

GODS AND HEROES
OR
THE KINGDOM OF
JUPITER

BY
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TO

Francis Felix

FOR WHOM
THIS BOOK WAS BEGUN

PREFACE.

THESE stories will, I trust, explain their own purpose; but a few words touching their form are due to critical readers.

It will be seen that the Mythology adopted throughout is strictly of the old-fashioned kind which goes to Ovid as its leading authority, and ignores the difference between the gods of Greece and the gods of Rome. I have deliberately followed this plan because, while there is not the remotest fear—quite the contrary—that young people, when or if they become scholars, will not be duly initiated into the mysteries of scientific and comparative mythology, there is considerable danger that the stories of the gods and heroes which have saturated literature, and have become essential portions of the thought and life of ages, may become explained away only too thoroughly. It is easy for my readers to acquire the science of the subject hereafter; but where mythology is concerned, the poetry must come before the prose, and it will be a distinct loss for them if, under scientific teaching, they have never been familiar with the ancient stories as they were read by the makers of literature in the præ-critical times. Without the mythology of the Latin poets, modern literature in all languages becomes almost a dead letter: hundreds of allusions become pointless, and thousands of substances fade into shadows. Of the three mythologies, the Greek, the Roman, and the Poetic or Conventional, I have selected the last, because—among other reasons—

It is as useful, and as needful to be known, as the others, on general grounds;

It is more useful, and more needful, than the others, as a portion of literature and as an intellectual influence;

It is preferable as a means of exciting an interest in the subject;

It is not in the remotest degree an obstacle to more accurate knowledge, for which indeed it is an almost indispensable preparation.

After these observations, there is no occasion to explain why I have made a point of employing Latin names and Latin spelling.

Another point to which I should call attention is the attempt to cover (within limits) the whole ground, so that the reader may not be left in ignorance of any considerable tract of the realm of Jove. The stories are not detached; they are brought, so far as I have been able to bring them, into a single *saga*, free from inconsistencies and contradictions. Omissions owing to the necessarily prescribed limits will, I think, always find a place to fall into. Altogether, the lines of the volume diverge so entirely from those of Kingsley, or Hawthorne, or any other story-teller known to me, that I may feel myself safe from the danger of fatal comparisons. Of course this aim at a certain completeness has implied the difficult task of selection among variants of the same story or incident. Sometimes I have preferred the most interesting, sometimes the version most consistent with the general plan. But I have endeavored, as a rule, to adopt the most usual or familiar, as being most in accordance with my original intention.

I need not, however, enumerate difficulties, which, if they are overcome, need no apology; and, if they are not, deserve none. The greatest and most obvious, the strict observance of the “Maxima reverentia,” will, and must always remain, crucial. In this, at least, I trust I have succeeded, in whatever else I may have failed. These stories were begun for one who was very dear to me, and who was their first and best critic; and I shall be glad if what was begun, in hope, for him should be of use to others.

R. E. F.

NOTE.—Quantity is marked in proper names, when necessary, at their first occurrence.

SATURN.

ONCE upon a time, the Sky married the Earth. The Sky's name was Cœlus, and the Earth's was Terra. They had a great many children: one of these, the eldest, was called Titan, and another was called Saturn.

Terra, their mother Earth, was very good and kind; but their father, Cœlus, was very unkind and cruel. He hated his own children, and shut them all up under ground, so that he might get rid of them—all of them, that is to say, except Saturn, whom he allowed to have his freedom. Saturn grew up; and he thought of nothing but how to set his brothers free. At last one day he went to his mother, and asked her what he could do. Terra had come to hate her husband for his cruelty: so she gave Saturn all the iron she had in her veins—you know that iron comes from what are called the Veins of the Earth—and he made a great scythe with it. With this scythe he wounded and punished his father so terribly that old Cœlus was never good for anything again—in fact, we never hear of him any more, except when we turn his name into Cœlum, which is the Latin for “the sky,” as you know.

Saturn instantly let all his brothers out from their underground prison. They were very grateful to him: and Titan, the eldest, said, “You shall be king of us all, and of all the world, if you will only promise me one thing.” Saturn promised. “It is this,” said Titan. “You know how our father treated us; and how you treated him. Children are plagues, and I don't want you to have anything to do with them. Therefore promise me to eat up all your children, if you

ever have any, as soon as they are born. They'll be too young to mind and you'll be safe from them. I think so much of this, that if you don't eat them up, every one, I'll take the kingdom away from you. For I'm the eldest, and I might keep it if I pleased instead of giving it up to you."

Saturn had no children then, and he gave the promise. But sometime afterwards he married a goddess named Rhea, who was very good and very beautiful. They, too, had a great many children. But, alas! there was that terrible promise that poor Saturn had made to Titan. Saturn could not break his word, so he ate every child as soon as it was born. Of course Rhea was very unhappy and miserable: it was worse, thought she, than if he had only shut them underground. But there was the promise—and she did not know what to do.

But she thought and thought, and at last she hit on a plan. When her next child was born, she hid it away, and when Saturn asked for it to eat it, she gave him a big stone instead of the baby. Saturn must have had good teeth, for he ate it up, and only thought that the new baby's bones were uncommonly hard. The trick answered so well that when the next child was born she did it again,—and again she did it a third time. She named the three children that she saved in this way, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto.

Jupiter, the eldest, was a very fine, strong child. He made such a noise with his crying that his mother Rhea was afraid Saturn would hear him. So she sent him away to the island of Crete, where he was brought up on goat's milk; and she ordered his nurses to make all the noise they could with drums, trumpets, and cymbals all day and all night long, so that nobody could hear him cry and so find out that he was alive.

But unluckily her secret was found out by Titan. Titan thought Saturn had been breaking his word; so he made war on him, and very nearly conquered him and took his kingdom from him.

Jupiter, however, heard the noise of the battle through all the cymbals, trumpets, and drums. He was only a year old, but so big and strong that he rushed out of Crete, and fought a most desperate battle against his uncles, the Titans, to save his father, Saturn. The Titans were wonderful people. All were giants; and one of them had a hundred arms. They threw mountains instead of stones. But Jupiter conquered them at last, and set his father free.

But somehow Saturn was very much afraid of his son. I think I should have been afraid of you if you had been such a wonderful baby. In some way or other—I don't know how—he tried to get rid of Jupiter, and made himself so unpleasant that Jupiter had to take his kingdom away from him, and make himself king. That is how Jupiter became king of all the gods and goddesses.

Saturn, when he lost his kingdom, went to Italy, where a king named Janus received him very kindly. Saturn and Janus became such friends that Janus made him king with him; and Saturn ruled so well that he made his people the happiest in all the world. Everybody was perfectly good and perfectly happy. Saturn's reign on earth is called the Golden Age. His wife, Rhea, was with him, and was as good as he;—so he had peace at last after all his troubles, which had no doubt taught him to be wise.

The Greek name for Saturn means "Time"; and Saturn is called the god of Time, who swallows up all things and creatures. All creatures may be called "the Children of Time." And the kingdom of Time, we may say, must always come to an end. The whole

story means a great deal more than this; but this is enough to show you that it is not nonsense, and means something. One of the planets is called Saturn.

In pictures Saturn is always made an old man, because Time is old; and he carries his scythe, because Time mows everything away, just as a mower does the grass; or like “The Reaper whose name is Death.” Only Death, in the poem, is kinder than Saturn or Time.

JUPITER AND JUNO.

PART I.—THE GODS AND THE GIANTS.

WHEN Jupiter became god and king of the whole world, he made his two brothers, Neptune and Pluto, kings under him. He made Neptune god and king of the sea: Pluto he made god and king of Hades. Hades was a world underground, in the middle of the earth, where men and women go and live when they die.

The next thing that Jupiter did was to marry Juno. Their wedding was the grandest and most wonderful that ever was seen. Invitations were sent out to all the gods and nymphs. The nymphs were a sort of fairies—some of them waited upon the goddesses; some of them lived in rivers, brooks, and trees. All of them came to the wedding, except one nymph named Chelone.

She refused to come: and, besides that, she laughed at the whole thing. When they told her that Jupiter was going to marry Juno, she laughed so loud that Jupiter himself could hear her. I don't know why she thought it so ridiculous, but I can guess pretty well. I expect she knew Juno's bad temper better than Jupiter did, and how Jupiter was just the sort of husband to spoil any wife's temper. But Jupiter was very fond of Juno just then, and he did not like to be laughed at on his wedding-day. So he had Chelone turned into a tortoise, so that she might never be able to laugh again. Nobody ever heard a tortoise laugh, nor ever will.

Jupiter and Juno set up their palace in the sky, just over the top of Mount Olympus, a high mountain in the north of Greece. And very soon, I am sorry to say, his quarrels with Juno began—so that, after all, poor Chelone had been right in not thinking much of the grand wedding. He always kept her for his Queen; but he cared for a great many Titanesses and nymphs much more than he did for her, and married more of them than anybody can reckon, one after another. This made Juno very angry, and they used to quarrel terribly. But something was going to happen which was almost as bad as quarreling, and which must have made Jupiter envy the peace and comfort of old Saturn, who had become only an earthly king.

The Titans made another war. And this time they got the help of the Giants, who were more terrible even than the Titans. They were immense monsters, some almost as tall as the tallest mountain, fearfully strong, and horribly ugly, with hair miles long, and rough beards down to their middle. One of them had fifty heads and a hundred hands. Another had serpents instead of legs. Others, called Cyclopes, had only one eye, which was in the middle of their foreheads. But the most terrible of all was a giant named Typhon. He had a hundred heads, each like a dragon's, and darted flames from his mouth and eyes. A great battle was fought between the gods and the giants. The giants tried to get into the sky by piling up the mountains one upon another. They used oak-trees for clubs, and threw hills for stones. They set whole forests on fire, and tossed them up like torches to set fire to the sky. And at last Typhon's hundred fiery mouths set up a hundred different yells and roars all at once, so loud and horrible that Jupiter and all the gods ran away into Egypt and hid themselves there in the shapes of animals. Jupiter turned himself into a ram, and Juno became a cow.

But, when their fright was over, the gods came back into their own shapes, and fought another battle, greater and more terrible than before. And this time the gods won. Some of the giants were crushed under mountains or drowned in the sea. Some were taken prisoners: and of these some were beaten to death and others were skinned alive. Atlas, who was the tallest, was ordered to spend all his days in holding up the sky on his shoulders,—how it was held up before, I do not know. Some of the Cyclopes were set to work in making thunderbolts for Jupiter. They became the blacksmiths of the gods, and Mount Ætna, which is a volcano, was one of their forges.

After this, the gods lived in peace: though Jupiter and Juno never left off quarreling a good deal. Jupiter made most of his children gods and goddesses, and they all lived together over Mount Olympus, ruling the earth and the sky, and the air, the sun, and the stars. You will read the stories of all of them. They used to eat a delicious food called Ambrosia, and their wine was a wonderful drink called Nectar. Hebe, the goddess of Youth, mixed and poured out the Nectar, and Ganymede was Jupiter's own page and cup-bearer. These gods and goddesses of the sky were a sort of large family, with Jupiter and Juno for father and mother. Of course Neptune with his gods of the sea, and Pluto with his gods of Hades, were like different families, and lived in their own places.

Whenever it thunders, that is the voice of Jupiter. One of the planets is named after him—it is a beautiful large white star. In pictures, he is a large, strong man, with a thick brown beard, looking like a king. He sits on a throne, with lightning in his hand, and an eagle by his side. Juno is a large, beautiful woman, tall and grand, looking like a queen, with a proud face and splendid eyes. The peacock is her favorite bird, just as Jupiter's is the eagle.

PART II.—THE FIRST MAN; OR, THE STORY OF PROMETHEUS AND PANDORA.

ONE of the Titans left two sons, Prometheus and Epimetheus. Prometheus means Forethought, and Epimetheus means Afterthought. Now Prometheus was not big and strong like the other Titans, but he was more clever and cunning than all of them put together. And he said to himself, “Well, the gods have shown themselves stronger than we. We can’t conquer them by fighting, that’s clear. But there are cleverer ways of winning than by fighting, as they shall see.”

So Prometheus dug up a good-sized lump of clay, more than six feet long, and nearly four feet round. And now, said he to himself, “I only want just one little spark of Heavenly Fire.”

Now the Heavenly Fire is only to be found in the sky; and Jupiter had ordered that no Titan was ever to enter the sky again. But Prometheus was much too clever to find any difficulty about that. The great goddess Minerva, who is the goddess of Wisdom, happened to be on a visit to the earth just then, so Prometheus called upon her and said:—

“Great goddess, I am only a poor, beaten Titan, and I have never seen the sky. But my father and my father’s father used to live there in the good old times, and I should like, just once, to see the inside of the beautiful blue place above the clouds which was once their home. Please, great goddess, let me go in just once, and I’ll promise to do no harm.”

Now Minerva did not like to break the rule. But she was very trusting and very good-natured, because she was very wise; and besides, Prometheus looked such a poor little creature, so different from all the other Titans and Giants, that she said:—

“You certainly don’t look as if you could do us any harm, even if you tried. Very well—you shall have a look at the sky, and I’ll show you round.”

So she told Prometheus to follow her up Mount Olympus; but she did not notice a little twig that he carried in his hand: and if she had noticed it, she would not have thought it mattered. Wise people don’t notice all the little things that cunning people do. Then she opened the golden gate of the sky, and let him in. She was very kind, and showed him everything. He went over the palace of the gods, and saw Jupiter’s great ivory throne, and his eagle, and the brew-house where the nectar is made. He looked at the places behind the clouds, where they keep the rain and snow. Then they looked at all the stars; and at last they came to the Stables of the Sun. For you must know that the sun is a great fiery car, drawn by four white horses from the east to the west, and is put away in a stable during the night-time, where the four horses eat wheat made of gold.

“Now you have seen everything,” said Minerva; “and you must go.”

“Thank you,” said Prometheus. And he went back to earth again. But just as he was leaving, he touched one of the wheels of the sun with his little twig, so that a spark came off upon the end.

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