit

the embraces of men, on pretence, indeed, as being worshipping Mænades; but that they consider Venus before Bacchus. As many then as I have caught, the servants keep them bound as to their hands in the public prisons, and as many as are absent I will hunt from the mountain, Ino, and Agave who bore me to Echion, and the mother of Actæon, I mean Autonoe; and having bound them in iron fetters, I will soon stop them from this evil Bacchanalianism. And they say that some stranger has come hither, a cheat, a conjuror, from the Lydian land, fragrant as to his air with golden curls, florid, having in his eyes the graces of Venus, who days and nights is with them, administering the Bacchic mysteries to the young maidens—but if I catch him in this house, I will stop him from making a noise with the thyrsus, and waving his hair, cutting off his neck from his body. He says he is the god Bacchus, that he was sown in the thigh of Jove, who was burnt in the flame of lightning, together with his mother, because she falsely claimed a heavenly marriage. Are not these things deserving of a terrible halter for a stranger to insult us with these insults, whoever he may be? But here is another marvel—I see Tiresias the soothsayer, in dappled deer-skins, and the father of my mother, a sight full of ridicule, raging about with a thyrsus—I deprecate it, O father, seeing your old age void of sense; will you not throw away the ivy? will you not, O father of my mother, put down your hand empty of the thyrsus? Have you persuaded him to this, O Tiresias? do you wish introducing this new god among men, to examine birds and to receive rewards for fiery omens? If your hoary old age did not protect you, you should sit as a prisoner in the midst of

the Bacchæ for introducing these wicked rites; for when the juice of the grape is present at a feast of women, I no longer say any thing good of their mysteries.

CHO. Alas for his impiety! O host, do you not respect the gods? and being the son of Echion, do you disgrace your race and Cadmus, who sowed the earth-born crop<sup>4</sup>?

TI. When any wise man takes a good occasion for his speech, it is not a hard task to speak well; but you have a fluent tongue, as if wise, but in your words there is no wisdom; but a powerful man, when bold, and able to speak, is an evil to the citizens if he has not sense. And this young god, whom you ridicule, I am unable to express how great he will be in Greece. For, O young man, two things are of primary importance among men; Ceres, the goddess, and she is the earth, call her whichever name you please. She nourishes mortals with dry food; but he who is come as a match to her, the son of Semele, has invented the liquid drink of the grape, and has brought it to mortals, which delivers miserable men from grief, when they are filled with the stream of the vine; and gives sleep a daily oblivion of evils: nor is there any other medicine for troubles. He who is a god is poured out in sacrifices to the gods, that by his means men may have good things—and you ridicule him as to how he was sewn up in the thigh of Jove; I will teach you that this is well—when Jove snatched him from the lightning flame, and took him, a young infant, up to Olympus, Juno wished

<sup>4</sup> Cadmus having slain the dragon, sowed his teeth in a ploughed field, and there sprang up a band of armed men from the earth, who fought with one another.

to throw him down from heaven; but Jupiter had a counter contrivance, as a god should have. Having broken up a part of the air which surrounds the earth, he placed in it, giving him a pledge, Bacchus, safe from the hate of Juno; and in time, mortals say, that he was nourished in the thigh of Jupiter; changing his name, because a god gave him formerly as a pledge to a goddess, they having made an agreement together. But this god is a prophet—for Bacchanalian excitement and frenzy have much divination in them. For when the god comes with vehemence into the body, he makes the frantic to foretell the future; and he has also some quality of Mars; for fear alarms sometimes an army under arms and in its ranks, before they touch the spear; and then frenzy from Bacchus seizes it; then you shall see him on the Delphic rocks, bounding with torches along the double pointed district<sup>5</sup>, tossing about, and shaking the Bacchic branch, mighty through Greece. But be guided by me, O Pentheus; do not boast that sovereignty has power among men, nor, even if you think so, and your mind is disordered, believe that you are wise. But receive the god into your land, and sacrifice to him, and be a Bacchanalian, and crown your head. Bacchus will not compel women to be immodest with regard to Venus, but in his nature modesty in all things is always innate. This you must consider, for she who is modest will not be corrupted by being at a Bacchanalian feast. Do you see? You rejoice when many stand at your gates, and the city extols the name

<sup>5</sup> Parnassus is meant. Per-  
sius says,

“Nec in bicipiti somniâsse  
Parnasso Memini.”—*Introd.* ii.  
And Ovid,

“Mons ibi verticibus petit ar-  
duus astra duobus Nomine Par-  
nassus, superatque cacumine  
nubes.”—*Met.* iii.

of Pentheus; and he, I suppose, is pleased at being honoured. I, then, and Cadmus whom you ridicule, will crown ourselves with ivy, and dance, a hoary pair; but still we must dance; and I will not contend against the gods being persuaded by your words—for you are mad most grievously; nor can you procure any cure from medicine, nor are you now afflicted without them.

CHO. O old man, you do not disgrace Apollo by your words, and honouring Bromius, the mighty god, you are wise.

CAD. My son, well has Tiresias advised you; dwell with us, not without the laws. For now you wander, and though wise are unwise; for although this person may not be a god as you say, let it be said by you that he is; and affirm a glorious falsehood, so that Semele may appear to have borne a god, and that honour may accrue to all our race. You see the miserable fate of Actæon, whom his blood-thirsty hounds, whom he reared, tore to pieces, for boasting that he was superior in the chace to Diana in the meadows. This may you not suffer; come, that I may crown thy head with ivy, in company with us give honour to God—

PEN. Do not bring your hand towards me; but departing, be a Bacchanalian, and wipe not off your folly on me; I will pursue with punishment this teacher of your folly; let some one go as quickly as possible, and going to his seat where he inspects the birds, upset and overthrow it with levers, turning every thing upside down; and commit his crowns to the winds and storms; for doing this, I shall vex him most. And some of you going along the city, track this effeminate stranger, who brings the new disease upon women, and pollutes our beds—and if you catch him, bring him hither bound;

that meeting with a judgment of stoning he may die, having seen a better part of Bacchus in Thebes.

TI. O wretched man! now you know not what you are saying. You are mad—before now you have been out of your mind. Let us go, O Cadmus. I entreat the god, on behalf of him, savage though he be, and on behalf of the city, to do nothing severe: but follow me with the ivy-clad staff, and attempt to support my body, and I will yours; for it would be a shameful thing for two old men to fall down: but let that pass, for we must serve Bacchus, the son of Jove; but beware lest Pentheus bring grief to thy house, O Cadmus. I do not speak in the spirit of prophecy, but judging from the aspect of affairs, for a foolish man says foolish things.

CHO. O holy venerable goddess! holy, who bearest thy golden wings along the earth, hearest thou these words of Pentheus? Dost thou hear his unholy insolence against Bromius, the son of Semele, the first of the gods at the banquets where the guests wear beautiful chaplets! who has these gifts, to join in dances, and to laugh with the flute, and to put an end to care, when the juice of the grape comes at the feast of the gods, and in the ivy-bearing banquet the goblet sheds sleep over man? Of unbridled mouths and lawless folly the end is misery, but the life of peace, and wisdom, remains unshaken, and sustains a house; for the gods are afar indeed, but still inhabiting the air, they behold the deeds of mortals. But acuteness is not wisdom, nor is the thinking things unfit for mortals. Life is short; and in it who, for the sake of pursuing great things, would not enjoy the present? These are the manners of maniacs; and of ill-disposed men in my opinion. Would that I could go to Cyprus, the island of



Venus, where the Loves dwell, soothing the minds of mortals, and to Paphos, which the waters of a foreign river flowing with a beautiful mouth, fertilise without rain—and to the land in Pieria, where is the beautiful seat of the Muses, the holy hill of Olympus. Lead me thither, O Bromius, O god Bacchus! There are the Graces, and there is Love, and there it is lawful for the Bacchæ to celebrate their orgies; the god, the son of Jove, delights in banquets, and loves Peace, the giver of riches, the goddess who nourishes youths. And both to the rich and the poor <sup>6</sup> has she given to enjoy an equal delight from wine, banishing grief; and he who does not care for these things, hates to live happy by day and by friendly night—but it is wise to keep away the mind and intellect from over-curious men; what the insignificant multitude thinks and adopts, that will I say.

SERVANT. Pentheus, we are here; having caught this prey, for which you sent us: nor have we gone on a vain errand; but the beast was tame in our hands, nor did he withdraw his foot, but yielded not unwillingly; nor did he turn pale nor change his wine-coloured complexion, but laughing, allowed us to bind and lead him away; and remained still, making my work easy; and I for shame said: O stranger, I do not take you of my own accord, but by the command of Pentheus who sent me. And the Bacchæ whom you shut up, whom you carried off and bound in the chains of the public prison, they being escaped are dancing at liberty in the meadows, invoking Bromius as god, and of their own accord the

<sup>6</sup> So Horace:  
 “Tu spem reducis mentibus  
 anxiis, Viresque, et addis cornua pauperi, Post te neque ira-

tos trementi Regum apices,  
 neque militum arma.”—Od. iii.  
 21, 20.

fetters were loosed from their feet, and the keys opened the doors without mortal hand, and full of wonder is this man come to Thebes ; but the rest must be your care.

PEN. Take him by the hands ; for being in the toils, he is not so quick as to escape me : but in your body you are not ill-made, O stranger, for women's purposes, on which account you have come to Thebes. For your hair is long, not savouring of wrestling, scattered over your cheeks, full of love, and you have a white skin from constant attention to it ; hunting after Venus by your beauty not exposed to strokes of the sun, but in the shade. First then tell me who you are in family.

BAC. I will make no boast ; but this is easy to say ; you know by hearing of the flowery Tmolus ?

PEN. I know, the hill which surrounds the city of Sardis.

BAC. Thence do I come ; and Lydia is my country.

PEN. And from whence do you bring these rites into Greece ?

BAC. Bacchus persuaded us, the son of Jove.

PEN. Is Jove then one who begets new gods ?

BAC. No, but having married Semele here,—

PEN. Did he compel you by night, or in your sight by day ?

BAC. Seeing me who saw him ; and he gave me orgies.

PEN. And what appearance have these your orgies ?

BAC. It is unlawful for uninitiated mortals to know.

PEN. And have they any profit to those who sacrifice ?

BAC. It is not lawful for you to hear, but they are worthy for you to know them.

PEN. You have well devised this, that I may wish to hear.

BAC. The orgies of the god hate him who practises impiety.

PEN. Do you say that you saw the god clearly what he was like?

BAC. As he chose himself; I did not enjoy this.

PEN. This too you have well contrived, saying nothing.

BAC. One may seem, though he speaks wisely to one ignorant, not to be wise.

PEN. And did you come hither first, bringing the god?

BAC. Every barbarian celebrates these orgies.

PEN. Ay, for they are much less wise than Greeks.

BAC. In these things they are wiser, but their laws are different.

PEN. Do you perform these rites at night, or by day?

BAC. Most of them at night; darkness has awe in it.

PEN. This is treacherous towards women, and evil.

BAC. Even by day some may devise base things.

PEN. You must be punished for your evil devices.

BAC. And you for your ignorance, being impious to the god.

PEN. How bold is Bacchus, and not unpractised in speaking.

BAC. Say what I must suffer, what evil will you do to me?

PEN. First of all I will cut off your delicate hair.

BAC. The hair is sacred, I cherish it for the god.

PEN. Next give up this thyrsus out of your hands.

BAC. Take it from me yourself, I bear it as the en-  
sign of Bacchus.

PEN. And we will keep your body in-doors in  
prison.

BAC. The god himself will release me when I wish.

PEN. Ay, when you call him standing among the  
Bacchæ.

BAC. Even now, being near, he sees what I suffer.

PEN. And where is he? for at least he is not visible  
to my eyes.

BAC. Near me, but you being wicked, see him not.

PEN. Seize him, he insults me and Thebes!

BAC. I bid you not to bind me: I in my senses com-  
mand you who are not in your senses.

PEN. And I bid them to bind you, being mightier  
than you.

BAC. You know not why you live and see not, nor  
who you are.

PEN. Pentheus, son of Agave, and of my father  
Echion.

BAC. You are suited to be miserable according to  
your name<sup>7</sup>.

PEN. Begone! confine him near the stable of horses  
that he may behold darkness! There dance; and as  
for these women whom you bring with you, the accom-  
plices in your wickedness, we will either sell them, or  
stopping their hand from this noise and beating of skins,  
I will take them as slaves at the loom.

BAC. I will go—for what is not right is not necessary  
to suffer; but as a punishment for these insults Bac-

<sup>7</sup> Punning on πένθος, *grief*.

chus shall pursue you, who you say does not exist; for injuring us you put him in prison.

CHO. O daughter of Achelöus, venerable Dirce, happy virgin, for you received the infant of Jupiter in your fountains when Jove who begat him saved him in his thigh from the immortal fire; uttering this shout: Go, O Dithyrambus<sup>8</sup>, enter this my male womb, I will make you illustrious, O Bacchus, in Thebes, so that they shall call you by this name. But you, O happy Dirce, reject me having a garland-bearing company about you. Why do you reject me? Why do you avoid me? Yet, I swear by the grapy delights of the vine of Bacchus, yet shall you have a regard for Bacchus. What a rage does the earth-born race show, and Pentheus descended from the dragon, whom the earth-born Echion begat, a fierce-looking monster, not a mortal man, but like a bloody giant, an enemy to the gods—who will soon bind me, the handmaid of Bacchus, in halters—he already has within the house my fellow-reveller, hidden in a dark prison. Dost thou behold this, O son of Jupiter? Bacchus, thy prophets in the dangers of restraint. Come, O golden-faced god, brandishing your thyrsus along Olympus, and restrain the insolence of the blood-thirsty man. Where are you collecting your bands of thyrsus-bearers, O Bacchus, is it near Nysa which nourishes wild beasts, or in the summits of Corycus? or perhaps in the woody lairs of Olympus, where formerly Orpheus playing the lyre collected the trees by his songs, collected the beasts

<sup>8</sup> The name Dithyrambus is of very uncertain derivation. The scholiast on Pindar, Ol. 13. 26, says Bacchus received the name from coming out of two doors (*θύραι*), his mother's womb and the thigh of Jupiter.

who dwell in the fields; O happy Pieria, Bacchus respects you, and will come to lead the dance with revellings having crossed the swiftly-flowing Oxius, will bring the dancing Mænades, and leaving Lydia the giver of wealth to men, and the father whom I have heard fertilises the country famous for horses with the most beautiful streams.

BAC. Io<sup>9</sup>! hear ye, hear ye my song, Io Bacchæ! O Bacchæ!

CHO. Who is here, who? from what quarter did the shout of Evius summon me?

BAC. Io, I say again! I, the son of Semele, the son of Jove!

CHO. Io! Master, master! come now to our company. O Bromius! Bromius! Shake this place, O holy Earth! O! O! quickly will the palace of Pentheus be shaken in ruin—Bacchus is in the halls.

BAC. Worship him.

CHO. We worship him. Behold these stone buttresses shaken with their pillars.

SEMI-CHO. Bacchus will shout in the palace; light the burning fiery lamp; burn, burn the house of Pentheus.

SEM. Alas! Do you not see the fire, nor behold around the sacred tomb of Semele the flame which formerly the bolt-bearing thunder of Jupiter left? Cast on the ground your trembling bodies, cast them down, O Mænades, for the king turning things upside down is coming to this palace, Bacchus, the son of Jupiter.

<sup>9</sup> Io! was a favourite shout in honour of the gods, particularly of Apollo. So Ovid:  
"Dicite, Io Pæan, et Io, bis

dicite, Pæan."

And Callimachus:

ὀππὸρ' ἰὴ Παιητὴν ἰὴ Παιητὴν ἀκούσθ.

BAC. O barbarian women! have ye fallen to the ground thus stricken with fear? You have felt, it seems, Bacchus shaking the house of Pentheus; but raise your bodies, and take courage, casting off fear from your flesh.

CHO. O thou great light! to us of Bacchic mystery, how gladly do I see thee, being before alone and desolate!

BAC. Ye came to despair, when I was sent in, as about to fall into the dark prison of Pentheus.

CHO. How could I not?—who was my protector if you met with misfortune? but how were you delivered having met with an impious man?

BAC. I delivered myself easily in that trouble.

CHO. And did he not bind your hand in links of chain?

BAC. In this too I mocked him; when thinking to bind me, he touched me not, nor handled me, but fed on hope; and finding a bull in the stable, where having taken me, he confined me, he cast halters round the knees of that, and the hoof of its feet; breathing out fury, dropping sweat from his body, fixing his teeth in his lips—and I being near, sitting quietly, looked on; and, in the mean time, Bacchus coming, shook the house, and lit a flame on the tomb of his mother; and he, when he saw it, thinking the house was burning, rushed hither and thither, calling to the servants to bring water<sup>1</sup>, and every servant was at work labouring in vain; and giving up this labour, I having escaped, seizing a dark sword, he rushes into the

<sup>1</sup> So Virgil uses the Ache-  
lotis for water:

“Poculaque inventis Ache-  
loia miscuit uvis.”—G. i. 9.

house, and then Bromius, as it seems to me, I speak my opinion, made a light in the palace, and he rushing towards it, rushed on and stabbed at the bright air, as if killing me; and besides this, Bacchus afflicts him with these other things; and threw his house down to the ground, and every thing was shivered to pieces while he saw my bitter chains; and from fatigue dropping his sword, he falls exhausted—for he being a man, dared to fight a god: and I quietly bring the Bacchæ to get out of the house, not regarding Pentheus. But, as it seems to me, a shoe sounds in the house; he will soon come out of the house. What will he say after this? I shall easily bear him, even if he comes full of arrogance, for it is the part of a wise man to practise prudent moderation.

PEN. I have suffered terrible things, the stranger has escaped me, who was lately confined in prison. Hollo! here is the man; what is this? how do you appear outside my house, having come out?

BAC. Stop; and substitute calmness for anger.

PEN. How are you out, having escaped chains?

BAC. Did I not say, or did you not hear, that some one would deliver me.

PEN. Who? for you are always uttering strange things.

BAC. He who produces the grape-bearing vine for mortals.

PEN. It is a fine reproach you heap on Bacchus; I order ye to close every tower all round.

BAC. Why? do not gods pass over walls too?

PEN. You are wise, wise at least in all save what you should be wise in.

BAC. In what I most ought, in that I was born wise;



but first learn, hearing his words who is come from the mountains to bring a message to you; but we will await you, we will not fly.

MESSENGER. Pentheus, king of this Theban land, I come, having left Cithæron, where never have the brilliant flakes of white snow fallen.

PEN. But bringing what important news are you come?

MES. Having seen the holy Bacchæ, who driven by madness have borne their fair feet from this land, have I come, wishing to tell you and the city, O king, what awful things they do, things beyond marvel; and I wish to hear whether in freedom of speech I shall tell you of the things there, or whether I shall repress my report, for I fear, O king, the hastiness of thy mind, and your fierce temper, and too imperious disposition.

PEN. Speak, as you shall be in all respects blameless as far as I am concerned; for it is not right to be angry with the just; and in proportion as you say worse things of the Bacchæ, by so much the more will we punish this man who has taught women these tricks.

MES. I was just now driving to the heights the herd of calves, when the sun sends forth his rays warming the land, and I see three companies of dances of women, one of which Autonoe was chief of; a second, thy mother, Agave; and Ino led the third dance; and they were all sleeping, relaxed as to their bodies, some leaning their backs against the leaves of pine, and some laying their heads at random on the leaves of oak in the ground, modestly, not, as you say, that, drunk with wine and the noise of the flute, they solitary hunt Venus through the wood. But thy mother standing in the midst of the Bacchæ, raised a shout, to wake their

bodies from sleep, when she heard the lowing of the horned oxen; but they casting off refreshing sleep from their eyes, rose upright, a wonder to behold for their elegance, young, old, and virgins yet unmarried—and first they let their hair down on their shoulders; and arranged their deer-skins, as many as had had the fastenings of their knots loosened, and they girded the dappled hides with serpents licking their jaws—and some having in their arms a kid, or the fierce whelps of wolves, gave them white milk. All who having lately had children had breasts still full, having left their infants, and they put on their ivy chaplets, and garlands of oak and flowery yew; and one having taken a thyrsus, struck it against a rock, whence a dewy stream of water springs out; another put her wand on the ground, and then the god sent up a spring of wine. And as many as preferred the white drink, scratching the earth with the tips of their fingers, had abundance of milk; and from the ivy thyrsi sweet streams of honey did drop—so that, had you been present beholding these things, you would have approached with prayers the god whom now you blame. And we came together, herdsmen and shepherds, to discourse with one another of this strange matter, what terrible and marvellous things they do; and some one, a wanderer about the city, and cunning in speaking, said to us all, O ye who inhabit the holy districts of the mountains, will ye that we bring back Agave, the mother of Pentheus, from the revels, and do the king a pleasure? And he seemed to us to speak well, and hiding ourselves, we lie in ambush in the leaves of the bushes; and they, at the appointed hour, waved the thyrsus in their solemnities, calling with united voice on Iacchus, the son of

Jove, Bromius; and the whole mountain was excited, and the beasts; and nothing was unmoved by their running; and Agave was bounding near to me, and I sprang forth, as wishing to seize her, evacuating my lurking-place, where I was hidden. But she cried out, O my swift hounds, we are hunted by these men; but follow me, follow, armed with thyrsi in your hands. We then flying, avoided the tearing of the Bacchæ, but they sprang on the heifers browsing the grass with unarmed hand, and you might see one pulling asunder a fatted calf lowing, and others tore open cows, and you might see either ribs, or a cloven-footed hoof, tossed here and there, and hanging from the pine-trees the fragments were dripping, polluted with blood; and the fierce bulls showing their fury ere now with their horns, were thrown to the ground, overpowered by myriads of maiden hands; and quicker were the coverings of flesh torn asunder by the royal maids than you could close your eyes; and like birds raised in their course, they proceed along the level plain, which by the streams of the Asopus give forth the fertile crop of the Thebans, and falling on Hysiæ and Erythræ, which are inhabited below Cithæron, they turned every thing upside down; they dragged children from the houses; and whatever they put on their shoulders stuck there without chains, and fell not on the dark plain, neither brass nor iron; and they bore fire on their hair, and it burnt not; but some from rage betook themselves to arms, being plundered by the Bacchæ, the sight of which was fearful to behold, O king!—for their pointed spear was not made bloody, but the women hurling the thyrsi from their hands, wounded them, and turned their backs to flight, women defeating men; not with-

out the aid of some god. And they went back again to whence they had started, to the same fountains which the god had made spring up for them, and they washed off the blood; and the snakes with their tongues smoothed off the drops from their cheeks. Receive then, O master, this deity, whoever he be, in this city, since he is mighty in other respects, and they say this too of him, as I hear, that he has given mortals the wine which puts an end to grief,—and where wine exists not there is no Venus, nor any thing pleasant any more to men.

CHO. I fear to speak independent words to the king, but still they shall be spoken; Bacchus is inferior to none of the gods.

PEN. Already like fire does this insolence of the Bacchæ extend thus near, a great reproach to the Greeks. But I must not hesitate; go to the Electra gates, bid all the heavy-armed soldiers and riders of speedy horses to assemble, and all who brandish the light shield, and twang with their hand the string of the bow, as we will make an expedition against the Bacchæ; but this is monstrous if we are to endure what we endure from women.

BAC. O Pentheus, you obey not at all hearing my words; but although ill-treated by you, still I say that you ought not to take up arms against a god, but to rest quiet; Bacchus will not endure your moving the Bacchæ from their Bacchic mountains.

PEN. You shall not teach me; but be content having escaped from prison, or else I will again punish you.

BAC. I would rather sacrifice to him than, being angry, kick against the pricks; a mortal against a god.

PEN. I will sacrifice, making a great slaughter of women, as they deserve, in the glens of Cithæron.

BAC. You will all fly, (and that will be shameful,) so as to yield your brazen shields to the thyrsi of the Bacchæ.

PEN. We are troubled with this impracticable stranger, who neither when he acts nor when he suffers will be silent.

BAC. My friend, there is still time to arrange these things well.

PEN. By doing what? being a slave to my slaves?

BAC. I will bring the women here without arms.

PEN. Alas! you are contriving some device against me.

BAC. Of what sort, if I wish to save you by my contrivances?

PEN. You have devised this together, that ye may save Bacchus for ever.

BAC. And indeed, know this, I agreed on it with the god.

PEN. Bring hither the arms! and do you cease to speak.

BAC. Do you wish to see them sitting on the mountains?

PEN. Very much, if I gave ten thousand pounds of gold for it.

BAC. But why? have you fallen into a great wish for this?

PEN. I should like to see them drunk.

BAC. Would you gladly see what is grievous to you?

PEN. To be sure, sitting quietly under the pines.

BAC. But they will track you out, even though you hide.

PEN. But I will act openly, for you have said this well.

BAC. Shall I then guide you? and will you attempt the way?

PEN. Lead me as quickly as possible; I do not grudge the time.

BAC. Put on then linen garments on your body.

PEN. Why, shall I be reckoned among women, being a man?

BAC. Lest they slay you if you are seen there, being a man.

PEN. You say this well, and you have been long wise.

BAC. Bacchus taught me this wisdom.

PEN. How then can these things which you recommend me be well done?

BAC. I will dress you, going into the house.

PEN. With what dress—a woman's? but I am ashamed.

BAC. Do you no longer wish to see the Mænades?

PEN. But what dress do you bid me put on my body?

BAC. I will spread out your hair at length on your head.

PEN. And what is the next article of my equipment?

BAC. A garment down to your feet; and you shall have a Lydian cap on your head.

PEN. Besides this, shall you put any thing else on me?

BAC. A thyrsus in your hand, and the dappled hide of a deer.

PEN. I cannot wear a woman's dress.

BAC. But you will shed blood if you fight the Bacchæ.

PEN. You say right ; we must first go and see.

BAC. That is wiser than to hunt evils with evils.

PEN. And how shall I go through the city unseen by the Cadmeans ?

BAC. We will go by deserted roads, and I will guide you.

PEN. Every thing is better than for the Bacchæ to mock me ; going into the house we will consider what seems best.

BAC. We can do what we like ; my part is prepared.

PEN. Let us go ; for either I will go bearing arms, or I will be guided by your counsels.

BAC. O women ! the man is in the toils, and he will come to the Bacchæ, where, by dying, he shall make amends. Now, Bacchus, is there need of you, for you are not far off. Let us chastise him ; but first make him out of his wits, inspiring light-headed frenzy, since in his right mind he will not be willing to put on a female dress, but driving him out of his senses he will put it on ; and I wish him to afford laughter to the Thebans, being led in woman's guise through the city, after his former threats, with which he was terrible. But I will go to fit on Pentheus the dress, which, having taken, he shall die, slain by his mother's hand. And he shall know Bacchus, the son of Jupiter, who is to wicked mortals terrible, but to the wise the mildest of deities.

CHO. Shall I move my white foot in the nocturnal dance, honouring Bacchus, exposing my neck to the

dewy air, sporting like a fawn in the green delights of the meadow, when it has escaped a fearful chase beyond the watch of the well-woven nets, (and the huntsman rushing about keeps together the course of his hounds,) and like the swift storm rushes along the river plain exulting in the solitude apart from men, and in the thickets of the shady wood? What is wise, what is a better gift from the gods among mortals than to hold one's hand on the heads of one's enemies? What is good is always pleasant; divine strength is aroused with difficulty, but still is sure, and it chastises those mortals who practise folly, and do not extol the gods in their mad mind. But the gods variously conceal the long foot of time, and hunt the impious man; for it is not right to determine or meditate any thing superior to the laws: for it is a light expense to think that that has power whatever is divine, and that what has long been law has its origin in nature. What is wise, what is a more noble gift from the gods among men, than to hold one's hand on the heads of one's enemies? what is honourable is always pleasant. Happy is he who has escaped from the wave of the sea, and arrived in harbour. Happy, too, is he who is superior to his labours; and one excels another in different ways, in wealth and power. Still are there innumerable hopes to innumerable men—some result in wealth to mortals, and some fail,—and I call him happy whose life is happy day by day.

BAC. You, eager to see what you ought not, and hasty to do what ought not to be done, I mean Pentheus, come forth before the house, be seen by me, having the dress of a woman, of a raging Bacchæ, pre-



pared to spy on your mother and her company! In appearance, you are like one of the daughters of Cadmus.

PEN. And indeed I think I see two suns, and two Thebes's, and seven-gated cities; and you seem to guide me, being like a bull<sup>2</sup>, and horns seem to grow on your head. But were you ever a beast? for you look like a bull.

BAC. The god accompanies us, not propitious formerly, but now in alliance with us. You see what you should see.

PEN. How do I look? Does not my appearance seem that of Ino, or of Agave, my mother?

BAC. I seem to see them beholding you; but this lock of hair of yours is out of its place, not as I arranged it under the turban.

PEN. Moving it in-doors backwards and forwards, and practising Bacchic revelry, I disarranged it.

BAC. But we who ought to wait upon you will again re-arrange it. But hold up your head.

PEN. Look, do you arrange it, for we depend on you.

BAC. And your girdle is loosened, and the fringes of your garments do not extend regularly round your legs.

PEN. They seem so to me, too, about the right foot; but on this side the robe sits well along the leg.

BAC. Will you not think me the first of your friends when, contrary to your expectations, you see the Bacchæ behaving modestly?

<sup>2</sup> Bacchus was constantly represented horned. So Sappho says to Phaon:

"Sume fidem et pharetras,

fies manifestus Apollo; Accedant capiti cornua, Bacchus eris."—Ep. Her. xix. 18.

PEN. But shall I be most like a Bacchæ, holding the thyrsus in the right hand, or in this ?

BAC. You should hold it in your right hand, and raise it at the same time with your right foot ; and I praise you for having changed your mind.

PEN. Could I bear on my shoulders the glens of Cithæron, Bacchæ and all ?

BAC. You could if you would ; but you had your former mind unsound ; but now you have such as you ought.

PEN. Shall we bring levers, or shall I tear them up with my hands, putting my shoulder or arm under the summits.

BAC. No, lest you destroy the habitations of the Nymphs, and the seats of Pan, where he plays his flute.

PEN. You speak well,—it is not with strength we should conquer women ; but I will hide my body among the pines.

BAC. Hide you their hiding in which you should hide, coming as a crafty spy on the Mænades.

PEN. And, indeed, I think to catch them in the thickets, like birds in the sweet nets of beds.

BAC. You go then as a watch for this very thing ; and perhaps you will catch them, if you be not caught first.

PEN. Lead me through the middle of the Theban land, for I am the only man of them who would dare these things.

BAC. You alone labour for this city, you alone ; therefore labours, which ought to, await you. But follow me, I am your saving guide, some one else will guide you away from thence.

PEN. My mother ?

BAC. Being remarkable by all.

PEN. For this purpose do I come.

BAC. You will depart, being borne.

PEN. You allude to my delicacy.

BAC. In the hands of your mother.

PEN. And she will compel me to be effeminate.

BAC. Ay, with such effeminacy.

PEN. I take in hand things worthy of me.

BAC. You are terrible, terrible ; and you go to terrible woes ; so that you shall find a renown reaching to heaven. Spread out, O Agave, your hands, and ye, her sister, daughters of Cadmus ! I lead this young man to a mighty contest ; and the conquerors shall be I and Bacchus ! The rest will the matter itself show.

CHO. Go, ye swift hounds of madness, go to the mountain where the daughters of Cadmus hold their company ; drive them against the frantic spy on the Mænades,—him in woman's attire. First shall his mother, from some smooth rock or paling, behold him watching ; and she will cry out to the Mænades : Who is this of the Cadmeans who has come to the mountain as a spy on us, who have sought the mountain ? Io Bacchæ ! Who brought him forth ? for he was not born of the blood of women : but, as to his race, he is either born of some lion, or of the Libyan Gorgons. Let manifest justice go forth, slaying the wicked, lawless, iniquitous, earth-born offspring of Echion through the throat ; who, with wicked mind and unjust anger about your orgies, O Bacchus, and those of his mother, with mad heart and insane mind proceeds as about to conquer an invincible deity by

force<sup>3</sup>. Appear as a bull, or a many-headed dragon, or a fiery lion, to be seen. Go, O Bacchus! cast a snare around the hunter of the Bacchæ, with a smiling face falling on the deadly crowd of the Mænades.

MES. O house, which wast formerly flourishing in Greece! house of the Sidonian old man, who sowed in the land the earth-born crop of the dragon; how I lament for you, though a slave. But still the calamities of their masters are a grief to good servants.

CHO. But what is the matter? Do you announce any news from the Bacchæ?

MES. Pentheus is dead, the son of his father Echion.

CHO. O, king Bacchus! truly you appear a great god!

MES. How do you mean? Why do you say this? Do you, O woman, delight at my master being unfortunate?

CHO. I, a foreigner, celebrate it in foreign strains; for no longer do I crouch in fear under my fetters.

MES. But do you think Thebes thus void of men?

CHO. O Bacchus! Bacchus! Thebes has not my allegiance.

MES. You, indeed, may be pardoned; still, O

<sup>3</sup> I have left the passage from γνῶμαν to θεοῦς untranslated, because the text is hopelessly corrupt; nor has any one, without the most extensive alterations, ever extracted a tolerable sense out of it. Porson (præf. ad Hec.) calls the Bacchæ the most corrupt of all plays; and this passage is probably one of those to which he alluded. To translate any of the various conjectures introduced by various editors would not be translating Euripides: they are wiser who listen to the caution of Barnes: "Mihi religio est incerta movere donec certissima substituere possimus."

woman, it is not right to rejoice at the misfortunes which have taken place.

CHO. Tell me, tell me by what fate is the wicked man doing wicked things dead, O man?

MES. When having left Therapnæ of this Theban land, we crossed the streams of Asopus, we entered on the hill of Cithæron, Pentheus and I, for I was following my master, and the stranger who was our guide in this search, for the sight: first, then, we sat down in a grassy grove, keeping our steps noiseless, and observing silence, that we might see without being seen; and there was a valley surrounded by precipices, watered with streams, shady with pines, where the Mænades were sitting using their hands in pleasant labours, for some of them were again wreathing the stripped thyrsus, so as to make it leafy with ivy; and some, like horses quitting the ornamented yoke, sang in reply to another a Bacchic melody. And the miserable Pentheus, not seeing the crowd of women, said these things: O stranger, where we are standing, I cannot make out where is the dance of the Mænades; but getting on a mound, or a lofty pine, I could well discern the shameful deeds of the Mænades. And on this I see this strange deed of the stranger; for seizing hold of the extreme lofty branch of a pine, he pulled it down, pulled it to the dark earth, and it was bent like a bow, or as a curved wheel worked by a turning-lathe describes a circle as it revolves, thus did the stranger, pulling a mountain branch with his hands, bend it to the earth; doing deeds impossible to a mortal; and having placed Pentheus on the branches of pine, he let it go upright through his hands steadily, taking care that it should not shake him off; and the pine stood firm upright to the sky, bearing

on its back my master, sitting on it ; and he was seen rather than saw the Mænades, for sitting on high he was evident, as he was not before. <sup>4</sup> And one could no longer see the stranger, but there was a voice from the sky ; Bacchus, as one might conjecture, shouted out : O women, I bring you him who made you and me and my orgies a laughing stock : but punish ye him. And at the same time he cried out, and sent forth to heaven and earth a light of holy fire ; and the air was silent, and the shady grove held its leaves noiselessly, and you could not hear the voice of a beast ; but they not distinctly apprehending the voice, stood upright, and cast their eyes around. And again he uttered his exhortation. And when the daughters of Cadmus recognized the distinct bidding of Bacchus, they rushed forth, having in the eager running of their feet a speed not less than that of a dove ; his mother, Agave, and her kindred sisters, and all the Bacchæ : and frantic with the inspiration of the god, they bounded through the valley full of torrents, and over the rocks. But when they saw my master sitting on the pine, first they threw stones, striking his head, mounting on an opposite rock ; and some hurled their thyrsi through the air ; and with pine branches some aimed at the miserable seat of Pentheus ; but they effected nothing ; for he having a height too great for their eagerness, sat, wretched that he was, overcome with perplexity. But at last using powerfully some oaken branches, they tore up the roots with levers, not made of iron ; and when they could not accomplish the end of their labours, Agave said : Come, standing round in a circle, seize each a branch, O Mænades, that we may take the beast who has ascended, that he may not report the secret dances of the god.

And they applied their countless hands to the pine, and tore it from the ground ; and sitting on high, Pentheus falls to the ground from on high, with innumerable lamentations ; for he knew that he was near to calamity. And his mother, as the priestess, began his slaughter, and falls upon him ; but he threw the turban from his head, in order that the wretched Agave, recognizing him, might not slay him ; and touching her cheek, he says : I, O mother, am thy child, Pentheus, whom you bore in the house of Echion ; but pity me, O mother ! and do not slay me, thy child, in my sins. But she, foaming and rolling her eyes everyway, not thinking as she ought to think, was occupied wholly by Bacchus, and he did not persuade her ; and seizing his left hand with her hand, putting her foot on the side of the unhappy man, she tore off his shoulder, not by strength, but the god gave facility to her hands ; and Ino completed the work on the other side, tearing his flesh. And Autonoe and the whole multitude of the Bacchæ pressed on ; and there was a noise of all together ; he, indeed, groaning as much as he had life to, and they shouted ; and one bore his arm, another his foot, shoe and all ; and his sides were laid bare with their tearings, and the whole band, bloody as to their hands, tore to pieces the flesh of Pentheus : and his body lies dismembered, part under the rugged rocks, part in the thick shade of the wood, not easy to be sought ; and as to his miserable head, which his mother has taken in her hands, having fixed it on the top of a thyrsus, she is bearing it, like that of a savage lion, through the middle of Cithæron, leaving her sisters in the dances of the Mænades ; and she proceeds, rejoicing in her unhappy prey, within these walls, invoking Bacchus, her

fellow-huntsman, her coadjutor in the chase, the god who has gained a glorious victory, for which she wins nought but tears. I, therefore, will depart far from this calamity before Agave comes to the palace; but to be wise, and to reverence the things of the gods, I think is the most honourable and wisest thing for mortals who adopt this course.

CHO. Let us dance in honour of Bacchus; let us raise a shout for the calamity of Pentheus, the descendant of the dragon, who took female attire and the wand with the beautiful thyrsus,—a sure death, having a bull as his leader to calamity. A Cadmean Baccha has accomplished a glorious victory, illustrious, yet tending to woe and tears. It is a glorious contest to plunge one's dripping hand in the blood of one's son. But—for I see Agave, the mother of Pentheus, coming to the house with starting eyes; receive the revel of the Evian god.

AGAVE. O Asiatic Bacchæ!

CHO. To what will you excite me? O!

AG. We bring from the mountains a new-slain whelp to the house, a blessed prey.

CHO. I see it, and hail you as a fellow-reveller, O!

AG. I have taken him without a noose, a young lion, as you may see.

CHO. From what desert?

AG. Cithæron.

CHO. What did Cithæron?

AG. Slew him.

CHO. Who was it who first smote him?

AG. The honour is mine.

CHO. Happy Agave!

AG. We are celebrated in our revels.



CHO. Who else ?

AG. Cadmus's.

CHO. What of Cadmus ?

AG. Descendants with me, with me laid hands on this beast.

CHO. You are fortunate in this capture.

AG. Partake now of our feast.

CHO. What shall I, unhappy, partake of ?

AG. The whelp is young ; he is just putting forth a downy chin under his soft-haired head ; for it is beautiful as the mane of a wild beast. Bacchus, a wise huntsman, wisely sent the Mænades against this beast.

CHO. For the king is a huntsman.

AG. Do you praise ?

CHO. What should I praise ?

AG. But soon the Cadmeans and my son Pentheus will praise his mother, who has caught this lion-born prey, an excellent prey, excellently.

CHO. You rejoice.

AG. I rejoice greatly, having accomplished this great and illustrious deed.

CHO. Show now, O wretched woman, thy conquering booty to the citizens, which you have come bringing with you.

AG. O, ye who inhabit the fair-towered city of the Theban land, come ye, that ye may see this prey, O daughters of Cadmus, of the wild beast which we have taken ; not by the thonged javelins of the Thessalians, not by nets, but by our fair arms ; then may we boast, and not require the instruments of the spear-makers ; but we, with this hand, slew this beast, and tore his limbs asunder. Where is my aged father ? let him come near ; and where is my son Pentheus ?

let him raise the ascent of a well-made ladder against the house, that he may fasten to the cornice this head of the lion which I am present having caught.

CAD. Follow me, bearing the miserable burden of Pentheus; follow me, O servants, before the house whose body here, labouring with long search, I have having found it in the defiles of Cithæron, torn in pieces, and finding nothing in the same place, lying in a wood, difficult to be searched. For I heard from some one of the daring of my daughters the moment I came to the city within the walls, with the old Tiresias, first the Bacchæ; and having returned again to the mountain, I bring back my child, slain by the Mænads. And I saw Autonoe, who formerly bore Actæon, Aristæus, and Ino together, still miserably mad in the thicket; but some one told me that Agave was proceeding hither with frantic foot; nor did I hear false things for I see her an unhappy sight.

AG. O father! you may boast a great boast, that you of mortals have begot by far the best daughters; I speak of all, but particularly of myself, who, leaving my shuttle at the loom, have come to a greater work, to catch wild beasts with my hands. And as you see having taken him, I bear in my arms this prize of my valour, that it may be suspended against your house. And do you, O father, receive it in your hands; and rejoicing in my successful capture, invite your friends to a feast; for you are blessed, blessed since I have done such deeds.

CAD. O, immeasurable woe! and not to be seen, a slaughter accomplished by wretched hands; having knocked down a splendid victim for the gods, you invite Thebes and me to a banquet. Alas me, first

thy ills, then for my own; how justly, but how severely, has the god Bacchus, the king, destroyed us, being one of our own family!

AG. How morose is old age in men! and sullen-looking to behold; would that my son may be fond of hunting, resembling the disposition of his mother. Truly with the Theban youths he would pursue the beasts—but he is only disposed to contend with gods. He is to be admonished, O father, by you and me, not to rejoice in cunning wickednesses. Where is he? Who will summon him hither to my sight, that he may see me, that happy woman?

CAD. Alas, alas! when ye know what ye have done, ye will grieve with a sad grief; but if for ever ye remain in the condition in which ye are, unfortunate as you are, you will seem but to be unfortunate.

AG. But what of this is not well, or what is grievous?

CAD. Just cast your eyes to this sky.

AG. Well; why do you bid me look at it?

CAD. Is it still the same, or do you think it is changed?

AG. It is brighter than formerly, and clearer.

CAD. Is then this fluttering still present to your soul?

AG. I understand not your word; but I become somehow sobered, changing my former mind.

CAD. Can you then hear any thing, and answer clearly?

AG. How I forget what we said before, O father.

CAD. To what house did you come in marriage?

AG. You gave me, as they say, to the earth-born Echion.

CAD. What son then was born in your house to your husband?

AG. Pentheus, by the participation of myself and his father.

CAD. Whose head then have you in your arms?

AG. That of a lion, as those who hunted him said.

CAD. Look now rightly; it is a short toil to see.

AG. Ah! what do I see? what is this I bear in my hands?

CAD. Look at it, and learn more surely.

AG. I see the greatest grief, wretched that I am.

CAD. Does it seem to you to be like a lion?

AG. No: but I, wretched, hold the head of Pentheus.

CAD. Ay, much lamented before you recognised him.

AG. Who slew him, how came he into my hands?

CAD. O wretched truth, how unseasonably are you come!

AG. Tell me, since delay causes a quivering in my heart.

CAD. You slew him, and your sisters.

AG. And where did he die, in the house, or in what place?

CAD. Where formerly the dogs tore Actæon.

AG. But why did he, unhappy, go to Cithæron?

CAD. He went deriding the god and your Bacchic revels.

AG. But on what account did we go thither?

CAD. Ye were mad, and the whole city was frantic.

AG. Bacchus undid us—now I perceive.

CAD. Being insulted with insolence—for ye thought him not a god.

AG. But the dear body of my child, O father !

CAD. I having with difficulty found it, bring it, not altogether rightly united in its joints.

AG. But what part had Pentheus in my folly ?

CAD. He was like you, not honouring the god, therefore he mingled all in one ruin, both ye and him, so as to destroy the house, and me, who being childless of male children, see this branch of thy womb, O unhappy woman ! miserably and shamefully slain—whom the house respected ; you, O child, who supported my house, born of my daughter, and was an object of fear to the city ; and no one dared insult the old man, seeing you ; for he would have received a worthy punishment. But now I shall be cast out of my house dishonoured, I, the great Cadmus, who originated the Theban race, and sowed a most glorious crop ; O dearest of men, for although no longer existing, still you shall be reckoned by me the dearest of my children ; no longer touching this, my chin, with your hand, addressing me, your mother's father, shall you embrace me my son, saying, Who injures, who insults you, O father, who vexes your heart, being troublesome ? say, that I may punish him who injures you, O father. But now I am miserable, and you are wretched, and your mother is wretched, and your relations are wretched. But if there is any one who despises the gods, seeing this man's death, let him acknowledge the gods.

CHO. I grieve for your distress, O Cadmus ; but your child has the punishment of your daughter, deserved indeed, but grievous to you.

AG. O father, for you see how I am changed . . .

BAC. . . . changing, you shall become a dragon, and your wife becoming a beast, shall receive in ex-

change the form of a serpent, Harmonia, the daughter of Mars, whom you had, being a mortal. And as the oracle of Jove says, you shall drive with your wife a chariot drawn by heifers, ruling over barbarians; and with an innumerable army you shall destroy many cities; and when they plunder the temple of Apollo, they shall have a miserable return, but Mars shall defend you and Harmonia, and shall establish your life in the islands of the blessed. I say this, I, Bacchus, not born of a mortal father, but of Jupiter; and if ye had known how to be wise when ye would not, ye would have been happy, having the son of Jupiter for your ally.

CAD. Bacchus, we entreat you, we have erred.

BAC. Ye have learnt it too late; but when it behoved you, you knew it not.

CAD. I knew it, but you press on us too severely.

BAC. Ay, for I, being a god, was insulted by you.

CAD. It is not right for gods to resemble mortals in anger.

BAC. My father, Jupiter, long ago decreed this.

AG. Alas! a miserable banishment is decreed<sup>4</sup> for us, old man.

CAD. My child, into what a terrible distress have we fallen; both you wretched and your dear sisters, and I miserable, shall go, an aged sojourner, among foreigners. Still is it fated for me to bring into Greece a motly barbarian army, and leading their spears, I, a dragon, shall

<sup>4</sup> The singular verb *δέδοκται* after *φυγαι*, a fem. pl., is explained by some, as *δέδοκται δόγμα, φυγαι δηλονότι*. It is a very unusual construction; still there is no necessity for adopt-

ing this explanation; it is not quite the only instance of plural nominatives having a singular verb when they mean an inanimate thing, even though not of the neuter gender.

lead the daughter of Mars, Harmonia, my wife, having the fierce appearance of a dragon, to the altars and tombs of the Greeks. Nor shall I, wretched, rest from troubles, nor even sailing over the lower Acheron shall I be at peace.

AG. O, my father! and I being deprived of you shall be banished.

CAD. Why do you embrace me with your hands, O unhappy child, as a white swan does its exhausted parent?

AG. For whither can I turn, cast out from my country?

CAD. I know not, my child; your father is a poor ally.

AG. Farewell, O hall! farewell, O native city! I leave you in misfortune a fugitive from my chamber.

CAD. Go then, my child, to the land of Aristæus.

AG. I am deprived of thee, O father!

CAD. And I of thee, my child; and I lament your sisters.

AG. Terribly, terribly has king Bacchus brought this misery upon thy house.

BAC. Ay, for I have suffered terrible things from ye, having a name unhonoured in Thebes.

AG. Farewell, my father.

CAD. And you farewell, O miserable daughter; yet you cannot easily accomplish my word.

AG. Lead me, O guides, where I may take my miserable sisters as the companions of my flight; and may I go where neither the cursed Cithæron may see me, nor I may see Cithæron with my eyes, and where there is no memory of thyrsi hallowed, but they may be a care to other Bacchæ.

CHO. There are many forms of divine things; and the gods accomplish many in an unexpected manner: both what has been expected has not been accomplished, and God has found out a means for doing unimagined things. So, too, has this event turned out <sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> So great was Euripides' opinion of the piece of wisdom here inculcated by the Chorus, that he ends no less than five of his plays with this speech—this play, the *Andromache*, *Helen*, *Medea*, and *Alcestis*.

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# THE HERACLIDÆ

OF

## EURIPIDES.



### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IOLAUS.  
COPREUS.  
CHORUS.  
DEMOPHOON.  
APOLLO.  
MACARIA.  
SERVANT.  
ALCMENA.  
MESSENGER.  
EURYSTHEUS.



## THE ARGUMENT.

IOLAUS was the son of Iphiclus, and the nephew of Hercules ; and having joined him in his expeditions in his youth, in his old age he was a willing assistant to his sons. For his sons having been driven out of all Greece by Eurystheus, he came with them to Athens ; and there betaking himself to the gods, he was safe, Demophoon being king of the city ; and when Copreus, the herald of Eurystheus, wished to drag the suppliants away, he prevented him ; and he departed, bidding him, with threats, to expect war. But Demophoon despised him ; and receiving some oracles promising him victory if he sacrificed to Ceres the most noble of his virgins, he was grieved at the announcement ; for he thought it not just to slay either his own daughter, or that of any citizen, for the sake of the suppliants. But one of the daughters of Hercules, Macaria, hearing of the prediction, willingly encountered death. So they honoured her, having nobly died. And they knowing that their enemies were at hand, went forth to battle <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The Heraclidæ and the Suppliants are mere occasional tragedies, and surely could only succeed as pieces of adulation to the Athenians. They celebrate two exploits of Athens in the heroic age, on which the panegyrists, who ever blend fable with history, (for instance, Isocrates,) lay surprisingly great stress,—their protection of the children of Hercules, the ancestors of the Lacedæmonian kings, against the persecution of Eurystheus ; and their forcing the Thebans, whom they had

conquered in a war, waged against them on behalf of Adrastus, king of Argos, to allow the interment of the seven chieftains and their hosts. The Heraclidæ is a very poor play ; its termination, in particular, is extremely bald. Of the sacrifice of Macaria (and this is really accomplished) we hear no more : as the resolution seems to cost even her no victory over herself, so neither do the others make any ceremony with her. Demophoon, the Athenian king, does not come

on the stage again, any more than that old man so wonderfully restored to youth, Iolaus, the comrade of Hercules and keeper of his children ; Hyllus, the heroic Heraclide, is not even forthcoming ; thus, at the end, there remains nobody but Alcmena, who wrangles stoutly with Eurystheus. Inexorably vengeful old women like this, Euripides seems to depict with a special relish ; twice, at least, he has made this use of Hecuba, once in conflict with Helen, and once with Polymnestor: the constant return of the same means and motives is a sure sign of mannerism. In the works of

this poet we have three instances of women sacrificed, who become affecting from their self-devotion, Iphigenia, Polyxena, and Macaria ; the voluntary death of Alcestis and Evadne belong, in some measure, to the same class. Suppliants imploring protection are another favourite subject with him ; they afford a good opportunity for distressing the spectator with anxiety lest they be torn away from the hallowed refuge of the altar. I have already enumerated his interpositions of deities at the conclusions of his plays.—SCHLEGEL, on Dramatic Literature.

## THE HERACLIDÆ

OF

EURIPIDES.



IOLAUS. This has long since been my opinion, the just man is born for his neighbours ; but he who has a mind eager for gain is both useless to the city and grievous to deal with, but he is best for himself. And I know this, not having learnt it by report ; for I, from shame, and honouring the ties of kindred, when it was in my power to live quietly in Argos, partook of more of Hercules' labours, while he was with us, than any one man besides : and now that he dwells in heaven, having these his children under my wings, I preserve them, I myself being in need of safety. For since their father was removed from the earth, first of all Eurystheus wished to kill me, but I escaped ; and my country indeed is lost to me, but my life is saved, and I am a wandering exile migrating to one city from another. For, in addition to my other distresses, Eurystheus has chosen to insult me with this insult ; sending heralds whenever he hears we are settled, he demands us, and drives us out ; alleging the city of Argos, one not unimportant whether to be friends with or to make an enemy, and himself too successful as he is ; but they

B 3

seeing my weakness, and that these too are inconsiderable and deprived of their father, honouring the more powerful, drive us from the land. And I fly, together with the banished children, and fare ill in company with those who fare ill, fearing to desert them, lest some may say, Behold, now that the children have no father, Iolau their relation by birth, defends them not. But being driven from all Greece, coming to Marathon and the country under the same rule as it, we sit down suppliants at the altars of the gods, that they may aid us for it is said that the two sons of Theseus inhabit the land of the race of Pandion, having received it by lot being near akin to these children; on which account we have come this way to the boundaries of illustrious Athens. And by two aged people is this flight regulated, I, indeed, being alarmed about these children and the female race of her son Alcmena preserve clasping it in her arms, within this temple; for we are unwilling, for shame, that virgins should mingle with the mob, and stand at the altars. But Hyllus and his brothers, who are older, are seeking what stronghold we may inhabit if we be driven by force from this land. O children, children! hither; take hold of my garments; I see the herald of Eurystheus coming hither towards us, by whom we are pursued as wanderers deprived of every country. O detestable man, may you perish, and he who sent you: how many evils have you announced to the noble father of these children from that same mouth!

COPREUS. I suppose you think that you are sitting in a fine seat, and have come to a city which is an ally; foolish that you are; for there is no one who will choose your valueless power in preference to Eurystheus.

theus. Depart ; why do you labour thus ? You must go to Argos, where punishment by stoning awaits you.

IOI. Not so, since the altar of the god will protect me, and the free land in which we are.

COP. Do you wish to give trouble to me with this band ?

IOI. Surely you will not drag me away, nor these children by force ?

COP. You will see ; but you are not a good prophet in this.

IOI. It shall never happen while I am alive.

COP. Depart thou ; but I will lead these away, even if you are unwilling, considering them, wherever they may be, to belong to Eurystheus.

IOI. O ye who have dwelt in Athens a long time, defend us ; being suppliants of Agoræus<sup>2</sup> Jupiter, we are treated with violence, and our garlands are profaned, both a reproach to the city, and an insult to the gods.

CHORUS. Hollo ! what is this noise near the altar ? what calamity will it portend ?

IOI. Behold me, a weak old man, thrown down on the plain ; miserable that I am.

CHO. By whose hand do you fall this unhappy fall ?

IOI. This man, O strangers, dishonouring your gods, drags me violently from the altar of Jupiter.

CHO. From what land, O old man, have you come

<sup>2</sup> This was a common title of Jupiter under which temples were built to him, as the god who protected the common place of meeting of the citizens ; there was an altar built to him under this title at Athens. And Minerva, Æsch. Eum. 973, referring to the acquittal of Orestes, says,  
*ἐκράτησε Ζεὺς ἀγοραῖος.*

hither to this people dwelling together in four<sup>3</sup> cities? or, have you come hither from across the sea with marine-oar, having left the Eubœan shore?

IOL. O strangers, I am not accustomed to an islander's life, but we are come to your land from Mycenæ.

CHO. What name, O old man, did the Mycenæan people call you?

IOL. Know that I am Iolaus, once the companion of Hercules; for this body is not unrenowned.

CHO. I know, having heard of it before; but say whose young children you are leading in your hand.

IOL. These, O strangers, are the sons of Hercules, having come as suppliants of you and the city.

CHO. On what account? tell me; or is it wanting to have speech of the city?

IOL. Not to be given up, and not to go to Argos, being dragged by force from your gods.

COP. But this will not be sufficient for your masters, who, having right over you, find you here.

CHO. It is right, O stranger, to reverence the suppliants of the gods, and not for you to leave by force the habitations of the deities, for venerable Justice will not suffer this.

COP. Send now Eurystheus's subjects out of this land, and I will not put forth a violent hand.

CHO. It is impious for a state to reject the suppliant prayer of strangers.

COP. But it is good to have one's foot out of trouble, being possessed of the better wisdom.

<sup>3</sup> We learn from Strabo that the cities forming this tetralis were CEnoe, Marathon, Probalinthus, and Tricorythus.



CHO. You should then have dared this after speaking to the king of this land, but you should not drag strangers away from the gods by force, if you respect a free land.

COP. But who is the king of this country and city?

CHO. Demophon, the son of Theseus, the son of a noble father.

COP. The contest, then, of this argument had best be with him; all else is spoken in vain.

CHO. And indeed here he comes in haste, and Acamas, his brother, to hear these words.

DEMOPHOON. Since you, being an old man, have anticipated us, who are younger, in running to this hearth of Jove, say what chance collects this multitude here.

CHO. These sons of Hercules sit here as suppliants, having crowned the altar, as you see, O king, and Iolaus, the faithful companion of their father.

DE. Why then did this chance occasion clamours?

CHO. This man caused the noise, seeking to carry him by force from this hearth; and tripped up the legs of the old man, so that I shed tears for pity.

DE. And indeed he has a Grecian robe and arrangement of dress; but these are the deeds of a barbarian hand; it is your business then to tell me, and not to delay, leaving the boundaries of what land you are come hither.

COP. I am an Argive; for this you wish to learn; and I am willing to say why I am come, and from whom. Eurystheus, the king of Mycenæ, sends me hither to bring these men; and I have come, O stranger, having many just things both to do and to say; for I being an Argive myself, lead away Argives, having

them as fugitives from my country condemned to die by the laws there ; and it is just that we, managing our city, should ourselves, by ourselves, fix our own punishments : but they having come to the hearths of many others also, there also we have taken our stand on these arguments, and no one has dared to incur evils to himself. But either perceiving some folly in you, they have come hither, or in perplexity running the risk, whether it shall be or not. For surely they do not think that you alone are mad, in so great a portion of Greece as they have been over, so as to pity their unwise distresses. Come, compare the two ; admitting them into your land, and suffering us to lead them away, what will you gain ? This which I will mention may you gain from us ; you may add to this city the power of Argos, great as it is, and all the might of Eurystheus ; but if regarding the words and pitiable condition of these men, you are softened by them, the matter comes to the contest of the sword ; for think not that we will give up this contest without steel. What then will you say ? deprived of what lands, making war on the Tirynthians and Argives, and repelling them, with what allies, and on whose behalf will you bury the dead that fall ? Surely you will acquire an evil reputation among the citizens, if, for the sake of an old man's grave, one who is nothing, as one may say, and of these children, you will put your foot into a hole ; you will say, what is best, that you shall find, at least, hope ; and this too is much wanting at present ; for these who are armed would fight but ill with Argives if they were grown up, if this encourages your mind, and there is much time between in which ye may be destroyed ; but be persuaded by me, giving nothing, but permitting me to

lead away my own, gain Mycenæ. And do not, as you are wont to do, suffer this,—when it is in your power to choose the better friends, choose the worse.

CHO. Who can decide justice or understand an argument till he has clearly heard a statement from both?

IOI. O king, this exists in thy city; I am allowed in turn to speak and to hear, and no one will repulse me before that, as in other places; but with this man we have nothing to do; for since nothing of Argos remains any longer to us, (it being decreed by a vote,) but we are banished from our country, how can this man justly lead us away as Mycenæans, whom they have driven from the land? for we are strangers; or else you decide that whoever is banished from Argos is banished from the boundaries of the Greeks. Surely not from Athens; they will not, for fear of the Argives, drive out the children of Hercules from their land; for it is not Trachis, nor the Achæan city, from whence you, not by justice, but by bragging about Argos, just as you now speak, drove these men, sitting at the altars as suppliants; for if this shall be, and they ratify your words, I no longer consider this Athens as free. But I know their mind and disposition; they would rather die; for among virtuous men, disgrace is considered before life. Enough of the city; for it is an invidious thing to praise it too much; and often I know myself I have been annoyed at being overpraised: but I wish to say to you that it is necessary for you to save these men, since you are king of this land. Pitheus was son of Pelops and Æthra, daughter of Pitheus, and your father was born of her, Theseus. And again I trace for you their descent: Hercules was son of Jupiter and Alcmena, and she was the child of the daughter of

Pelops ; so your father and theirs must be cousins. Thus you, O Demophoon, are related to them by birth ; and, besides this relationship, I will tell you what you are bound to requite to the children. For I say, I formerly, when shield-bearer to their father, sailed with Theseus after the belt<sup>4</sup>, the cause of much slaughter, and from the dark recesses of hell did he bring<sup>5</sup> forth your father. All Greece bears witness to this ; for which things they entreat you to repay a kindness, and that they may not be given up, and not be driven from this land, torn by force from your gods ; for this would be disgraceful to you, an evil to the city, that suppliant relation's wanderers—alas the misery ! look on them, look on them—should be dragged away by force. But I entreat you, and offer you suppliant garlands, by your hands and your chin, do not dishonour the children of Hercules, having received them in your power ; but be a relation to them, be a friend, father, brother, master ; for all these things are better than to fall into the power of the Argives.

CHO. Hearing of these men's misfortunes, I have pitied them, O king ! and now particularly I see noble-

<sup>4</sup> This is the scholiasts' account of this belt : " Hippolyta, the daughter of Eurystheus, desired to possess the belt of Hippolyta, and Hercules, with Theseus and others, went in a vessel to the lake of Themiscyra, and Hippolyta promised to give him her belt."

<sup>5</sup> The mythological story was, that Theseus and Pirithous descended to hell to carry off Proserpine ; that, being caught, Pirithous was given to Cerbe-

rus to be devoured, and Theseus bound in hell, till Hercules delivered him, pulling him away from the stone to which he was tied with such violence, that the sitting-part of him (as Sheridan called it) was left behind. The historical version was, that they attempted to carry off the daughter of Aidoneus, king of the Molossi, who imprisoned them till he released them as a favour to Hercules.

ness overcome by fortune ; for these men, being sons of a noble father, are undeservedly unfortunate.

DE. Three ways of misfortune urge me, O Iolaus, not to reject these suppliants. Chiefly, Jupiter, at whose altars you sit, having this company of youths with you ; and my relationship to them, and because I am bound of old that they should be well treated by me, in gratitude to their father ; and disgrace, which one ought exceedingly to regard. For if I permitted this altar to be violated by force by a stranger, I shall not seem to inhabit a free country. But I fear to betray my suppliants to the Argives ; and this is as bad as hanging. But I wish you had come with better fortune ; but still, even now, fear not lest any one should drag you and these children by force from this altar. And do thou, going to Argos, both tell this Eurystheus ; and besides that, if he has any accusation against these strangers, he shall meet with justice ; but you shall never drag away these men.

COP. Not if it be just, and I prevail in argument ?

DE. And how can it be just to drag away a suppliant by force ?

COP. This, then, is not disgraceful to me, but an injury to you.

DE. It would be so if I allowed you to drag them away.

COP. But do you depart, and then will I drag them thence.

DE. You are foolish, thinking yourself wiser than a god.

COP. Hither it seems the wicked should fly.

DE. The seat of the gods is a common defence to all.

**COP.** Perhaps this will not seem good to the Mycæans.

**DE.** Am not I then lord over those here ?

**COP.** Ay, but not to injure them, if you are wise.

**DE.** Are ye hurt, if I do not violate the gods ?

**COP.** I do not wish you to have war with the Argives.

**DE.** I, too, have that feeling ; but I will not desert these men.

**COP.** At all events, taking possession of my own, I shall drag them away.

**DE.** Then you will not easily depart back to Argos.

**COP.** I shall soon see that by experience.

**DE.** You will touch them to your own injury, and that without delay.

**CHO.** For God's sake, attempt not to strike a herald !

**DE.** I will not, if the herald at least will learn to be wise.

**CHO.** Depart thou ; and do not you touch him, O king !

**COP.** I go ; for the struggle of a single hand is unavailing. But I will come, bringing hither many a brazen spear of Argive war ; and ten thousand shield-bearers await me, and Eurystheus, the king himself, as their general. And he waits, expecting news from hence, on the extreme boundaries of Alcathus ; and, having heard of your insolence, he will be very manifest to you, and to the citizens, and to this land, and to the trees ; for to little purpose should we have so much youth in Argos, if we did not chastise you.

**DE.** My curse on you, for I do not fear your Argos. But you are not likely, insulting me, to drag these men

away from hence by force ; for I possess this land, not being subject to Argos, but independent.

CHO. It is time to provide, before the army of the Argives approaches the borders. And very impetuous is the mass of the Mycenæans, and on this account more than formerly ; for it is the custom of all heralds to exaggerate what is twice as much. What do you not think he will say to his princes about what terrible things he has suffered, and how near he was losing his life.

IOL. There is not, to this man's children, a more illustrious honour than to be born of a good and valiant father, and to marry from a good family ; but I will not praise him who, being overcome by desire, has mingled with the vulgar to leave his children a reproach instead of pleasure ; for noble blood wards off misfortune better than low descent ; for we, having fallen into the extremity of misfortune, find these men friends and relations, who alone, in so large a country as Greece, have stood forward in our defence. Give, O children, give them your right hand ; and do ye give yours to the children, and come near to them. O children, we have come to experience of our friends ; and if you ever have a return to your country, and recover the homes and honours of your father, always consider them as your saviours and friends, and never raise a hostile spear against the land, remembering these things ; but consider it the dearest city of all. And they are worthy that you should respect them, who have chosen to have so great a country and the Pelagic people as enemies instead of us, though seeing us to be poor wanderers ; but still they have not given us up, nor driven us from their land. But I, living and dying, when I do die, will praise you much, my friend, to Theseus, when I am

in his company I will extol you ; and saying this, I will delight him, saying how well you received and aided the children of Hercules ; and, being noble, you preserve through Greece your father's reputation ; and being born of noble parents, you are nowise inferior to your father, with but few others ; for among many you may find perhaps but one who is not inferior to his father <sup>6</sup>.

CHO. This land is always desirous to assist in a just cause those in distress ; therefore it has borne countless toils for its friends, and now I see a contest at hand.

DE. You say well ; and I boast, old man, that their disposition is such : the kindness will be remembered. And I will make an assembly of the citizens, and arrange so as to receive the army of the Mycenæans with a large force. First, I will send spies towards it, that it may not attack me by surprise : for in Argos every man is an eager warrior. And, collecting the soothsayers, I will sacrifice. And do you go to my palace with the children, leaving the altar of Jove, for there are those who, even when I am from home, will take care of you ; go then, old man, to my palace.

IOL. I will not leave the altar ; we will sit here, as suppliants, waiting till the city is successful ; and when you have successfully finished this contest, we will go to thy palace. But we have gods as allies not inferior to those of the Argives, O king ; for Juno, the wife of Jove, protects them, and Minerva us ; and I say that this too is an element of success to have the best gods, for Pallas will not endure to be conquered.

CHO. If you boast greatly, others do not therefore regard you the more, O stranger, coming from Argos ;

<sup>6</sup> Compare Horace,—  
 “Ætas parentum, pejor avis,  
 ulit Nos nequiores, mox datu-

ros Progeniem vitiosiore.”—  
 Od. iii. 6, 48.



but with your large words you will not alarm my mind : may it not be so to the mighty Athens, beautiful in the dance. But both you are foolish to the son of Sthenelus, who is king in Argos, who, coming to another city not less than Argos, being a stranger, seek by force to drag away wanderers, suppliants of the gods, and claiming the protection of my country, not yielding to our kings, nor saying anything else that is just. How can this be thought well among the wise? Peace indeed pleases me ; but, O foolish king, I tell you, if you come to this city, you will not find what you expect. You are not the only one who has a spear and a brazen shield ; but, O lover of war, may you not with the spear disturb my city dear to the Graces ; but restrain yourself.

IOE. O, my son, why do you come, bringing anxiety to my eyes? Have you any news of the enemy? Do they delay, or are they at hand? or what do you hear? for I fear the word of the herald will not be false, for their leader will come having been fortunate in previous affairs I well know, and with no moderate notions, against Athens ; but Jupiter is the chastiser of over-arrogant thoughts.

DE. The army of the Argives is coming, and Eurystheus the king. I have seen it myself ; for it behoves a man who says he knows well how to command not to reconnoitre the enemy by means of messengers. He has not then, as yet, let loose his army on these plains, but, sitting on a lofty ridge, he looks (I should say this as a conjecture) to see by which way he shall lead his present expedition, and place it in a safe position in this land ; and my preparations are already well completed, and the city is under arms, and the victims stand prepared for those gods to whom they ought to be

offered ; and the city, by means of soothsayers, is preparing sacrifices to avert the enemy and save the city. And having collected together all the utterers of oracles, I have tried the ancient oracles, both public and concealed, which might save this land ; and of their other counsels many things are different ; but one opinion of all is conspicuously the same,—they bid me sacrifice to the daughter of Ceres a damsel who is of a noble father. And I have indeed, as you see, such great goodwill towards you, but I will neither slay my own child nor compel any other of my citizens to do so against his will ; and who is so mad of his own accord, as to give out of his hands his dearest children ? And now you may see bitter meetings ; some saying that it is right to assist foreign suppliants, and some blaming my folly ; and if I do this, a civil war is at once prepared. This, then, do you consider, and devise how both you yourselves may be saved and this land, and I not be injuriously blamed by the citizens ; for I have not absolute sovereignty, as over barbarians ; but if I do just things, I shall be justly treated.

CHO. But does not the goddess allow this city, although eager and wishing, to assist strangers ?

IOL. O children, we are like sailors, who, fleeing from the fierce rage of the storm, have come close to land, and then, again, by gales from the land, have been driven again to sea ; thus also we are driven from this land, being already on shore, as if saved. Alas ! why, O wretched hope, did you then delight me, not being about to complete my joy ? For his thoughts, in truth, are to be pardoned if he is not willing to slay the children of his citizens ; and I praise their conduct here, if the gods decree that I shall fare thus. My gratitude to you shall never perish. O children, I know not

what to advise you : whither shall we turn ? for which of the gods has been uncrowned by us ? and what bulwark of land have we not approached ? We shall perish, my children, we shall be given up ; and for myself I care nothing if I must die, except that I shall gratify my enemies by dying ; but I weep for and pity you, O children, and Alcmena, the aged mother of your father ; O ! unhappy art thou, because of thy long life ; and miserable am I, having laboured much in vain. It was our fate then, falling into the hands of an enemy, to leave life disgracefully and miserably. But do you know in what you may aid me ? for all hope of their safety has not deserted me. Give me up to the Argives instead of them, O king, and so both avoid any risk yourself, and let the children be saved for me ; I must not regard my own life, let it go ; and above all, Eurystheus would like taking me, the ally of Hercules, to insult me ; for he is a wicked man ; and the wise should pray to have quarrels with a wise man, not with an ignorant disposition, for in that case one, even if unfortunate, may meet with much respect.

CHO. O old man, do not now blame the city, perhaps it might be a gain to us ; but still it would be an evil reproach that we betrayed strangers.

DE. You have made a proposal noble indeed, but impossible ; the king does not lead his army hither wanting you ; for what advantage were it to Eurystheus for an old man to die ? but he wishes to slay these youths ; for noble young men, who remember their fathers' injuries, springing up, are terrible things to enemies ; all which he must foresee ; but if you know any other more seasonable counsel, prepare it, since I am perplexed and full of fear, having heard the oracle.

MACARIA. O strangers, do not impute boldness to my advances, this I will beg first; for silence and modesty are best for a woman, and to remain quietly in-doors; but, O Iolaus, hearing your lamentations, I have come forth, not being commissioned to speak as ambassador for my race, but I am in some degree fit to do it; but chiefly do I care for these, my brothers: concerning myself I wish to ask whether, besides our former evils, any additional distress agitates your mind?

IOL. My child, it is not a new thing that I justly have to praise you most of the children of Hercules; but our house having appeared to us to prosper well, has again changed to perplexity, for this man says, that the prophets of the oracles order us to sacrifice not a bull or a heifer, but a virgin, who is of a noble father, if we and this city would exist. About this then we are perplexed, for this man says he will neither slay his own children nor those of any one else; and to me he says, not indeed in express words, but somehow or other, unless I can devise any remedy for this, that we must find some other land, but he himself wishes to preserve this country.

MAC. On this condition can we be saved?

IOL. On this, being fortunate in other respects.

MAC. Fear not then any longer the hostile spear of the Argives; for I myself, old man, before I am ordered, am prepared to die, and to stand for slaughter; for what shall we say if the city is willing for our sakes to encounter a great danger, but we putting toils on others, avoid death because we can be saved? Surely not, since this would be ridiculous for suppliants sitting at the shrines of the gods to lament, but being of such a sire as we are, to be seen to be cowards; how can this

be good? it were better, I think, (which may it never happen!) to fall into the hands of the enemy, this city being taken, and afterwards being born of a noble father, having suffered terrible things, still to see hell; but shall I wander about, driven from this land, and shall I not be ashamed if any one says, "Why have ye come hither with your suppliant branches, yourselves being afraid to die? Depart from the land, for we will not aid cowards." But neither, indeed, if these die, and I myself am saved, have I any hopes to be happy; for before now many have in this way betrayed their friends. For who would choose to have me, a solitary damsel, for his wife, or to have children by me? therefore it is better to die than to have such a fate as this inglorious; and this may even be more seemly for some other who is not illustrious as I am. Lead me then where this body must die, and crown me and take the first-fruits if you choose, and conquer your enemies; for this life is ready for you, willing, and not reluctant; and I promise to die for these my brethren, and for myself; for not regarding my life, I have found this most glorious thing to find, namely, to leave life gloriously.

CHO. Alas! alas! what shall I say, hearing this noble speech of the maiden who is willing to die for her brothers? Who can make a more noble speech than this? who of men can do a greater action?

IOE. My child, your head comes from no other source but the seed of thy divine mind, and you were born of Hercules. I am not ashamed at your words, but I grieve for your fortune; but how it may be more justly done, I will say: we must call hither all her

sisters, and then let her who draws the lot die for her family ; but it is not right for you to die without casting lots.

MAC. I will not die, obtaining the lot by chance, for then there would be no thanks to me ;—speak it not, old man ; but if you accept me, and are willing to use me, who am willing, I willingly give my life to them, not being compelled.

IOL. Alas ! this word of thine is again still nobler, and that other was most excellent ; but you outdaring by daring, and good words by good words. I do not bid you, nor do I forbid you, to die, my child ; but you will profit your brothers by dying.

MAC. You bid wisely ; fear not to partake of my pollution, but I shall die freely. But follow me, O old man ; for I wish to die by your hand ; and do you, being present, wrap my body in my garments, since I am going to terrible sacrifice, because I am born of the father of whom I boast to be.

IOL. I cannot be present at your death.

MAC. At least, then, entreat him that I may die, not by the hands of men, but of women.

CHO. It shall be so, O unhappy maiden ; since it were disgraceful to me too not to arrange you properly on many accounts ; both for your valiant spirit, and for justice' sake : but you are the most unhappy of all women that I have beheld with my eyes ; but, if you will, depart addressing a last speech to these and to the old man.

MAC. Farewell, old man, farewell ; and bring up for me these children to be such as thysself, wise in all respects, nothing more, for they will be enough ; and

endeavour to save them, not being careless about dying: they are your children; by your hands we were brought up, and you see me giving up my hour of marriage, and dying for them. And ye, my present company of brothers, may ye be happy, and may every thing be to you for which my soul is sacrificed; and honour the old man, and the old woman in the house, Alcmena, the mother of my father, and these strangers. And if a release from troubles, and a return should ever be found for you by the gods, remember to bury her who saves you; most honourably you ought to, for I was not wanting to you, but died for my race. This is what I leave behind me as an heirloom instead of children and virginity, if indeed there be aught under the earth. May there indeed be nothing; for if we, of mortals who die, are to have cares, then, also, I know not where one can turn, for to die is considered the greatest remedy for evils.

IOE. But, O you, who excel all women in courage, know that, both living and dying, you shall be held in exceeding honour by us: and farewell; for I fear to speak words of ill-omen about the goddess to whom your body is given as the first-fruits, the daughter of Ceres. My children, we are undone; my limbs are relaxed by grief; take me, and place me in my seat, covering me there with these garments, O children; since neither am I pleased at these things which are done, and, on the other hand, if the oracle were not fulfilled, I could not live, for so the ruin would be greater; but even this is miserable.

CHO. I say that no man is either happy or miserable without the intervention of the gods, and that the same family does not always proceed in prosperity, but dif-

ferent fates pursue it in different directions ; it makes one from having been in a lofty station insignificant, and makes the wanderer wealthy : but it is impossible to avoid what is fated ; no one can repel it by wisdom, but he who is needlessly prompt will always have trouble ; but do not thus bear the fortune sent by the gods falling down to supplicate them, and do not over-agitate your mind with grief, for she unhappy has a glorious portion of death for her brethren and her country ; nor will an inglorious reputation among men await her : but virtue proceeds through toils. These things are worthy of her father, and worthy of her nobility ; and if you respect the deaths of the valiant, I agree with you.

SERVANT. O children, hail ! But at what distance is the aged Iolaus and the mother of your father from this place ?

IOL. We are here, such as I am.

SER. Why do you lie thus, and have an eye so downcast ?

IOL. A domestic anxiety has come on me, by which I am constrained.

SER. Raise now thyself, erect thy head.

IOL. I am an old man, and by no means strong.

SER. But I am come, bringing you great joy.

IOL. And who are you, where having met you, do I forget you ?

SER. I am a poor servant of Hyllus ; do you not recognise me, seeing me ?

IOL. O dear man, do you come then as a saviour to us from injury ?

SER. Surely ; and moreover you are happy as to the present state of affairs.

IOL. O mother of an excellent son, I mean Alcmena,



come forth, hear these most welcome words; for you have been long wasting as to your soul grieving for those who have come hither, whether they would ever arrive<sup>7</sup>.

ALCMENA. What loud<sup>8</sup> shout has filled all this house? O Iolaus, does any herald from Argos, coming again, use violence to you? my strength indeed is weak, but you must know thus much, O stranger, you can never drag them away while I am alive, else may I no longer be thought to be his mother; but if you touch them with your hand, you will have a contest other than honourable with two old people.

IOI. Be of good cheer, old woman; fear not, the herald is not come from Argos bearing hostile words.

ALC. Why then did you raise a shout, a messenger of fear?

IOI. To you, that you should come near before this temple.

ALC. I do not understand; for who is this man?

IOI. He brings word that your son's son is come.

ALC. O! hail you too for this news; but why and where is he now absent putting his foot in this country? what calamity prevents him from coming hither with you, and rejoicing my mind?

SER. He is settling and marshalling the army which he has come bringing.

ALC. I no longer understand this speech.

IOI. I do; but it is my business to inquire about this.

<sup>7</sup> Elmsley remarks that *νόστρος* very frequently signifies "arrival" in the tragedians; and that it cannot mean "return" here, which is its usual signification, because the Heraclidæ

had never been in Attica before. <sup>8</sup> *χρημα* with a genitive is often used to express something very great: so Herodotus says, *μέγα χρημα ὑδός*, 'a monstrous boar,' Clio, 36.

SER. What then of what has been done do you wish to learn?

IOL. With how great a multitude of allies is he come?

SER. A great one; for I can say no other number.

IOL. The chiefs of the Athenians know, I suppose?

SER. They do; and the left wing is occupied.

IOL. Is then the army already armed as for work?

SER. Ay; and already the victims are led away from the ranks.

IOL. And how far off is the Argive army?

SER. So that the general can be distinctly seen.

IOL. Doing what? arraying the ranks of the enemies?

SER. We conjectured this, for we did not hear him; but I will go; I should not like my masters to meet with the enemy, deserted as far as my part went.

IOL. And I will go with you; for we think the same things, being present to aid our friends as much as we can.

SER. It is not your part to say a foolish word.

IOL. And not to be partaker of valiant battle with my friends!

SER. One cannot see a wound from an inactive hand.

IOL. But what, cannot I too strike through a shield?

SER. You may strike, but you yourself would fall first.

IOL. No one of the enemy will dare to behold me.

SER. You have not, my friend, the strength which once you had.

IOL. But I will fight with them who will not be the fewer for my presence.

SER. You add but a slight weight to your friends.

IOL. Do not detain me who am prepared to act.

**SER.** You are not able to do any thing, but you may be to advise.

**IOI.** You may say what more you have to say, as I shall not stay to hear.

**SER.** How then will you appear to the soldiers without arms?

**IOI.** There are in this palace arms taken in war, which I will use and restore if alive; but if I am dead the god will not demand them back of me; but go in, and taking them down from the pegs, bring me as quickly as possible the dress of a warrior; for this is a disgraceful keeping of the house, for some to fight, and some to remain behind through fear.

**CHO.** Time does not depress your spirit, but it grows young again, but your body is weak; why do you toil in vain? which will injure you indeed, but aid our city but little; you should consider your age, and leave alone impossibilities, it is impossible for you again to acquire youth.

**ALC.** Why are you, not being in your senses, about to leave me alone with my children?

**IOI.** For valour is the part of men; but it is your part to take care of them.

**ALC.** But if you die, how shall I be saved?

**IOI.** Your sons who are left will take care of your son.

**ALC.** But if they, which Heaven forbid, should meet with fate!

**IOI.** These strangers will not betray you, do not fear.

**ALC.** Such confidence indeed I have, nothing else.

**IOI.** And Jove, I well know, regards your toils.

ALC. Alas! Jupiter shall never be reproached by me, but he himself knows whether he is just to me.

SER. You see now this panoply of arms; but you cannot be in time arraying your body in them, as the battle is at hand, and, above all things, Mars hates those who delay; but if you fear the weight of arms, now then go forth unarmed, and in the ranks be clad with this equipment, and I will carry it so far.

IOL. You say well; but bring the arms, having them close at hand, and put a spear in my hand, and support my left arm guiding my foot.

SER. Is it right to lead a warrior like a child?

IOL. One must go safely for the sake of the omen.

SER. Would you were able to do as you are willing.

IOL. Make haste, I shall suffer sadly if too late for the battle.

SER. It is you who delay, and not I, seeming to do something.

IOL. Do you not see how my foot hastens?

SER. I see you rather seeming to hasten than hastening.

IOL. You will not say this when you see me there.

SER. Doing what? I wish I may see you successful.

IOL. Striking some of the enemy through the shield.

SER. If indeed we get there; for that I am afraid of.

IOL. Alas! O my arm, that you were such an ally to me as I recollect you in your youth, when you destroyed Sparta with Hercules, how would I put Eurystheus to flight; since he is but a coward in abiding a spear. But in prosperity then is this too which is not well, a reputation for courage; for we think that he who is prosperous knows every thing well.

CHO. O earth, and moon shining by night, and brilliant rays of the God giving light to mortals, bring me news, and shout in heaven and at the royal throne of the blue-eyed Minerva—on behalf of my country, on behalf of my house, having received suppliants I am about to cut through danger with white steel. It is a terrible thing that a city, prosperous as Mycenæ, and illustrious for valour in war, should cherish anger against my kind; but it is evil too, O city, if we are to give up strangers<sup>9</sup> . . . . . Jupiter is my ally, I fear not; Jupiter rightly has a regard for me . . . . . But, O venerable goddess, for the soil of this land is thine, and the city of which you are mother, mistress, and guardian, lead away by some other way him who unjustly leads this warlike army of the Argives; for as far as my virtue is concerned, I do not deserve to be banished from these halls. But honour, with much sacrifice, is ever paid to you; nor does the last day of the month forget you, nor the songs of youths, or the melodies of dances; but on the lofty hill shouts resound in accordance with the nightly beatings of the feet of the virgins.

SER. O mistress, I bring news most concise for you

<sup>9</sup> 765. This and the next four lines are probably beyond the reach of remedy; the reading of MSS. is *καὶ λείσιμον Ἄργος*, and one or two read *ἄλγος*—as no sense can be extracted from either. Dindorf reads *κελεύσιμον Ἄργος*, a word found, as far as I know, in no author or Lexicon that has ever existed, nor do I know how he means to construe it. V. 769 has been altered in all sorts of ways, each

so different from the other, as to prove no more than that all such pure conjectures are wholly worthless. Elmsley seems the wisest, as he is undoubtedly the ablest of the commentators on this play, who is content to point out the difficulty without proposing a remedy, where any proposal can have no better foundation than mere guess work.

to hear, and to me most glorious ; we have conquered our enemies, and trophies are set up bearing the panoply of your enemies.

ALC. O dear man, this day has caused you to be made free for this news ; but one disaster you do not yet emancipate me from, for I fear whether they be living to me whom I wish to be.

SER. They live, the most glorious in the army.

ALC. Does not the aged Iolaus survive ?

SER. Surely, having done great deeds by help of the gods.

ALC. But what ? has he done any mighty act in the battle ?

SER. He has changed into a young man again, from an old one.

ALC. You say marvellous things, but first I wish you to relate the successful contest of your friends in battle.

SER. One speech of mine shall tell you all this ; for when stretching out our ranks, face to face, we arrayed our armies against one another. Hyllus putting his foot out of his four-horse chariot, stood in the mid-space between the lines ; and then said, O general, you who come from Argos, why leave we not this land alone ? and you will do Mycenæ no harm losing a man ; but you fighting alone with me alone, either killing me, lead away the children of Hercules, or dying, allow me to possess my father's honours and palaces. And the army assented ; that the speech was well spoken for a termination of their toils, and in respect of courage. But he neither regarding those who had heard the speech, nor, although he was general, his own character for cowardice, dared not to come near a warlike spear, but was most cowardly ; and being such, he came to

enslave the seed of Hercules. Hyllus then returned again to his ranks ; but the soothsayers, when they saw that the end could not be accomplished by the single combat of one shield, sacrificed, and delayed not, but poured forth immediately the propitious slaughter of mortal throats ; and some mounted chariots, and some concealed their sides under the sides of their shields ; but the king of the Athenians gave his army such orders as a high-born man should give—" O citizens, now it behoves every one to defend the land that has produced "and cherished him." And the other also entreated his allies not to shame Argos and Mycenæ. But when the signal sounded on a Tyrrhenian trumpet, and they joined battle with one another, what a clash of spears do you think sounded, what a groaning and lamentation at the same time. And first of all the violence of the Argive war broke us ; then they again retreated ; and next<sup>1</sup> foot being interchanged with foot, and man standing against man, the battle grew fierce ; and many fell ; and there were two cries, O ye who dwell in Athens, O ye who sow the land of the Argives, will ye not ward off shame from the city ? And with difficulty doing every thing, not without struggles did we put the Argive phalanx to flight ; and then the old man, seeing Hyllus rushing on, Iolaus, stretching forth his right hand, entreated him to place him on the chariot of horses ; and taking the reins in his hands, he drove at the horses of Eurystheus. And what happened after this I must tell by having heard from others, I myself hitherto having seen all ; for passing by the venerable

<sup>1</sup> Compare Tyrtaeus—  
καὶ πόδα παρ' ποδὶ θεῖς, καὶ  
ἐπ' ἀσπίδος ἀσπίδ' ἐρείσας Ἐν

δὲ λόφον τε λόφῳ καὶ κυνέην  
κυνέῃ. II. 26.

hill of the divine Minerva of Pellene, seeing the chariot of Eurystheus, he prayed to Juno and Jupiter to be young for one day, and to exact punishment from his enemies. You have a strange thing to hear; for two stars standing on the horse-chariot, concealed the chariot in a brilliant cloud, the wiser men say it was thy son and Hebe<sup>2</sup>; but he from the thick darkness showed forth a youthful appearance of youthful arms. And the illustrious Iolaus takes the four-horse chariot of Eurystheus at the Scironian rocks—and having bound his hands in fetters, he comes bringing the glorious first-fruits of victory, the general, him who was formerly happy; but by his present fortune he proclaims loudly to all mortals, so that they may learn not to envy him who seems prosperous till one sees him dead, as fortune lasts but a day<sup>3</sup>.

CHO. O Jupiter, god of victory, now it is given to me to behold a day free from terrible fear.

ALC. O Jupiter, at length you have cast an eye on my miseries, but still I am grateful to you for what you have done: and I, who formerly did not think that my son dwelt among the gods, now know it positively. O my children, now you shall be free from toils, and free from Eurystheus, who shall perish miserably; and ye shall see the city of your father, and you shall tread on

<sup>2</sup> Hebe was given to Hercules as his wife in heaven:

αὐτὸς δὲ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι  
θεοῖσι Τέρπεται ἐν θαλίῃς καὶ  
ἔχει καλλίσφυρον Ἥβην. H.  
Od. xi. 603.

<sup>3</sup> This is a very favourite doctrine with the ancient poets. So Sophocles,—

Ὡστε θνητὸν ὄντ' ἔκεινον τῆν

τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν Ἥμέραν ἐπι-  
σκοποῦντα, μηδέν' ὀλβίζειν,  
πρὶν ἂν Τέρμα τοῦ βίου περά-  
σῃ, μηδέν' ἀλγεινὸν παθῶν.  
C. R. 1530.

And Ovid,—

Ultima semper Expectanda  
dies homini, dicique beatus  
Ante obitum nemo, supremaque  
funera claudat.



your inherited land ; and ye shall sacrifice to your paternal gods, debarred from whom ye have had, as strangers, a wandering miserable life. But devising what clever thing has Iolaus spared Eurystheus, so as not to kill him, tell me ; for in my opinion this is not wise, having taken our enemies, not to exact punishment of them.

SER. Having respect for you, that with your own eyes you may see him defeated and subjected to your power ; not, indeed, of his own good-will, but he has brought him by force in bonds, for he was not willing to come alive into your sight and to be punished. But, O old woman, farewell, and remember for me what you first said when I began my tale. Emancipate me ; and in such noble people as you the mouth ought to be true-speaking.

CHO. The dance to me is sweet, if there be the tuneful joy of the pipe at the feast ; and may Venus be kind. And it is sweet to see the prosperity of friends who did not expect it formerly ; for the fate who accomplishes gifts produces many things ; and Time, the son of Saturn. You have, O city, a just path, you should never abandon it, to worship the gods ; and he who bids you not do so, is near madness, such proofs as these being shown. God, in truth, manifestly exhorts us, taking away the arrogance of the unjust for ever. Your son, O old woman, is gone to heaven ; he shuns being spoken of as having descended to the realm of Pluto, being consumed, as to his body, in the terrible flame of fire ; and he embraces the lovely bed of Hebe in the golden hall. O Hymenæus, you have honoured two children of Jupiter. Many things agree with many ; for they say that Minerva was an ally of their father,

and the city and people of that goddess has saved them, and has restrained the insolence of a man to whom passion was, with violence, before justice. May my mind and soul never be insatiable.

MESS. O mistress, you see, but still it shall be said, we are come, bringing to you Eurystheus here, an un-hoped for sight, and one no less so to him, for he never expected to come into your power when he went forth from Mycenæ with a numerous band of spearmen, thinking things much greater than his fortune, that he should destroy Athens; but the god changed his fortune, and made it contrary. Hyllus, therefore, and the good Iolaus, have set up a statue, in honour of their victory, of Jupiter, who giveth victory; and they send me to bring this man to you, wishing to delight your mind; for it is most delightful to see an enemy unfortunate, after having been fortunate.

ALC. O you hatred, are you come? has justice taken you at last? first then turn hither your head towards me, and endure to look your enemies in the face; for now you are ruled, and you no longer rule. Are you he, for I wish to know, who chose, O wretch, much to insult my son, though no longer existing? For in what respect did you forbear to insult him? who drove him, while alive, down to hell, and sent him forth, bidding him destroy hydras and lions? And what other evils you contrived, I say nothing of, for it would be a long story; and it was not enough for you that he alone should endure these things, but you drove me also, and my children, out of all Greece, sitting as suppliants of the gods, some old, and some still infants; but you found free men and a free city, who feared you not; you must die miserably, and you shall gain every thing,

for you ought to die not once only, having done many wicked things.

MESS. You must not put him to death.

ALC. Have we then taken him prisoner in vain? But what law prevents him from dying?

MESS. It seems not good to the chiefs of this land.

ALC. What is this? not good to them to slay one's enemies?

MESS. Not any one whom they have taken alive in battle.

ALC. And did Hyllus endure this decision?

MESS. He could, I suppose, disobey this land!

ALC. He ought no longer to live, nor to see the light.

MESS. Then first he did wrong in not dying.

ALC. Then is it no longer right for him to be punished?

MESS. There is no one who may put him to death.

ALC. I will. And yet I say that I am some one.

MESS. You will have much blame if you do this.

ALC. I love this city. It cannot be denied. But as for this man, since he has come into my power, there is no mortal who shall take him from me. Moreover, whoever chooses may call me bold, and thinking things too fierce for a woman; but this deed shall be done by me.

CHO. It is a serious and excusable thing, O lady, for you to have hatred against this man, I well know it.

EURYSTHEUS. O woman, know that I will not flatter you, nor say any thing else for my life, from which I may incur any imputation of cowardice. But not of my own accord did I undertake this strife—I knew that I was your cousin by birth, and a relation to your son Hercules; but whether I wished it or not, Juno, for

it was a goddess forced me to labour with this evil. But when I took up enmity against him, and determined to enter into this contest, I became a contriver of many evils, and sitting continually in council with myself, devised many things by night, how repelling and destroying my enemies, I might dwell for the future without fear, knowing that your son was not one of the common herd, but really a man; for though he be mine enemy, yet will I speak well of him, as he was a great man. And when he was dead, did it not behove me, being hated by these children, and knowing their father's hatred to me, to move every stone, slaying them, and banishing them, and contriving, by doing such things, my own affairs would have been safe? You, therefore, had you been in my condition, would not have oppressed with evils the hostile offspring of a hated lion, but would wisely have permitted them to live in Argos; you will convince no one of it. Now then, since they did not slay me then, when I was willing, by the laws of the Greeks I shall, if slain, be a sacrilegious act of the slayer; and the city, being wise, has dismissed me, having much greater regard for God than for its enmity towards me. And to what you said you have heard a reply: and now you may call me suppliant and coward. Thus is the case with me, I do not wish to die, but I should not be grieved at leaving life.

CHO. I wish, O Alcmena, to advise you a little, to dismiss this man, since it seems good to the city.

ALC. But how, if we both die, and still we obey the city?

CHO. That would be best; but how can that be?

ALC. I will tell you, easily; for having slain him,

then I will give his corpse to those of his friends who come after him ; for I will not refuse his body to the earth, but he dying, shall satisfy my revenge.

EV. Slay me, I do not deprecate it. But this city, since it has released me, and feared to slay me, I will present with an ancient oracle of Apollo, which, in time, will be a greater assistance than you would expect ; for ye will bury me when I am dead, where it is fated, before the temple of the divine virgin of Pallene ; and being well disposed to you, and a protector to the city, I shall ever lie as a sojourner under the ground, but most hostile to them and to their descendants when they come hither with a numerous force, making an ill requital for this kindness : such strangers are ye now defending. How then, (you will say,) did I, knowing this, come hither, and not regard the oracle of the god ? Thinking Juno far more powerful than oracles, and that she would not betray me, I did so. But suffer neither libations nor blood to be poured on my tomb, for I will give them an evil return as a requital for these things ; and ye shall have a double gain from me, I will both profit you and injure them by my death.

ALC. Why then do ye delay, if you are fated to accomplish safety to yourselves and to your children, to slay this man, hearing these things ? for they show us the safest path. The man is an enemy, and he will profit us dying. Take him away, O servants ; then having slain him, give him to the dogs ; for hope not thou, that living, you shall again banish me from my native land.

CHO. These things seem good to me, proceed, O attendants, for every thing on our part shall be done rightly for the interests of our sovereigns.

THE END.

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