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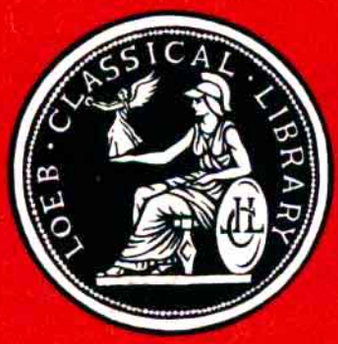
METAMORPHOSES

BOOKS I–VIII



Translated by

FRANK JUSTUS MILLER

Revised by G. P. Goold

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METAMORPHOSES

BOOKS I–VIII

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

FRANK JUSTUS MILLER

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THIS volume of the Loeb Ovid originally appeared in 1916, and a second edition (so styled, though without change) was issued in 1921. The work was reprinted many times and reset in 1960, some (though not all) of the errors then imported being corrected in the impression of 1971, when a few items were added to the bibliography. Although the time is not yet ripe for a complete revision (critical editions by William S. Anderson for the Bibliotheca Teubneriana and R. J. Tarrant for the Oxford Classical Texts having been announced), there was much which in the light of recent scholarship called for amendment. This edition, therefore, follows the principles of my revision of the Loeb *Heroides and Amores*: I have everywhere sought to present the best Latin text and accommodated the English translation to it, but I have otherwise disturbed the original edition as little as possible.

A few details call for comment. Considerations of economy have enforced adherence to the old pagination and consequently not permitted the introduction of critical notes; I have for the same reason refrained from switching to a fuller system of punctuation and from standardizing orthography,

particularly desirable in the case of non-assimilated compounds and the accusative plurals of *i*-stems (incorrect spellings, however, like *cygnus* and *Erechtheus*, have been banished). One major textual problem requires notice. Here and there in the *Metamorphoses* the manuscripts present alternative versions, and many scholars interpret this as evidence of two editions by Ovid himself. The crucial passages are: 1.544f, 547 (*al.* 546, 547a); 8.595f, 601f, 609f (*al.* 595–600, 600b, 601a, 602–608); 8.651, 655f (*al.* 651–654, 655a, 656a); and 8.693–699 (*al.* 693a, 693b, 697a, 698a). This notion of a revised edition by Ovid needs to be scouted, for the alternative passages are slight, inferior, and utterly insignificant; and at a number of other places (*e.g.* 6.282 and 8.286) interpolated lines have arisen as a result of textual difficulty. The fact is that the manuscript tradition is not good: we have no 9th-century manuscript like *P* for the *Heroides*, and nothing forbids the natural presumption that the *Metamorphoses* descends to us from a medieval archetype.

The original bibliography wore an old-fashioned look by its inclusion of many old and abstruse items: these I have now omitted and listed in their place the chief modern works bearing on our text.

Lastly, an innovation. To enable the reader to find his bearings I have prefixed to each book a brief table of contents.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON G. P. GOOLD
February 1977

INTRODUCTION

PROBABLY no Roman writer has revealed himself more frankly in his works than has Publius Ovidius Naso. Indeed, the greater part of our knowledge of him is gained from his own writings. References to his parentage, his early education, his friends, his work, his manner of life, his reverses—all lie scattered freely through his pages. Especially is this true of the *Amores*, and of the two groups of poems written from his exile. The *Metamorphoses* are naturally free from biographical material. Not content with occasional references, the poet has taken care to leave to posterity a somewhat extended and formal account of his life.

From this (*Tristia*, IV. 10) we learn that he was born at Sulmo in the Pelignian country, 43 B.C., of well-to-do parents of equestrian rank, and that he had one brother, exactly one year older than himself. His own bent, from early childhood, was towards poetry; but in this he was opposed by his practical father, who desired that both his sons should prepare for the profession of the law, a desire with which both the brothers complied, but the younger with only half-hearted and temporary devotion.

Having reached the age of manhood, young Ovid found public life utterly distasteful to him, and now that he was his own master, he gave loose rein to his poetic fancy and abandoned himself to the enjoy-

ment of the gay social life of Rome. He soon gained admission to the choice circle of the poets of his day, paying unlimited devotion to the masters of his art, and quickly becoming himself the object of no small admiration on the part of younger poets. His youthful poems soon gained fame among the people also, and his love poems became the popular lyrics of the town.

Though extremely susceptible to the influences of love, he proudly boasts that his private life was above reproach. He contracted two unhappy marriages in his youth, but his third marriage was a lasting joy to him.

And now his father and his mother died. The poet, while deeply mourning their loss with true filial devotion, still cannot but rejoice that they died before that disgrace came upon him which was to darken his own life and the lives of all whom he loved. For now, as the early frosts of age were beginning to whiten his locks, in the year 8 of our era, a sudden calamity fell upon him, no less than an imperial decree against him of perpetual banishment to the far-off shores of the Euxine Sea. The cause of this decree he only hints at; but he gives us to understand that it was an error of his judgment and not of his heart.[1]

Exiled to savage Tomi, far from home and friends and the delights of his beloved Rome, he was forced to live in a rigorous climate, an unlovely land, midst a society of uncultured semi-savages. His chief solace was the cultivation of his art, and in this he spent the tiresome days. He ends his autobiography

[1] Augustus, indeed, gave as his reason the immorality of Ovid's love poems, but this is generally supposed to be only a cloak for a more personal and private reason.

with a strain of thanksgiving to his muse, and a prophecy of his world-wide fame and literary immortality.

Though Ovid says that he strove to bear his misfortunes with a manly fortitude, the poems of his exile abound in plaintive lamentations at his hard lot, petitions to his friends in Rome, and unmanly subserviency to Augustus, and later to Tiberius, in the hope of gaining his recall. These, however, were all in vain, and he died at Tomi in A.D. 18, after a banishment of nearly ten years.

Ovid's greatest work, the fruit of the best years of the prime of his life, when his imagination had ripened and his poetic vigour was at its height, was the *Metamorphoses*, finished in A.D. 7, just before his banishment.

In the poet's own judgment, however, the poem was not finished, and, in his despair on learning of his impending exile, his burned his manuscript. He himself tells us of his motive for this rash act (*Tristia*, I. 7): "On departing from Rome, I burned this poem as well as many others of my works, either because I was disgusted with poetry which had proved my bane, or because this poem was still rough and unfinished." But fortunately copies of this great work still survived in the hands of friends; and in this letter he begs his friends now to publish it, and at the same time he begs his readers to remember that the poem has never received its author's finishing touches and so to be lenient in their judgment of it.

In the *Metamorphoses* Ovid attempts no less a task than the linking together into one artistically harmonious whole all the stories of classical mythology. And this he does, until the whole range of wonders

(miraculous changes, hence the name, *Metamorphoses*) is passed in review, from the dawn of creation, when chaos was changed by divine fiat into the orderly universe, down to the very age of the poet himself, when the soul of Julius Caesar was changed to a star and set in the heavens among the immortals. Every important myth is at least touched upon, and though the stories differ widely in place and time, there is no break in the sequence of narration. The poet has seized upon every possible thread of connexion as he passes on from cycle to cycle of story; and where this connexion is lacking, by various ingenious and artistic devices a connecting-link is found.

The poem thus forms a manual of classical mythology, and is the most important source of mythical lore for all writers since Ovid's time. This is the real, tangible service which he has done the literary world. Many of these stories could now be obtained from the sources whence Ovid himself drew them—from Homer, Hesiod, the Greek tragedians, the Alexandrine poets, and many others. And yet many stories, but for him, would have been lost to us; and all of them he has so vivified by his strong poetic imagination that they have come down to us with added freshness and life.

The classic myths have always had a strong fascination for later writers, and so numerous are both passing and extended references to these in English literature, and especially in the poets, that he who reads without a classical background reads with many lapses of his understanding and appreciation. While the English poets have, of course, drawn from all classic sources, they are indebted for their mythology largely to Ovid. The poet would have been

accessible after 1567 even to writers not versed in Latin, for in that year Golding's translation of Ovid appeared.

An admirable study of the influence of classic myth on the writings of Shakespeare has been made,[1] in which the author finds that Shakespeare was thoroughly familiar with the myths, and makes very free use of them. We read: "Though the number of definite allusions in Shakespeare is smaller than that of the vague ones, they are yet sufficiently numerous to admit of satisfactory conclusions. Of these allusions, for which a definite source can be assigned, it will be found that an overwhelming majority are directly due to Ovid, while the remainder, with few exceptions, are from Vergil. . . . Throughout, the influence of Ovid is at least four times as great as that of Vergil; the whole character of Shakespeare's mythology is essentially Ovidian."

What is true of Shakespeare is still more true of numerous other English poets in respect to their use of classical mythology. They do not always, indeed, use the myths in Ovid's manner, which is that of one whose sole attention is on the story, which he tells with eager interest, simply for the sake of telling; and yet such earlier classicists as Spenser and Milton [2] have so thoroughly imbibed the spirit of the classics that they deal with the classic stories quite as subjectively as Ovid himself. But among later English poets we find a tendency to objectify the myths, to rationalize them, to philosophize upon them, draw

[1] *Classical Mythology in Shakespeare.* By Robert Kilburn Root. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1903.

[2] See *The Classical Mythology of Milton's English Poems.* By Charles Grosvenor Osgood. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1900.

lessons from them, and even to burlesque them. Perhaps the most interesting development of all is found in our own time, a decided tendency to revamp the classical stories, though not always in the classical spirit—a kind of Pre-Raphaelite movement in poetry. Prominently in this class of poets should be named Walter Savage Landor, Edmund Gosse, Lewis and William Morris, and Frederick Tennyson; while many others have caught the same spirit and written in the same form.

The Latin text of this edition is based on that of Ehwald, published by Messrs. Weidmann, of Berlin, who have generously given permission to use it. All deviations of any importance from Ehwald's text have been noted, and Ehwald's readings given with their sources.

CHICAGO, *March* 1915.

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BOOK I

METAMORPHOSEON

LIBER I

In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
corpora; di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)
adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen!
Ante mare et terras et quod tegit omnia caelum
unus erat toto naturae vultus in orbe,
quem dixere chaos: rudis indigestaque moles
nec quicquam nisi pondus iners congestaque eodem
non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum.
nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina Titan,
nec nova crescendo reparabat cornua Phoebe,
nec circumfuso pendebat in aere tellus
ponderibus librata suis, nec bracchia longo
margine terrarum porrexerat Amphitrite;
utque erat et tellus illic et pontus et aer,
sic erat instabilis tellus, innabilis unda,
lucis egens aer; nulli sua forma manebat,
obstabatque aliis aliud, quia corpore in uno
frigida pugnabant calidis, umentia siccis,
mollia cum duris, sine pondere, habentia pondus.
Hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit.
nam caelo terras et terris abscidit undas

METAMORPHOSES

BOOK I

My mind is bent to tell of bodies changed into new forms. Ye gods, for you yourselves have wrought the changes, breathe on these my undertakings, and bring down my song in unbroken strains from the world's very beginning even unto the present time.

Before the sea was, and the lands, and the sky that hangs over all, the face of Nature showed alike in her whole round, which state have men called chaos: a rough, unordered mass of things, nothing at all save lifeless bulk and warring seeds of ill-matched elements heaped in one. No sun as yet shone forth upon the world, nor did the waxing moon renew her slender horns; not yet did the earth hang poised by her own weight in the circumambient air, nor had the ocean stretched her arms along the far reaches of the lands. And, though there was both land and sea and air, no one could tread that land, or swim that sea; and the air was dark. No form of things remained the same; all objects were at odds, for within one body cold things strove with hot, and moist with dry, soft things with hard, things having weight with weightless things.

God—or kindlier Nature—composed this strife; for he rent asunder land from sky, and sea from land,