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BOOK THE
FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

My design leads me to speak of forms changed into new bodies. Ye Gods, (for you it was who changed them,) favor my attempts, and bring down the lengthened narrative from the very beginning of the world, even to my own times.

FABLE I.

God reduces Chaos into order. He separates the four elements, and disposes the several bodies, of which the universe is formed, into their proper situations.
At first, the sea, the earth, and the heaven, which covers all things, were the only face of nature throughout the whole universe, which men have named Chaos; a rude and undigested mass, and nothing more than an inert weight, and the discordant atoms of things not harmonizing, heaped together in the same spot. No Sun as yet gave light to the world; nor did the Moon, by increasing, recover her horns anew. The Earth did not as yet hang in the surrounding air, balanced by its own weight, nor had Amphitrite stretched out her arms along the lengthened margin of the coasts. Wherever, too, was the land, there also was the sea and the air; and thus was the earth without firmness, the sea unnavigable, the air void of light; in no one of them did its present form exist. And one was ever obstructing the other; because in the same body the cold was striving with the hot, the moist with the dry, the soft with the hard, things having weight with those devoid of weight.

To this discord God and bounteous Nature put an end; for he separated the earth from the heavens, and the waters from the earth, and distinguished the clear heavens from the gross atmosphere. And after he had unravelled these elements, and released them from that confused heap, he combined them, thus disjoined, in harmonious unison, each in its proper place. The element of the vaulted heaven, fiery and without weight, shone forth, and selected a place for itself in the highest region; next after it, both in lightness and in place, was the air; the Earth was more weighty than these, and drew with it the more ponderous atoms, and was pressed together by its own gravity. The encircling waters sank to the lowermost place, and surrounded the solid globe.

EXPLANATION.

The ancient philosophers, unable to comprehend how something could be produced out of nothing, supposed a matter pre-existent to the Earth in its present shape, which afterwards received form and order from some powerful cause. According to them, God was not the Creator, but the Architect of the universe, in ranging and disposing the elements in situations most suitable to their respective qualities. This is the Chaos so often sung of by the poets, and which Hesiod was the first to mention. It is clear that this system was but a confused and disfigured tradition of the creation of the world, as mentioned by Moses; and thus, beneath these fictions, there lies some faint glimmering of truth. The first two chapters of the book of Genesis will be found to throw considerable light on the foundation of this Mythological system of the world’s formation.

Hesiod, the most ancient of the heathen writers who have enlarged upon this subject, seems to have derived much of his information from the works of Sanchoniatho, who is supposed to have borrowed his ideas concerning Chaos from that passage in the second verse of the first Chapter of Genesis, which mentions the darkness that was spread over the whole universe—‘and darkness was upon the face of the deep’—for he expresses himself almost in those words. Sanchoniatho lived before the Trojan war, and professed to have received his information respecting the original construction of the world from a priest of ‘Jehovah,’ named Jerombaal. He wrote in the Phoenician language; but we have only a
translation of his works, by Philo Judæus, which is by many supposed to be spurious. It is, however, very probable, that from him the Greeks borrowed their notions regarding Chaos, which they mingled with fables of their own invention.

**FABLE II.**

After the separation of matter, God gives form and regularity to the universe; and all other living creatures being produced, Prometheus moulds earth tempered with water, into a human form, which is animated by Minerva.

When thus he, whoever of the Gods he was,11 had divided the mass so separated, and reduced it, so divided, into distinct members; in the first place, that it might not be unequal on any side, he gathered it up into the form of a vast globe; then he commanded the sea to be poured around it, and to grow boisterous with the raging winds, and to surround the shores of the Earth, encompassed by it; he added also springs, and numerous pools and lakes, and he bounded the rivers as they flowed downwards, with slanting banks. These, different in different places, are some of them swallowed up12 by the Earth itself; some of them reach the ocean, and, received in the expanse of waters that take a freer range, beat against shores instead of banks.

He commanded the plains,13 too, to be extended, the valleys to sink down, the woods to be clothed with green leaves, the craggy mountains to arise; and, as on the right-hand side,14 two Zones intersect the heavens, and as many on the left; and as there is a fifth hotter than these, so did the care of the Deity distinguish this enclosed mass of the Earth by the same number, and as many climates are marked out upon the Earth. Of these, that which is the middle one15 is not habitable on account of the heat; deep snow covers two16 of them. Between either these he placed as many more,17 and gave them a temperate climate, heat being mingled with cold.

Over these hangs the air, which is heavier than fire, in the same degree that the weight of water is lighter than the weight of the earth. Here he ordered vapors, here too, the clouds to take their station; the thunder, too, to terrify the minds of mortals, and with the lightnings, the winds that
bring on cold. The Contriver of the World did not allow these indiscriminately to take possession of the sky. Even now, (although they each of them govern their own blasts in a distinct tract) they are with great difficulty prevented from rending the world asunder, so great is the discord of the brothers.18 Eurus took his way19 towards the rising of Aurora and the realms of Nabath20 and Persia, and the mountain ridges exposed to the rays of the morning. The Evening star, and the shores which are warm with the setting sun, are bordering upon Zephyrus.21 The terrible Boreas invaded Scythia,22 and the regions of the North. The opposite quarter is wet with continual clouds, and the drizzling South Wind.23

Over these he placed the firmament, clear and devoid of gravity, and not containing anything of the dregs of earth.

Scarcely had he separated all these by fixed limits, when the stars, which had long lain hid, concealed beneath that mass of Chaos, began to glow through the range of the heavens. And that no region might be destitute of its own peculiar animated beings, the stars and the forms of the Gods24 possess the tract of heaven; the waters fell to be inhabited by the smooth fishes;25 the Earth received the wild beasts, and the yielding air the birds.

But an animated being, more holy than these, more fitted to receive higher faculties, and which could rule over the rest,26 was still wanting. Then Man was formed. Whether it was that the Artificer of all things, the original of the world in its improved state, framed him from divine elements;27 or whether, the Earth, being newly made, and but lately divided from the lofty æther, still retained some atoms of its kindred heaven, which, tempered with the waters of the stream, the son of Iapetus fashioned after the image of the Gods, who rule over all things. And, whereas other animals bend their looks downwards upon the Earth, to Man he gave a countenance to look on high and to behold the heavens, and to raise his face erect to the stars. Thus, that which had been lately rude earth, and without any regular shape, being changed, assumed the form of Man, till then unknown.

**EXPLANATION.**

According to Ovid, as in the book of Genesis, man is the last work of the Creator. The information derived from Holy Writ is here presented to us, in a disfigured form. Prometheus, who tempers the earth, and Minerva, who animates his workmanship, is God, who formed man, and 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.'

Some writers have labored to prove that this Prometheus, of the heathen Mythology, was a Scriptural character. Bochart believes him to have been the same with Magog, mentioned in the book of Genesis. Prometheus was the son of Iapetus, and Magog was the son of Japhet, who, according to that learned writer, was identical with Iapetus. He says, that as Magog went to settle in Scythia, so did Prometheus; as Magog either invented, or improved, the art of founding metals, and forging iron, so, according to the heathen poets, did Prometheus. Diodorus Siculus asserts that Prometheus was the first to teach mankind how to produce fire
from the flint and steel.

The fable of Prometheus being devoured by an eagle, according to some, is founded on the name of Magog, which signifies ‘a man devoured by sorrow.’ Le Clerc, in his notes on Hesiod, says, that Epimetheus, the brother of Prometheus, was the same with the Gogof Scripture, the brother of Magog. Some writers, again, have exerted their ingenuity to prove that Prometheus is identical with the patriarch Noah.

FABLE III.

The formation of man is followed by a succession of the four ages of the world. The first is the Golden Age, during which Innocence and Justice alone govern the world.

The Golden Age was first founded, which, without any avenger, of its own accord, without laws, practised both faith and rectitude. Punishment, and the fear of it, did not exist, and threatening decrees were not read upon the brazen tables, nor yet did the supplicant multitude dread the countenance of its judge; but all were in safety without any avenger. The pine-tree, cut from its native mountains, had not yet descended to the flowing waves, that it might visit a foreign region; and mortals were acquainted with no shores beyond their own. Notas yet did deep ditches surround the towns; no trumpets of straightened, or clarions of crooked brass, no helmets, no swords then existed. Without occasion for soldiers, the minds of men, free from care, enjoyed an easy tranquillity.

The Earth itself, too, in freedom, untouched by the harrow, and wounded by no ploughshares, of its own accord produced everything; and men, contented with the food created under no compulsion, gathered the fruit of the arbute-tree, and the strawberries of the mountain, and cornels, and blackberries adhering to the prickly bramble-bushes, and acorns which had fallen from the wide-spreading tree of Jove. Then it was an eternal spring; and the gentle Zephyrs, with their soothing breezes, cherished the flowers produced without any seed. Soon, too, the Earth unploughed yielded crops of grain, and the land, without being renewed, was whitened with the heavy ears of corn. Then, rivers of milk, then, rivers of nectar were flowing, and the yellow honey was distilled from the green holm oak.

EXPLANATION.

The heathen poets had learned, most probably from tradition, that our first parents lived for some time in peaceful innocence; that, without tillage, the garden of Eden furnished them with fruit and food in abundance; and that the animals were submissive to their commands: that after the fall the ground became unfruitful, and yielded nothing without labor; and that nature no longer spontaneously acknowledged man for its master. The more happy days of
our first parents they seem to have styled the Golden Age, each writer being desirous to make his own country the scene of those times of innocence. The Latin writers, for instance, have placed in Italy, and under the reign of Saturn and Janus, events, which, as they really happened, the Scriptures relate in the histories of Adam and of Noah.

FABLE IV.

In the Silver Age, men begin not to be so just, nor, consequently, so happy, as in the Golden Age. In the Brazen Age, which succeeds, they become yet less virtuous; but their wickedness does not rise to its highest pitch until the Iron Age, when it makes its appearance in all its deformity.

Afterwards (Saturn being driven into the shady realms of Tartarus), the world was under the sway of Jupiter; then the Silver Age succeeded, inferior to that of gold, but more precious than that of yellow brass. Jupiter shortened the duration of the former spring, and divided the year into four periods by means of winters, and summers, and unsteady autumns, and short springs. Then, for the first time, did the parched air glow with sultry heat, and the ice, bound up by the winds, waspandent. Then, for the first time, did men enter houses; those houses were caverns, and thick shrubs, and twigs fastened together with bark. Then, for the first time, were the seeds of Ceres buried in long furrows, and the oxen groaned, pressed by the yoke of the ploughshare.

The Age of Brass succeeded, as the third in order, after these; fiercer in disposition, and more prone to horrible warfare, but yet free from impiety. The last Age was of hard iron. Immediately every species of crime burst forth, in this age of degenerated tendencies; modesty, truth, and honor took flight; in their place succeeded fraud, deceit, treachery, violence, and the cursed hankering for acquisition. The sailor now spread his sails to the winds, and with these, as yet, he was but little acquainted; and the trees, which had long stood on the lofty mountains, now, as ships bounded through the unknown waves. The ground, too, hitherto common as the light of the sun and the breezes, the cautious measurer marked out with his lengthened boundary.

And not only was the rich soil required to furnish corn and due sustenance, but men even descended into the entrails of the Earth; and riches were dug up, the incentives to vice, which the Earth had hidden, and had removed to the Stygian shades. Then destructive iron came forth, and gold, more destructive than iron; then War came forth, that fights through the means of both, and that brandishes in his blood-stained hands the clattering arms. Men live by rapine; the guest is not safe from his entertainer, nor the father-in-law from the son-in-law; good feeling, too, between brothers is a rarity. The husband is eager for the death of the wife, she for that of her husband. Horrible stepmothers then mingle the ghastly wolfsbane; the son prematurely makes inquiry into the years of his father.
Piety lies vanquished, and the virgin Astræa is the last of the heavenly Deities to abandon the Earth, now drenched in slaughter.

**EXPLANATION.**

The Poet here informs us, that during the Golden Age, a perpetual spring reigned on the earth, and that the division of the year into seasons was not known until the Silver Age. This allusion to Eden is very generally to be found in the works of the heathen poets. The Silver Age is succeeded by the Brazen, and that is followed by the Iron Age, which still continues. The meaning is, that man gradually degenerated from his primeval innocence, and arrived at that state of wickedness and impiety, of which the history of all ages, ancient and modern, presents us with so many lamentable examples.

The limited nature of their views, and the fact that their exuberant fancy was the source from which they derived many of their alleged events, naturally betrayed the ancient writers into great inconsistencies. For in the Golden Age of Saturn, we find wars waged, and crimes committed. Saturn expelled his father, and seized his throne; Jupiter, his son, treated Saturn as he had done his father Uranus; and Jupiter, in his turn, had to wage war against the Giants, in their attempt to dispossess him of the heavens.

**FABLE V.**

The Giants having attempted to render themselves masters of heaven, Jupiter buries them under the mountains which they have heaped together to facilitate their assault; and the Earth, animating their blood, forms out of it a cruel and fierce generation of men.

And that the lofty realms of æther might not be more safe than the Earth, they say that the Giants aspired to the sovereignty of Heaven, and piled the mountains, heaped together, even to the lofty stars. Then the omnipotent Father, hurling his lightnings, broke through Olympus, and struck Ossa away from Pelion, that lay beneath it. While the dreadful carcasses lay overwhelmed beneath their own structure, they say that the Earth was wet, drenched with the plenteous blood of her sons, and that she gave life to the warm gore; and that, lest no memorial of this ruthless race should be surviving, she shaped them into the form of men. But that generation, too, was a despiser of the Gods above, and most greedy of ruthless slaughter, and full of violence: you might see that they derived their origin from blood.

**EXPLANATION.**

The war of the giants, which is here mentioned, is not to be confounded with that between Jupiter and the Titans, who were inhabitants of heaven. The fall of the angels, as conveyed by tradition, probably gave rise to the story of the Titans; while, perhaps, the building of the
tower of Babel may have laid the foundation of that of the attempt by the giants to reach heaven. Perhaps, too, the descendants of Cain, who are probably the persons mentioned in Scripture as the children ‘of men’ and ‘giants,’ were the race depicted under the form of the Giants, and the generation that sprung from their blood. See Genesis, ch. vi. ver. 2, 4.

FABLE VI.

Jupiter, having seen the crimes of this impious race of men, calls a council of the Gods, and determines to destroy the world.

When the Father of the Gods, the son of Saturn, beheld this from his loftiest height, he groaned aloud; and recalling to memory the polluted banquet on the table of Lycaon, not yet publicly known, from the crime being but lately committed, he conceives in his mind vast wrath, and suchas is worthy of Jove, and calls together a council; no delay detains them, thus summoned.

There is a way on high, easily seen in a clear sky, and which, remarkable for its very whiteness, receives the name of the Milky Way. Along this is the way for the Gods above to the abode of the great Thunderer and his royal palace. On the right and on the left side the courts of the ennobled Deities are thronged, with open gates. The Gods of lower rank inhabit various places; in front of the Way, the powerful and illustrious inhabitants of Heaven have established their residence. This is the place which, if boldness may be allowed to my expression, I should not hesitate to style the palatial residence of Heaven. When, therefore, the Gods above had taken their seats in the marble hall of assembly; he himself, elevated on his seat, and leaning on his sceptre of ivory, three or four times shook the awful locks of his head, with which he makes the Earth, the Seas, and the Stars to tremble. Then, after such manner as this, did he open his indignant lips:—

“Not even at that time was I more concerned for the empire of the universe, when each of the snake-footed monsters was endeavoring to lay his hundred arms on the captured skies. For although that was a dangerous enemy, yet that war was with but one stock, and sprang from a single origin. Now must the race of mortals be cut off by me, wherever Nereus roars on all sides of the earth; this I swear by the Rivers of Hell, that glide in the Stygian grove beneath the earth. All methods have been already tried; but a wound that admits of no cure, must be cut away with the knife, that the sound parts may not be corrupted. I have as subjects, Demigods, and I have the rustic Deities, the Nymphs, and the Fauns, and the Satyrs, and the Sylvans, the inhabitants of the mountains; these, though as yet, we have not thought them worthy of the honor of Heaven, let us, at least, permit to inhabit the earth which we have granted them. And do you, ye Gods of Heaven,
believe that they will be in proper safety, when Lycaon remarkable for his cruelty, has formed a plot against even me, who own and hold sway over the thunder and yourselves?"

All shouted their assent aloud, and with ardent zeal they called for vengeance on one who dared such crimes. Thus, when an impious band madly raged to extinguish the Roman name in the blood of Cæsar, the human race was astonished with sudden terror at ruin so universal, and the whole earth shook with horror. Nor was the affectionate regard, Augustus, of thy subjects less grateful to thee, than that was to Jupiter. Who, after he had, by means of his voice and his hand, suppressed their murmurs, all of them kept silence.

Soon as the clamor had ceased, checked by the authority of their ruler, Jupiter again broke silence in these words:

“He, indeed, (dismiss your cares) has suffered dire punishment; but what was the offence and what the retribution, I will inform you. The report of the iniquity of the age had reached my ears; wishing to find this not to be the truth, I descended from the top of Olympus, and, a God in a human shape, I surveyed the earth. 'Twere an endless task to enumerate how great an amount of guilt was everywhere discovered; the report itself was below the truth.

EXPLANATION.

It is to be presumed, that Ovid here follows the prevailing tradition of his time; and it is surprising how closely that tradition adheres to the words of Scripture, relative to the determination of the Almighty to punish the earth by a deluge, as disclosed in the sixth chapter of Genesis. The Poet tells us, that the King of heaven calls the Gods to a grand council, to deliberate upon the punishment of mankind, in retribution for their wickedness. The words of Scripture are, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, 'I will destroy man, whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them.'"—Genesis, ch. vi. ver.5, 6, 7.

Tradition seems to have faithfully carried down the fact, that, amid this universal corruption, there was still at least one just man, and here it attributes to Deucalion the merit that belonged to Noah.

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FABLE VII.

Lycaon, king of Arcadia, in order to discover if it is Jupiter himself who has come to lodge in his palace, orders the body of an hostage, who had been sent to him, to be dressed and served up at a feast. The God, as a punishment, changes him into a wolf.

I had now passed Mænalus, to be dreaded for its dens of beasts of prey, and the pine-groves of cold Lycaeus, together with Cyllene. After this, I entered the realms and the inhospitable abode of the Arcadian tyrant, just as the late twilight was bringing on the night. I gave a signal that a God had come, and the people commenced to pay their adorations. In the first place, Lycaon derided their pious supplications. Afterwards, he said, I will make trial, by a plain proof, whether this is a God, or whether he is a mortal; nor shall the truth remain a matter of doubt. He then makes preparations to destroy me, when sunk in sleep, by an unexpected death; this mode of testing the truth pleases him. And not content with that, with the sword he cuts the throat of an hostage that had been sent from the nation of the Molossians, and then softens part of the quivering limbs, in boiling water, and part he roasts with fire placed beneath. Soon as he had placed these on the table, I, with avenging flames, overthrew the house upon the household Gods, worthy of their master. Alarmed, he himself takes to flight, and having reached the solitude of the country, he howls aloud, and in vain attempts to speak; his mouth gathers rage from himself, and through its usual desire for slaughter, it is directed against the sheep, and even still delights in blood. His garments are changed into hair, his arms into legs; he becomes a wolf, and he still retains vestiges of his ancient form. His hoariness is still the same, the same violence appears in his features; his eyes are bright as before; he is still the same image of ferocity.

“Thus fell one house; but one house alone did not deserve to perish; wherever the earth extends, the savage Erinnyse reigns. You would suppose that men had conspired to be wicked; let all men speedily feel that vengeance which they deserve to endure, for such is my determination.”

EXPLANATION.

If Ovid is not here committing an anachronism, and making Jupiter, before the deluge, relate the story of a historical personage, who existed long after it, the origin of the story of Lycaon must be sought in the antediluvian narrative. It is just possible that the guilty Cain may have been the original of Lycaon. The names are not very dissimilar: they are each mentioned as the first murderer; and the fact, that Cain murdered Abel at the moment when he was offering sacrifice to the Almighty, may have given rise to the tradition that Lycaon had set human flesh before the king of heaven. The Scripture, too, tells us, that Cain was personally called to account by the Almighty for his deed of blood.

The punishment here inflicted on Lycaon was not very dissimilar to that with which Cain was visited. Cain was sentenced to be a fugitive and a wanderer on the face of the earth; and such is essentially the character of the wolf, shunned by both men and animals. Of course, there
are many points to which it is not possible to extend the parallel. Some of the ancient writers
tell us, that there were two Lycaons, the first of whom was the son of Phoroneus, who reigned
in Arcadia about the time of the patriarch Jacob; and the second, who succeeded him,
polluted the festivals of the Gods by the sacrifice of the human race; for, having erected an
altar to Jupiter, at the city of Lycosura, he slew human victims on it, whence arose the story
related by the Poet.
This solution is given by Pausanias, in his Arcadica. We are also told by that historian, and
by Suidas, that Lycaon was, notwithstanding, a virtuous prince, the benefactor of his
people, and the promoter of improvement.

FABLE VIII.

Jupiter, not thinking the punishment of Lycaon sufficient to strike terror into the rest of mankind,
resolves, on account of the universal corruption, to extirpate them by a universal deluge.
Some, by their words approve the speech of Jupiter, and give spur to him, indignantly
exclaiming; others, by silent assent fulfil their parts. Yet the entire destruction of the human
race is a cause of grief to them all, and they inquire what is to be the form of the earth in
future, when destitute of mankind? who is to place frankincense on the altars? and
whether it is his design to give up the nations for a prey to the wild beasts? The ruler of the
Gods forbids them making these enquiries, to be alarmed (for that the rest should be his
care); and he promises, that from a wondrous source he will raise a generation unlike the
preceding race.
And now he was about to scatter his thunder over all lands; but he was afraid lest, perchance,
the sacred æther might catch fire, from so many flames, and the extended sky might become
inflamed. He remembers, too, that it was in the decrees of Fate, that a time should come, at
which the sea, the earth, and the palace of heaven, seized by the flames, should be
burned, and the laboriously-wrought fabric of the universe should be in danger of perishing.
The weapons forged by the hands of the Cyclops are laid aside; a different mode of
punishment pleases him: to destroy mankind beneath the waves, and to let loose the rains
from the whole tract of Heaven. At once he shuts the North Wind in the caverns of Æolus,
and all those blasts which dispel the clouds drawn over the Earth; and then he sends forth
the South Wind. With soaking wings the South Wind flies abroad, having his terrible face
covered with pitchy darkness; his beard is loaded with showers, the water streams down
from his hoary locks, clouds gather upon his forehead, his wings and the folds of his robe
drip with wet; and, as with his broad hand he squeezes the hanging clouds, a crash arises,
and thence showers are poured in torrents from the skies. Iris, the messenger of Juno,
clothed in various colors, collects the waters, and bears a supply upwards to the clouds.
The standing corn is beaten down, and the expectations of the husbandman, now lamented by him, are ruined, and the labors of a long year prematurely perish. Nor is the wrath of Jove satisfied with his own heaven; but Neptune, his azure brother, aids him with his auxiliary waves. He calls together the rivers, which, soon as they had entered the abode of their ruler, he says, “I must not now employ a lengthened exhortation; pour forth all your might, so the occasion requires. Open your abodes, and, each obstacle removed, give full rein to your streams.” Thus commanded; they return, and open the mouths of their fountains, and roll on into the ocean with unobstructed course. He himself struck the Earth with his trident, on which it shook, and with a tremor laid open the sources of its waters. The rivers, breaking out, rush through the open plains, and bear away, together with the standing corn, the groves, flocks, men, houses, and temples, together with their sacred utensils. If any house remained, and, not thrown down, was able to resist ruin so vast, yet the waves, rising aloft, covered the roof of that house, and the towers tottered, overwhelmed beneath the stream. And now sea and land had no mark of distinction; everything now was ocean; and to that ocean shores were wanting. One man takes possession of a hill, another sits in a curved boat, and plies the oars there where he had lately ploughed; another sails over the standing corn, or the roof of his country-house under water; another catches a fish on the top of an elm-tree. An anchor (if chance so directs) is fastened in a green meadow, or the curving keels come in contact with the vineyards, now below them; and where of late the slender goats had cropped the grass, there unsightly sea-calves are now reposing their bodies.

The Nereids wonder at the groves, the cities, and the houses under water; dolphins get into the woods, and run against the lofty branches, and beat against the tossed oaks. The wolf swims among the sheep; the wave carries along the tawny lions; the wave carries along the tigers.

Neither does the powers of his lightning-shock avail the wild boar, nor his swift legs the stag, now borne away. The wandering bird, too, having long sought for land, where it may be allowed to light, its wings failing, falls down into the sea. The boundless range of the sea had overwhelmed the hills, and the stranger waves beat against the heights of the mountains. The greatest part is carried off by the water: those whom the water spares, long fastings overcome, through scantiness of food.

EXPLANATION.

Pausanias makes mention of five deluges. The two most celebrated happened in the time of Ogyges, and in that of Deucalion. Of the last Ovid here speaks; and though that deluge was generally said to have overflowed Thessaly only, he has evidently adopted in his narrative the tradition of the universal deluge, which all nations seem to have preserved. He says, that the sea joined its waters to those falling from heaven. The words of Scripture are (Genesis, vii. 11), ‘All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.’ In speaking of the top of Parnassus alone being left uncovered, the tradition here
followed by Ovid probably referred to Mount Ararat, where Noah’s ark rested. Noah and his family are represented by Deucalion and Pyrrha. Both Noah and Deucalion were saved for their virtuous conduct; when Noah went out of the ark, he offered solemn sacrifices to God; and Pausanias tells us that Deucalion, when saved, raised an altar to Jupiter the Liberator. The Poet tells us, that Deucalion’s deluge was to be the last: God promised the same thing to Noah. Josephus, in his Antiquities, Book i., tells us, that the history of the universal deluge was written by Nicolas of Damascus, Berosus, Mnaseas, and other ancient writers, from whom the Greeks and Romans received it.

FABLE IX.

Neptune appeases the angry waves; and he commands Triton to sound his shell, that the sea may retire within its shores, and the rivers within their banks. Deucalion and Pyrrha are the only persons saved from the deluge.

Phocis separates the Aonian from the Actæan region; a fruitful land while it was a land; but at that time it had become a part of the sea, and a wide plain of sudden waters. There a lofty mountain rises towards the stars, with two tops, by name Parnassus, and advances beyond the clouds with its summit. When here Deucalion (for the sea had covered all other places), borne in a little ship, with the partner of his couch, first rested; they adored the Corycian Nymphs, and the Deities of the mountain, and the prophetic Themis, who at that time used to give out oracular responses. No man was there more upright than he, nor a greater lover of justice, nor was any woman more regardful of the Deities than she. Soon as Jupiter beholds the world overflowed by liquid waters, and sees that but one man remains out of so many thousands of late, and sees that but one woman remains out of so many thousands of late, both guiltless, and both worshippers of the Gods, he disperses the clouds; and the showers being removed by the North Wind, he both lays open the earth to the heavens, and the heavens to the earth. The rage, too, of the sea does not continue; and his three-forked trident now laid aside, the ruler of the deep assuages the waters, and calls upon the azure Triton standing above the deep, and having his shoulders covered with the native purple shells; and he bids him blow his resounding trumpet, and, the signal being given, to call back the waves and the streams. The hollow-wreathed trumpet is taken up by him, which grows to a great width from its lowest twist; the trumpet, which, soon as it receives the air in the middle of the sea, fills with its notes the shores lying under either sun. Then, too, as soon as it touched the lips of the God dripping with his wet beard, and being blown, sounded the bidden retreat; it was heard by all the waters both of earth and sea, and stopped all those waters by which it was heard. Now the sea again has a shore; their channels receive the full rivers; the rivers subside; the hills are seen to come forth. The ground rises, places increase in extent as the waters decrease; and after a length of time, the woods show their naked tops, and retain the mud left upon their branches. The world was restored; which when Deucalion beheld to be empty, and how the desolate Earth kept a profound silence, he thus addressed Pyrrha, with tears bursting forth:—“O sister, O wife, O thou, the only woman surviving, whom a common origin, and a kindred descent, and
afterwards the marriage tie has united to me, and whom now dangers themselves unite to me; we two are the whole people of the earth, whatever both the East and the West behold; of all the rest, the sea has taken possession. And even now there is no certain assurance of our lives; even yet do the clouds terrify my mind. What would now have been thy feelings, if without me thou hadst been rescued from destruction, O thou deserving of compassion? In what manner couldst thou have been able alone to support this terror? With whom for a consoler, to endure these sorrows? For I, believe me, my wife, if the sea had only carried thee off, should have followed thee, and the sea should have carried me off as well. Oh that I could replace the people that are lost by the arts of my father, and infuse the soul into the moulded earth! Now the mortal race exists in us two alone. Thus it has seemed good to the Gods, and we remain as mere samples of mankind.

EXPLANATION.

Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, were, perhaps, originally three brothers, kings of three separate kingdoms. Having been deified each retaining his sovereignty, they were depicted as having the world divided between them; the empire of the sea falling to the share of Neptune. Among his occupations, were those of raising and calming the seas; and Ovid here represents him as being so employed.

FABLE X.

Deucalion and Pyrrha re-people the earth by casting stones behind them, in the manner prescribed by the Goddess Themis, whose oracle they had consulted. He thus spoke, and they wept. They resolved to pray to the Deities of Heaven, and to seek relief through the sacred oracles. There is no delay; together they repair to the waters of Cephisus, though not yet clear, yet now cutting their wonted channel. Then, when they have sprinkled the waters poured on their clothes and their heads, they turn their steps to the temple of the sacred Goddess, the roof of which was defiled with foul moss, and whose altars were standing without fires. Soon as they reached the steps of the temple, each of them fell prostrate on the ground, and, trembling, gave kisses to the cold pavement. And thus they said: “If the Deities, prevailed upon by just prayers, are to be mollified, if the wrath of the Gods is to be averted; tell us, O Themis, by what art the loss of our race is to be repaired, and give thy assistance, O most gentle Goddess to our ruined fortunes.” The Goddess was moved, and gave this response: “Depart from my temple, and cover your heads, and loosen the garments girt around you, and throw behind your backs the bones of your great mother.” For a long time they are amazed; and Pyrrha is the first by her words to break the silence, and then refuses to obey the commands of the Goddess; and begs her, with trembling lips, to grant her pardon, and dreads to offend the shades of her mother by casting her bones. In the meantime they reconsider the words of the response given, but involved in dark obscurity, and they ponder them among themselves. Upon that, the son of Prometheus soothes the daughter of Epimetheus with these gentle words, and says, “Either is my discernment fallacious, or the oracles are just, and advise no sacrilege. The earth is the great mother; I suspect that the stones in the body of the earth are the bones meant; these we are ordered to
throw behind our backs.” Although she, descended from Titan, is moved by this interpretation of her husband, still her hope is involved in doubt; so much do they both distrust the advice of heaven; but what harm will it do to try? They go down, and they veil their heads, and ungird their garments, and cast stones, as ordered, behind their footsteps. The stones (who could have believed it, but that antiquity is a witness of the thing?) began to lay aside their hardness and their stiffness, and by degrees to become soft; and when softened, to assume a new form. Presently after, when they were grown larger, a milder nature, too, was conferred on them, so that some shape of man might be seen in them, yet though but imperfect; and as if from the marble commenced to be wrought, not sufficiently distinct, and very like to rough statues. Yet that part of them which was humid with any moisture, and earthy, was turned into portions adapted for the use of the body. That which is solid, and cannot be bent, is changed into bones; that which was just now a vein, still remains under the same name. And in a little time, by the interposition of the Gods above, the stones thrown by the hands of the man, took the shape of a man, and the female race was renewed by the throwing of the woman. Thence are we a hardy generation, and able to endure fatigue, and we give proofs from what original we are sprung.

EXPLANATION.

In the reign of Deucalion, king of Thessaly, the course of the river Peneus was stopped, probably by an earthquake. In the same year so great a quantity of rain fell, that all Thessaly was overflowed. Deucalion and some of his subjects fled to Mount Parnassus; where they remained until the waters abated. The children of those who were preserved are the stones of which the Poet here speaks. The Fable, probably, has for its foundation the double meaning of the word ‘Eben,’ or ‘Aben,’ which signifies either ‘a stone,’ or ‘a child.’ The Scholiast on Pindar tells us, too, that the word λαός, which means people, formerly also signified ‘a stone.’

The brutal and savage nature of the early races of men may also have added strength to the tradition that they derived their original from stones. After the inundation, Deucalion is said to have repaired to Athens, where he built a temple to Jupiter, and instituted sacrifices in his honor. Some suppose that Cranaus reigned at Athens when Deucalion retired thither; though Eusebius informs us it was under the reign of Cecrops. Deucalion was the son of Prometheus, and his wife Pyrrha was the daughter of his uncle, Epimetheus. After his death, he received the honor of a temple, and was worshipped as a Divinity.

Notes:

1. *Forms changed into new bodies.*—Ver. 1. Some commentators cite these words as an instance of Hypallage as being used for ‘corpora mutata in novas formas,’ ‘bodies changed into new forms;’ and they fancy that there is a certain beauty in the circumstance that the proposition of a subject which treats of the changes and variations of bodies should be framed with a transposition of words. This supposition is perhaps based rather on the exuberance of a fanciful imagination than on solid
grounds, as if it is an instance of Hypallage, it is most probably quite accidental; while the passage may be explained without any reference to Hypallage, as the word ‘forma’ is sometimes used to signify the thing itself; thus the words ‘formæ deorum’ and ‘ferarum’ are used to signify ‘the Gods,’ or ‘the wild beasts’ themselves.

2. *Favor my attempts.*—Ver. 3. This use of the word ‘adspirate’ is a metaphor taken from the winds which, while they fill the ship’s sails, were properly said ‘adspirare.’ It has been remarked, with some justice, that this invocation is not sufficiently long or elaborate for a work of so grave and dignified a nature as the Metamorphoses.

3. *To my own times.*—Ver. 4. That is, to the days of Augustus Caesar.

4. *A rude and undigested mass.*—Ver. 7. This is very similar to the words of the Scriptures, ‘And the earth was without form and void,’ Genesis, ch. i. ver. 2.

5. *No Sun.*—Ver. 10. Titan. The Sun is so called, on account of his supposed father, Hyperion, who was one of the Titans. Hyperion is thought to have been the first who, by assiduous observation, discovered the course of the Sun, Moon, and other luminaries. By them he regulated the time for the seasons, and imparted this knowledge to others. Being thus, as it were, the father of astronomy, he has been feigned by the poets to have been the father of the Sun and the Moon.

6. *The Moon.*—Ver. 11. Phœbe. The Moon is so called from the Greek φοῖβος, ‘shining,’ and as being the sister of Phœbus, Apollo, or the Sun.

7. *Amphitrite.*—Ver. 14. She was the daughter of Oceanus and Doris, and the wife of Neptune, God of the Sea. Being the Goddess of the Ocean, her name is here used to signify the ocean itself.

8. *Nature.*—Ver. 21. ‘Natura’ is a word often used by the Poet without any determinate signification, and to its operations are ascribed all those phenomena which it is found difficult or impossible to explain upon known and established principles. In the present instance it may be considered to mean the invisible agency of the Deity in reducing Chaos into a form of order and consistency. ‘Et’ is therefore here, as grammarians term it, an expositive particle; as if the Poet had said, ‘Deus sive natura,’ ‘God, or in other words, nature.’

9. *The element of the vaulted heaven.*—Ver. 26. This is a periphrasis, signifying the regions of the firmament or upper air, in which the sun and stars move; which was supposed to be of the purest fire and the source of all flame. The heavens are called ‘convex,’ from being supposed to assume the same shape as the terrestrial globe which they surround.

10. *The lowermost place.*—Ver. 31. ‘Ultima’ must not be here understood in the presence of ‘infima,’ oras signifying ‘last,’ or ‘lowest,’ in a strict philosophical sense, for that would contradict the account of the formation of the world given by Hesiod, and which is here closely followed by Ovid; indeed, it would contradict his own words,—‘Circumfluus humor coercuit solidum orbem.’ The meaning seems to be, that the waters possess the lowest place only in respect to the earth whereon we tread, and not relatively to the terrestrial globe, the supposed centre of the system, inasmuch as the external surface of the earth in some places rises considerably, and leaves the water to subside in channels.

11. *Whoever of the Gods he was.*—Ver. 32. By this expression the Poet perhaps may intend to intimate that the God who created the world was some more mighty Divinity than those who were commonly accounted Deities.

12. *Are some of them swallowed up.*—Ver. 40. He here refers to those rivers which, at some distance from their sources, disappear and continue their course under ground. Such was the stream
of Arethusa, the Lycus in Asia, the Erasinus in Argolis, the Alpheus in Peloponnesus, the Arcas in Spain, and the Rhone in France. Most of these, however, after descending into the earth, appear again and discharge their waters into the sea.

13. *He commanded the plains.*]—Ver. 43. The use here of the word ‘jussit,’ signifying ‘ordered,’ or ‘commanded,’ is considered as being remarkably sublime and appropriate, and serving well to express the ease wherewith an infinitely powerful Being accomplishes the most difficult works. There is the same beauty here that was long since remarked by Longinus, one of the most celebrated critics amongst the ancients, in the words used by Moses, ‘And God said, Let there be light, and there was light,’ Genesis, ch. i. ver. 3.

14. *On the right-hand side.*]—Ver. 45. The “right hand” here refers to the northern part of the globe, and the “left hand” to the southern. He here speaks of the zones. Astronomers have divided the heavens into five parallel circles. First, the equinoctial, which lies in the middle, between the poles of the earth, and obtains its name from the equality of days and nights on the earth while the sun is in its plane. On each side are the two tropics, at the distance of 23 deg. 30 min., and described by the sun when in his greatest declination north and south, or at the summer and winter solstices. That on the north side of the equinoctial is called the tropic of Cancer, because the sun describes it when in that sign of the ecliptic; and that on the south side is, for a similar reason, called the tropic of Capricorn. Again, at the distance of 23½ degrees from the poles are two other parallels called the polar circles, either because they are near to the poles, or because, if we suppose the whole frame of the heavens to turn round on the plane of the equinoctial, these circles are marked out by the poles of the ecliptic. By means of these parallels, astronomers have divided the heavens into four zones or tracks. The whole space between the two tropics is the middle or torrid zone, which the equinoctial divides into two equal parts. On each side of this are the temperate zones, which extend from the tropics to the two polar circles. And lastly, the portions enclosed by the polar circles make up the frigid zones. As the planes of these circles produced till they reached the earth, would also impress similar parallels upon it, and divide it in the same manners they divide the heavens, astronomers have conceived five zones upon the earth, corresponding to those in the heavens, and bounded by the same circles.

15. *That which is the middle one.*]—Ver. 49. The ecliptic in which the sun moves, cuts the equator in two opposite points, at an angle of 23½ degrees; and runs obliquely from one tropic to another, and returns again in a corresponding direction. Hence, the sun, which in the space of a year, performs the revolution of this circle, must in that time be twice vertical to every place in the torrid zone, except directly under the tropics, and his greatest distance from their zenith at noon, cannot exceed 47 degrees. Thus his rays being often perpendicular, or nearly so, and never very oblique, must strike more forcibly, and cause more intense heat in that spot. Being little acquainted with the extent and situation of the earth, the ancients believed it uninhabitable. Modern discovery has shown that this is not the case as to a considerable part of the torrid zone, though with some parts of it our acquaintance is still very limited.

16. *Deep snow covers two.*]—Ver. 50. The two polar or frigid zones. For as the sun never approaches these nearer than the tropic on that side, and is, during one part of the year, removed by the additional extent of the whole torrid zone, his rays must be very oblique and faint, so as to leave these tracts exposed to almost perpetual cold.

17. *He placed as many more.*]—Ver. 51. The temperate zones, lying between the torrid and the frigid, partake of the character of each in a modified degree, and are of a middle temperature between hot and cold. Here, too, the distinction of the seasons is manifest. For in either temperate
zone, when the sun is in that tropic, which borders upon it, being nearly vertical, the heat must be considerable, and produce summer; but when he is removed to the other tropic by a distance of 47 degrees, his rays will strike but faintly, and winter will be the consequence. The intermediate spaces, while he is moving from one tropic to the other, make spring and autumn.

18. The brothers.]—Ver. 60. That is, the winds, who, according to the Theogony of Hesiod, were the sons of Astreus, the giant, and Aurora.

19. Eurus took his way.]—Ver. 61. The Poet, after remarking that the air is the proper region of the winds, proceeds to take notice that God, to prevent them from making havoc of the creation, subjected them to particular laws, and assigned to each the quarter whence to direct his blasts. Eurus is the east wind, being so called from its name, because it blows from the east. As Aurora, or the morning, was always ushered in by the sun, who rises eastward, she was supposed to have her habitation in the eastern quarter of the world; and often, in the language of ancient poetry, her name signifies the east.

20. The realms of Nabath.]—Ver. 61. From Josephus we learn that Nabath, the son of Ishmael, with his eleven brothers, took possession of all the country from the river Euphrates to the Red Sea, and called it Nabathæa. Pliny the Elder and Strabo speak of the Nabatae as situated between Babylon and Arabia Felix, and call their capital Petra. Tacitus, in his Annals (Book ii. ch. 57), speaks of them as having a king. Perhaps the term ‘Nabathæa regna’ implies here, generally, the whole of Arabia.

21. Are bordering upon Zephyrus.]—Ver. 63. The region where the sun sets, that is to say, the western part of the world, was assigned by the ancients to the Zephyrs, or west winds, so called by a Greek derivation because they cherish and enliven nature.

22. Boreas invaded Scythia.]—Ver. 64. Under the name of Scythia, the ancients generally comprehended all the countries situate in the extreme northern regions. ‘Septem trio,’ meaning the northern region of the world, is so called from the ‘Triones,’ a constellation of seven stars, near the North Pole, known also as the Ursa Major, or Greater Bear, and among the country people of our time by the name of Charles’s Wain. Boreas, one of the names of ‘Aquilo,’ or the ‘north wind,’ is derived from a Greek word, signifying ‘an eddy.’ This name was probably given to it from its causing whirlwinds occasionally by its violence.

23. The drizzling South Wind.]—Ver. 66. The South Wind is especially called rainy, because, blowing from the Mediterranean sea on the coast of France and Italy, it generally brings with it clouds and rain.

24. The forms of the Gods.]—Ver. 73. There is some doubt what the Poet here means by the ‘forms of the Gods.’ Some think that the stars are meant, as if it were to be understood that they are forms of the Gods. But it is most probably only a poetical expression for the Gods themselves, and he here assigns the heavens as the habitation of the Gods and the stars; these last, according to the notion of the Platonic philosophers being either intelligent beings, or guided and actuated by such.

25. Inhabited by the smooth fishes.]—Ver. 74. ‘Cesserunt nitidis habitandæ piscibus;’ Clarke translates ‘fell to the neat fishes to inhabit.’

26. Could rule over the rest.]—Ver. 77. This strongly brings to mind the words of the Creator, described in the first chapter of Genesis, ver. 28. ‘And God said unto them—have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.’

27. Framed him from divine elements.]—Ver. 78. We have here strong grounds for contending that the ancient philosophers, and after them the poets, in their account of the creation of the world
followed a tradition that had been copied from the Books of Moses. The formation of man, in Ovid, as well as in the Book of Genesis, is the last work of the Creator, and was, for the same purpose, that man might have dominion over the other animated works of the creation.

28. Read upon the brazen tables.]—Ver. 91. It was the custom among the Romans to engrave their lawson tables of brass, and fix them in the Capitol, or some other conspicuous place, that they might be open to the view of all.

29. Clarions of crooked brass.]—Ver. 98. ‘Cornu’ seems to have been a general name for the horn or trumpet; whereas the “tuba” was a straight trumpet, while the ‘lituus’ was bent into a spiral shape. Lydus says that the ‘litus’ was the sacerdotal trumpet, and that it was employed by Romulus when he proclaimed the title of his newly-founded city. Acro says that it was peculiar to the cavalry, while the ‘tuba’ belonged to the infantry. The notes of the ‘litus’ are usually described as harsh and shrill.

30. Age of degenerated tendencies.]—Ver. 128. ‘Vena’ signifies among other things, a vein or track of metal as it lies in the mine. Literally, ‘vena pejoris’ signifies ‘of inferior metal.’

31. Now as ships bounded.]—Ver. 134. ‘Insultavere carinæ.’ This line is translated by Clarke, ‘The keel-pieces bounced over unknown waves.’

32. To the Stygian shades.]—Ver. 139. That is, in deep caverns, and towards the centre of the earth; for Styx was feigned to be a river of the Infernal Regions, situate in the depths of the earth.

33. Through the means of both.]—Ver. 142. Gold forms, perhaps, more properly the sinews of war than iron. The history of Philip of Macedon gives a proof of this, as he conquered Greece more by bribes than by the sword, and used to say, that he deemed no fortress impregnable, where there was a gate large enough to admit a camel laden with gold.

34. Prematurely makes inquiry.]—Ver. 148. Namely, by inquiring of the magicians and astrologers, that by their skill in casting nativities, they might inform them the time when their parents were likely to die, and to leave them their property.

35. Astræa.]—Ver. 150. She was the daughter of Astræus and Aurora, or of Jupiter and Themis, and was the Goddess of Justice. On leaving the earth, she was supposed to have taken her place among the stars as the Constellation of the Virgin.

36. Olympus.]—Ver. 154. Olympus was a mountain between Thessaly and Macedonia. Pelion was a mountain of Thessaly, towards the Pelasgic gulf; and Ossa was a mountain between Olympus and Pelion. These the Giants are said to have heaped one on another, in order to scale heaven.

37. There is a way on high.]—Ver. 168. The Poet here gives a description of the court of heaven; and supposing the galaxy, or Milky Way, to be the great road to the palace of Jupiter, places the habitationsof the Gods on each side of it, and adjoining the palace itself. The mythologists also invented a story, that the Milky Way was a track left in the heavens by the milk of Juno flowing from the mouth of Hercules, when suckled by her. Aristotle, however, suspected what has been since confirmed by the investigations of modern science, that it was formed by the light of innumerable stars.

38. The ennobled Deities.]—Ver. 172. These were the superior Deities, who formed the privy councilors of Jupiter, and were called ‘Di majorum gentium,’ or, ‘Di consentes.’ Reckoning Jupiter as one, they were twelve in number, and are enumerated by Ennius in two limping hexameter lines:—

‘Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars,
39. **The Gods of lower rank.**—Ver. 173. These were the ‘Dii minorum gentium,’ or inferior Deities.

40. **Shook the awful locks.**—Ver. 179. This awful nod of Jupiter, the sanction by which he confirms his decrees, is an idea taken from Homer; by whom it is so vividly depicted at the end of the first book of the Iliad, that Phidias, in his statue of that God, admired for the awful majesty of its looks, is said to have derived his conception of the features from that description. Virgil has the same idea in the Æneid, book x; ‘Annuit, et totum metu tremefecit Olympum.’

41. **Nereus.**—Ver. 187. He was one of the most ancient of the Deities of the sea, and was the son of Oceanus and Tethys.

42. **The Nymphs.**—Ver. 192. The terrestrial Nymphs were the Dryads and Hamadryads, who haunting the woods, and the duration of their existence depending upon the life of particular trees, derived their name from the Greek word δρῦς, ‘an oak.’ The Oreades were Nymphs who frequented the mountains, while the Napeæ lived in the groves and valleys. There were also Nymphs of the sea and of the rivers; of which, the Nereids were so called from their father Nereus, and the Oceanitides, from Oceanus. There were also the Naiads, or Nymphs of the fountains, and many others.

43. **Thus when an impious band.**—Ver. 200. It is a matter of doubt whether he here refers to the conspiracies of Brutus and Cassius against Julius Caesar, or whether to that against Augustus, which is mentioned by Suétionius, in the nineteenth chapter of his History. As Augustus survived the latter conspiracy, and the parallel is thereby rendered more complete, probably this is the circumstance here alluded to.

44. **Together with Cyllene.**—Ver. 217. Cyllenus, or Cyllene, was a mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Mercury, who was hence called by the poets Cyllenius. Lycaeus was also a mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Pan, and was covered with groves of pine-trees.

45. **Of the Molossians.**—Ver. 226. The Molossi were a people of Epirus, on the eastern side of the Ambracian gulf. Ovid here commits a slight anachronism, as the name was derived from Molossus, the son of Neoptolemus, long after the time of Lycaon. Besides, as Burmann observes, who could believe that ‘wars could be waged at such an early period between nations so distant as the Molossi and the Arcadians?’ Apollodorus says, that it was a child of the same country, whose flesh Lycaon set before Jupiter. Other writers say that it was Nyctimus, the son of Lycaon, or Arcas, his grandson, that was slain by him.

46. **Upon the household Gods.**—Ver. 231. This punishment was awarded to the Penates, or household Gods of Lycaon, for taking such a miscreant under their protection.

47. **The savage Erinnys.**—Ver. 241. Erinnys was a general name given to the Furies by the Greeks. They were three in number—Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megæra. These were so called, either from the Greek ἐρĩς νοῦς, ‘the discord of the mind,’ or from ἐν τῇ ἔρα ναίειν, ‘their inhabiting the earth,’ watching the actions of men.

48. **To place frankincense.**—Ver. 249. In those early ages, corn or wheaten flour, was the customary offering to the Deities, and not frankincense, which was introduced among the luxuries of more refined times. Ovid is consequently guilty of an anachronism here.

49. **That a time should come.**—Ver. 256. Lactantius informs us that the Sibyls predicted that the world should perish by fire. Seneca also, in his consolation to Marcia, and in his Quæstiones Naturales, mentions the same destined termination of the present state of the universe. It was a
doctrine of the Stoic philosophers, that the stars were nurtured with moisture, and that on the cessation of this nourishment the conflagration of the universe would ensue.

50. The folds of his robe.]—Ver. 267. ‘Rorant pennae sinusque,’ is quaintly translated by Clarke, ‘his wingsand the plaits of his coat drop.’

51. Iris.]—Ver. 271. The mention of Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, in connection with the flood of Deucalion, cannot fail to remind us of the ‘bow set in the cloud, for a token of the covenant between God and the earth,’ on the termination of Noah’s flood.—Gen. x. 14.

52. The mouths of their fountains.]—Ver. 281. The expressions in this line and in line 283, are not unlike the words of the 11th verse of the 7th chapter of Genesis, ‘The fountains of the great deep were brokenup.’

53. The wolf swims.]—Ver. 304. One commentator remarks here, that there was nothing very wonderful in a dead wolf swimming among the sheep without devouring them. Seneca is, however, too severe upon our author in saying that he is trifling here, in troubling himself on so serious an occasion with what sheep and wolves are doing: for he gravely means to say, that the beasts of prey are terrified to that degree that they forget their carnivorous propensities.

54. Eurypylus.]—Ver. 363. He was a former king of the Isle of Cos, in the Ægean Sea, and was much famed for his skill as an augur.

55. The Coan matrons.]—Ver. 363. Lactantius says that the women of Cos, extolling their own beauty as superior to that of Venus, incurred the resentment of that Goddess, and were changed by her into cows. Another version of the story is, that these women, being offended at Hercules for driving the oxen of Ægeon through their island, were very abusive, on which Juno transformed them into cows: to this latter version reference is made in the present passage.

56. Hercules.]—Ver. 364. He besieged and took the chief city of the island, which was also called Cos; and having slain Eurypylus, carried off his daughter Chalciope.

57. Phœbean Rhodes.]—Ver. 365. The island of Rhodes, in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Asia Minor, was sacred to the Sun, and was said never to be deserted by his rays.

58. Ialysian Telchines.]—Ver. 365. Ialysus was one of the three most ancient cities of Rhodes, and was said to have been founded by Ialysus, whose parent was the Sun. The Telchines, or Thelchines, were a race supposed to have migrated thither from Crete. They were persons of great artistic skill, on which account they may, possibly, have obtained the character of being magicians; such was the belief of Strabo.

59. Whose eyes.]—Ver. 366. The evil eye was supposed by the ancients not only to have certain fascinating powers, but to be able to destroy the beauty of any object on which it was turned.

60. Cea.]—Ver. 368. This island, now Zia, is in the Ægean sea, near Eubœa. Carthæa was a city there, the ruins of which are still in existence.

61. Alcidamas.]—Ver. 369. Antoninus Liberalis says, that Alcidamas lived not at Carthæa, but at Iülis, another city in the Isle of Cea.

62. Lakes of Hyrie.]—Ver. 371. Hyrie was the mother of Cycnus; and pining away with grief on the transformation of her son, she was changed into a lake, called by her name.
63. **Cycneian Tempe.**—Ver. 371. This was not Thessalian Tempe, but a valley of Teumesia, or Teumesus, a mountain of Bœotia.

64. **Pleuron.**—Ver. 382. This was a city of Ætolia, near Mount Curius. It was far distant from Bœotia and Lake Hyrie. Some commentators, therefore, suggest that the reading should be Brauron, a village of Attica, near the confines of Bœotia.

65. **Combe.**—Ver. 383. She was the mother of the Curetes of Ætolia, who, perhaps, received that name from Mount Curius. There was another Combe, the daughter of Asopus, who discovered the use of brazen arms, and was called Chalcis, from that circumstance. She was said to have borne a hundred daughters to her husband.

66. **Calaurea.**—Ver. 384. This was an island between Crete and the Peloponnesus, in the Saronic gulf, which was sacred to Apollo. Latona resided there, having given Delos to Neptune in exchange for it. Demosthenes died there.

67. **Menephron.**—Ver. 386. Hyginus says, that he committed incest both with his mother Blias, and with Cyllene, his daughter.

68. **Cephisus.**—Ver. 388. The river Cephisus, in Bœotia, had a daughter, Praxithea. She was the wife of Erectheus, and bore him eight sons, the fate of one of whom is perhaps here referred to.

69. **Eumelus.**—Ver. 390. He was the king of Patræ, on the sea-coast of Achaia. Triptolemus visited him with his winged chariot; on which, Antheas, the son of Eumelus, ascended it while his father was sleeping, and falling from it, he was killed. He is, probably, here referred to; and the reading should be ‘natum,’ and not ‘natam.’ Some writers, however, suppose that his daughter was changed into a bird.

70. **Pirenian Ephyre.**—Ver. 391. Corinth was so called from Ephyre, the daughter of Neptune, who was said to have lived there. Its inhabitants were fabled to have sprung from mushrooms.