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NONNOS
DIONYSIACA
BOOKS 36–48



Translated by
W. H. D. ROUSE

NONN

DIONYSIACA

BOOKS 36-48

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WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

W. H. D. ROUSE

MYTHOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION AND

NOTES BY H. I. ROSE

NOTES ON TEXT CRITICISM BY L. R. LIND



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PREFACE

I SHOULD like to have written an estimate of Nonnos as poet and man of letters, but that is hardly what would be expected in a translation. His Niagara of words is apt to overwhelm the reader, and his faults are easy to see; but if we stand in shelter behind the falls, we can see many real beauties, and we can see his really wonderful skill in managing his metre long after stress had displaced the old musical accent. He has left his mark, indirectly at least, on English literature; for one man of genius was for ever quoting him, and had him in mind when he created his incomparable and immortal drunkard, Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi. He it was who summed up in four lines the sordid ambitions of all the tyrants of the world, from Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar to Timour and Attila and Napoleon,

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter.
And so we thought it meeter
To carry off the latter.

W. H. D. ROUSE

HISTON MANOR
CAMBRIDGE
June 1940

NONNOS
DIONYSIACA

ΠΕΡΙΟΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΑΚΩΝ ΠΟΙΗΜΑΤΩΝ

ΕΠΙΓΡΑΦΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΥΠΟΛΕΙΠΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΙΓ' ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΑΚΩΝ ΠΟΙΗΜΑΤΩΝ

Ἐν δὲ τριηκοστῷ ἔκτῳ μετὰ λύματα λύσσης
Βάκχος Δηριαδῇ κορύσσεται εἶδος ἀμείβων.

Ἦχι τριηκοστὸν πέλεν ἑβδομον, εἵνεκα νίκης
ἀνδράσιν ἀθλοφόροις ἐπιτύμβιοί εἰσιν ἀγῶνες.

Ἦχι τριηκοστὸν πέλεν ὄγδοον, αἶθοπι δαλῷ
δειλαίου Φαέθοντος ἔχεις μόρον ἡνιοχῆος.

Ἐν δὲ τριηκοστῷ ἐνάτῳ μετὰ κύματα λεύσσεις
Δηριάδην φεύγοντα πυριφλεγέων στόλον Ἰνδῶν.

Τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔχει δεδαῖγμένον ὄρχαμον Ἰνδῶν,
πῶς δὲ Τύρον Διόνυσος ἐδύσατο, πατρίδα Κάδμου.

Πρῶτον τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔχει, πόθεν νιέει Μύρρης
ἄλλην Κύπριν ἔτικτεν Ἀμυμώνην Ἀφροδίτη.

Τεσσαρακοστὸν ὕφηνα τὸ δεύτερον, ἦχι λιγαίνῳ
Βάκχου τερπνὸν ἔρωτα καὶ ἥμερον ἐννοσιγαίου.

Δίξω τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτι τρίτον, ὁππόθι μέλπῳ
Ἄρεα κυματόεντα καὶ ἀμπελόεσσαν Ἐννῷ.

SUMMARY OF THE BOOKS OF THE POEM

HEADINGS OF THE LAST THIRTEEN BOOKS OF THE *DIONYSIACA*

- (36) In the thirty-sixth, Bacchos, after his surges of madness, changes his shape and attacks Deriades.
- (37) When the thirty-seventh takes its turn, there are contests about the tomb, the men competing for prizes.
- (38) When the thirty-eighth takes its turn, you have the fate of unhappy Phaëthon in the chariot, with a blazing brand.
- (39) In the thirty-ninth, you see Deriades after the flood trying to desert the host of fire-blazing Indians.
- (40) The fortieth has the Indian chief wounded, and how Dionysos visited Tyre, the native place of Cadmos.
- (41) The forty-first tells how Aphrodite bore Amy-mone a second Cypris to the son of Myrrha.
- (42) The forty-second web I have woven, where I celebrate a delightful love of Bacchos and the desire of Earthshaker.
- (43) Look again at the forty-third, in which I sing a war of the waters and a battle of the vine.

SUMMARY OF BOOKS

Τεσσαρακοστὸν ὕφηνα τὸ τέτρατον, ἦχι γυναῖκας
δέρκεο μαινομένας καὶ Πενθέος ὄγκον ἀπειλῆς.

Πέμπτον τεσσαρακοστὸν ἐπόψαι, ὁππόθι Πεν-
θεὺς
ταῦρον ἐπισφίγγει κεραελκέος ἀντὶ Λυαίου.

Ἑκτον τεσσαρακοστὸν ἴδε πλέον, ἦχι νοήσεις
Πενθέος ἄκρα κάρηνα καὶ ὠλεσίτεκνον Ἀγαύην.

Ἑρχεο τεσσαρακοστὸν ἐς ἑβδομον, ὁππόθι Περ-
σεὺς
καὶ μόρος Ἰκαρίοιο καὶ ἀβροχίτων Ἀριάδνη.

Δίξεο τεσσαρακοστὸν ἐς ὄγδοον αἷμα Γιγάντων,
Παλλήνην δὲ δόκευε καὶ ὑπναλέης τόκον Αὔρης.

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SUMMARY OF BOOKS

- (44) The forty-fourth web I have woven, where you may see maddened women and the heavy threat of Pentheus.
- (45) See also the forty-fifth, where Pentheus binds the bull instead of stronghorn Lyaïos.
- (46) See also the forty-sixth, where you will find the head of Pentheus and Agauë murdering her son.
- (47) Come to the forty-seventh, in which is Perseus, and the death of Icarios, and Ariadne in her rich robes.
- (48) In the forty-eighth, seek the blood of the giants, and look out for Pallene and the son of sleeping Aura.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΑΚΩΝ ΤΡΙΑΚΟΣΤΟΝ ΕΚΤΟΝ

Ἐν δὲ τριηκοστῷ ἕκτῳ μετὰ λύματα λύσσης
Βάκχος Δηριαδῇ κορύσσεται εἶδος ἀμείβων.

Ὡς φάμενος θάρσυνε γεγηθότας ἡγεμονῆας·
Δηριάδης δ' ἐτέρωθεν εἰὸς ἐκόρυσσε μαχητάς.
ἀμφοτέρῃ δὲ φάλαγγι θεοὶ ναετῆρες Ὀλύμπου
κεκριμένοι στέλλοντο κυβερνητῆρες Ἐννοῦς,
οἱ μὲν Δηριαδῆος ἀρηγόνες, οἱ δὲ Λυαίου. 5
Ζεὺς μὲν ἄναξ μακάρων ὑψίζυγος ὑψόθι Κέρνης
Ἄρεος εἶχε τάλαντα παρακλιδόν· οὐρανόθεν δὲ
ἔμπυρον ὕδατόεις προκαλίζετο κυανοχαίτης
Ἥελιον, γλαυκῶπιν Ἄρης, Ἥφαιστος Ὑδάσπην·
Ἥρης δ' ἀντικέλευθος ὄρεστιάς Ἀρτεμις ἔστη· 10
Λητώην δ' ἐπὶ δῆριν εὐρραπὶς ἦλυθεν Ἑρμῆς.
Καὶ ζαθέου πολέμου διδυμόκτυπος ἔβρεμεν ἡχῶ
ἀμφοτέροις μακάρεσσιν. ἐπεσσυμένων δὲ κυδοιμῷ
Ἄρης ἐπταπέλεθρος ἐμάρνατο Τριτογενεΐη,
καὶ δόρυ θοῦρον ἱάλλεν· ἀνουτήτου δὲ θεαίνης 15
μέσσην αἰγίδα τύψεν, ἀθηήτου δὲ καρήνου
ἤλασε Γοργεΐης ὀφιώδεια λήια χαίτης,
Παλλάδος οὐτήσας λάσιον σάκος· ὀξύτενης δὲ
πεμπομένη ροιζηδὸν ἀκαμπέος ἔγχεος αἰχμῇ
ποιητὴν πλοκαμίδα νόθης ἐχάραξε Μεδούσης. 20
κούρη δ' ἐγρεκύδοιμος ἐπαΐξασα καὶ αὐτὴ

BOOK XXXVI^a

In the thirty-sixth, Bacchos, after his surges of madness, changes his shape and attacks Deriades.

With this speech he encouraged the glad leaders ; and Deriades on his part put his own soldiers under arms. The gods who dwell in Olympos ranged themselves in two parties to direct the warfare on both sides, these supporting Deriades, those Lyaïos. Zeus Lord of the Blessed throned high on Cerne held the tilting balance of war. From heaven Seabluehair of the waters challenged fiery Helios, Ares challenged Brighteyes, Hephaistos Hydaspes ; highland Artemis stood facing Hera ; Hermes rod in hand came to conflict with Leto.

¹² A double din of divine battle resounded for the two parties of the Blessed. As they rushed to conflict, sevenrood Ares joined battle with Tritogeneia and cast a valiant spear ; the goddess was untouched, but it struck full on the aegis, and ran through the snaky crop of hair on the Gorgon's head, which none may look upon. So it wounded only the shaggy target of Pallas, and the sharpened point of the whizzing unbending spear scored the counterfeit hair of Medusa's image. Then the battlestirring maiden,

^a The battle of the gods is imitated rather closely from *Il.* xx. 32-74 ; xxi. 328-513.

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σύγγονον ἔγχος ἄειρεν ἐπ' Ἄρει Παλλὰς ἀμήτωρ,
 κείνο, τό περ φορέουσα λεχώιον ἥλικι χαλκῷ
 ἄνθορε πατρώοιο τελεσσιγόνοιο καρήνου.
 καὶ δαπέδῳ γόνυ κάμψε τυπείς περιμήκετος Ἄρης· 25
 ἀλλά μιν ὀρθώσασα παλινδίνητον Ἀθήνη
 μητρὶ φίλῃ μετὰ δῆριν ἀνούτατον ὤπασεν Ἥρη.
 Ἥρη δ' ἀντερίδαιεν ὀρεσσινόμου Διονύσου
 Ἀρτεμις ὡς συνάεθλος ὀρεστιάς, ἰθυτενὲς δὲ
 τόξον ἐὼν κύκλωσεν· ὁμοζήλῳ δὲ κυδοιμῷ 30
 Ἥρη Ζηνὸς ἐλοῦσα νέφος πέπυκασμένον ὤμοις
 ἄρραγὲς ὡς σάκος εἶχε· καὶ Ἀρτεμις ἄλλον ἐπ' ἄλλῳ
 ἡερίης πέμπουσα δι' ἄντυγος ἰὼν ἀλήτην
 εἰς σκοπὸν ἀχρήιστον ἔην ἐκένωσε φαρέτρην,
 καὶ νεφέλην ἄρρηκτον ὄλην ἐπύκαζεν ὀιστοῖς· 35
 καὶ γεράνων μιμηλὸς ἔην τύπος ἡεροφοίτης
 ἵπταμένων στεφανηδὸν ἀμοιβαίῳ τινὶ κύκλῳ·
 καὶ νέφεϊ σκιδόεντι πεπηγότες ἦσαν ὀιστοί·
 ὠτειλὰς δ' ἀχάρακτος ἀναίμονας εἶχε καλύπτρη.
 καὶ κραναὸν κούφισσεν ὑπηνέμιον βέλος Ἥρη, 40
 χειρὶ δὲ δινεύουσα πεπηγότα νῶτα χαλάζης
 Ἀρτεμιν ἐστυφέλιξε χαραδρήεντι βελέμνῳ·
 τόξου δ' ἀγκύλα κύκλα συνέθλασε μάρμαρος αἰχμῇ·
 οὐ δὲ μάχην ἀνέκοψε Διὸς δάμαρ· Ἀρτέμιδος δὲ
 στήθεος ἄκρον ἔτυψε μεσαίτατον· ἡ δὲ τυπείσα 45
 ἔγχει παχνήεντι χαμαὶ κατέχευε φαρέτρην.
 καὶ οἱ ἐπεγγελόωσα Διὸς μυθήσατο νύμφη·
 “ Ἀρτεμι, θηρία βάλλε· τί μείζουσιν ἀντιφερίζεις;
 καὶ σκοπέλων ἐπίβηθι· τί σοὶ μόθος; οὐτιδανὰς δὲ
 ἐνδρομίδας φορέουσα λίπε κνημίδας Ἀθήνη· 50

* Appropriately ; by a popular ancient theory, Hera (Ἥρα) is the atmosphere (ἀήρ).

motherless Pallas, rushed forwards in her turn and raised her birthmate spear, the weapon as old as herself, with which at her birth she leapt out of her father's pregnant head born in armour. Huge Ares was hit, and sank to the ground on one knee; but Athena helped him up and sent him back to his dear mother Hera unwounded, when the duel was done.

²⁸ Against Hera came highland Artemis as champion for hillranging Dionysos, and rounded her bow aiming straight. Hera as ready for conflict seized one of the clouds^a of Zeus, and compressed it across her shoulders where she held it as a shield proof against all; and Artemis shot arrow after arrow moving through the airy vault in vain against that mark, until her quiver was empty, and the cloud still unbroken she covered thick with arrows all over. It was the very image of a flight of cranes moving in the air and circling one after another in the figure of a wreath: the arrows were stuck in the dark cloud, but the veil was untorn and the wounds without blood. Then Hera picked up a rough missile of the air, a frozen mass of hail, circled it and struck Artemis with the jagged mass. The sharp stony lump broke the curves of the bow. But the consort of Zeus did not stop the fight there, but struck Artemis flat on the skin of the breast, and Artemis smitten by the weapon of ice emptied her quiver upon the ground. Then the wife of Zeus mocked at her:

⁴⁸ "Go and shoot wild beasts, Artemis! Why do you quarrel with your betters? Climb your crags—what is war to you? Wear your trumpery shoes and let Athena wear the greaves. Stretch your

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καὶ λῖνα σείο τίνασσε δολοπλόκα· θηροφόνοι γὰρ
 σοὶ κύνες ἀγρώσσουσι, καὶ οὐ πτερόεντες ὀιστοί·
 οὐ σὺ λεοντοφόνον μεθέπεις βέλος· ἀδρανέων γὰρ
 σῶν καμάτων ἰδρῶτες ἀνάλκιδές εἰσι λαγωοί·
 σῶν δ' ἐλάφων ἀλέγιζε καὶ εὐκεράου σέο δίφρου, 55
 σῶν ἐλάφων ἀλέγιζε· τί σοὶ Διὸς υἷα γεραίρειν
 πορδαλίων ἐλατῆρα καὶ ἥνιοχῆα λεόντων;
 ἦν δ' ἐθέλης, ἔχε τόξον, Ἔρως ὅτι τόξα τιταίνει·
 παρθενικὴ φυγόδεμνε μογοστόκε, πορθμὸν Ἐρώτων
 κεστὸν ἔχειν ὥφελles ἀοσσητῆρα λοχεΐης, 60
 σὺν Παφίῃ, σὺν Ἐρωτι· σὺ γὰρ κρατέεις τοκετοῖο.
 ἀλλά, τελεσσιγόνοιο κυβερνήτειρα γενέθλης,
 ἔρχεο παιδοτόκων ἐπὶ παστάδα θηλυτεράων,
 καὶ λοχίοις βελέεσσιν ὀιστεύουσα γυναῖκας
 εἵκελος ἔσσο λέοντι λεχωίδος ἐγγύθι νύμφης, 65
 ἀντὶ φιλοπτολέμοιο μογοστόκος. ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτῆς
 λῆγε σαοφρονέουσα σαόφρονος εἵνεκα μίγρης,
 ὅττι τεῶν μελέων μεθέπων τύπον ὑψιμέδων Ζεὺς
 παρθενικὰς ἀγάμους νυμφεύεται· εἰσέτι κείνην
 εἰκόνα σὴν βοόωσι γαμοκλόπον Ἀρκάδες ὕλαι, 70
 Καλλιστοῦς ἀγάμοιο γαμοστόλον, ὑμετέρην δὲ
 ἔμφρονα μάρτυρον ἄρκτον ἔτι στενάχουσι κολῶναι
 μεμφομένην νόθον εἶδος ἔρωμανὲς ἰοχεαίρης,
 θηλυτέρης ὅτε λέκτρον ἐδύσατο θῆλυς ἀκοίτης.
 ἀλλὰ τεὴν ἀνόνητον ἀπορρίψασα φαρέτρην 75
 Ἥρης κάλλιπε δῆριν ἀρείονος· ἦν δ' ἐθελήσης,
 ὥς λοχίῃ πολέμιζε τελεσσιγάμῳ Κυθερείῃ.”
 Ἐννεπε, τειρομένην δὲ παρήλυθεν Ἀρτεμιν Ἥρη.
 τὴν δὲ φόβῳ μεθύουσαν ἀπὸ φλοίσβοιο κομίζων

^a Cf. Π. xxi. 483. Many other close imitations will be

DIONYSIACA, XXXVI. 51-79

cunning nets. Dogs, not winged arrows, hunt and kill your beasts. You handle no weapon to kill lions; the sweats of your paltry labours are timid hares. Attend to your stags and your horned team, attend to your stags: why should you exalt the son of Zeus, the driver of panthers and the charioteer of lions? Keep your bow, if you like, for Eros also bends a bow. What you ought to do, you virgin marriage-hater, you midwife, is to carry the cestus, love's ferry, the helper of childbed, in company with Eros and the Paphian: for you have power over birth. Begone then to the bedchambers of women in labour of child, you the guide of creative birth, and shoot women with the arrows of child-birth; be like a lion^a beside the young wife in labour, be midwife rather than warrior. Nay, cease to be chaste yourself because of your chaste girdle, since Zeus our Lord on High assumes your shape to woo virgins unwedded.^b The Arcadian woods still tell of that love-stealing copy of you which seduced unwedded Callisto; the mountains lament still your bear who saw and understood, and reproached the false enamoured image of the Archeress, when a female paramour entered a woman's bed. Come, throw away your useless quiver, and cease fighting with Hera who is stronger than you. Fight Cythereia, if you like, the childbed-nurse against the marriage-maker."

⁷⁸ So Hera spoke, and passed on, leaving Artemis discomfited and drunken with fear. Phoibos threw

found if the reader compares this book with the passages cited in the note on the title of this book.

^b He disguised himself as Artemis to approach Callisto; she was afterwards changed into a bear (authors differ as to the reasons).

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ἀμφοτέρω πήχυνε κατηφεί Φοῖβος ἀγοστώ, 80
καί μιν ἄγων ἔστησεν ἔρημάδος ἔνδοθι λόχμης·
νοστήσας δ' ἀκίχητος ὀμίλεε θέσπιδι χάρμη.

Καὶ βυθίου προμάχου πυρόεις πρόμος ἀντίος ἔσση,
Φοῖβος ἐς ὑσμίνην Ποσιδήιον· ἀμφὶ δὲ νευρῇ
θῆκε βέλος καὶ πυρσὸν ἐκούφισε Δελφίδι πεύκη 85
ἀμφοτέρῃ παλάμῃ περιδέξις, ὅφρα κορύσση
ὀλκῶ κυματόεντι σέλας καὶ τόξα τριαίνῃ.

αἰχμὴ δ' αἰθαλόεσσα καὶ ὕδατόεντες ὀιστοὶ
σύμπεσον ἀλλήλοισι· κορυσσομένοιο δὲ Φοίβου

Ἄρεος ἐσμαράγησε μέλος πατρώιος Αἰθῆρ, 90
βρονταῖον κελάδημα· θυελλήεσσα δὲ σάλπιγξ
οὔασι Φοιβείοισιν ἐπέκτυπε ποντιάς Ἥχῳ·

Τρίτων δ' εὐρυγένειος ἐβόμβεεν ἡθάδι κόχλῳ
ἀνδροφυῆς ἀτέλεστος, ἀπ' ἰξύος ἔγχλοος ἰχθύς·
Νηρεῖδες δ' ἀλάλαζον· ὑπερκύψας δὲ θαλάσσης 95
σειομένου τριόδοντος Ἄραψ μυκήσατο Νηρεύς.

Οὐρανίης δὲ φάλαγγος ὑπέρτερον ἦχον ἀκούων
Ζεὺς χθόνιος κελάδησε, μὴ ἐννοσίγαιος ἀράσσω
γαῖαν ἱμασσομένην ῥοθίων ἐνοσίχθονι παλμῶ
ἁρμονίην κόσμοιο μετοχλίσσειε τριαίνῃ, 100
μὴ ποτε κινήσας χθονίων κρηπῖδα βερέθρων
θηητὴν τελέσειεν ἀθηήτου χθονὸς ἔδρην,
μὴ βυθίων φλέβα πᾶσαν ἀναρρήξειεν ἐναύλων
Ταρταρίῳ κευθμῶνι χέων μετανάστιον ὕδωρ,
νέρτερον εὐρώεντα κατακλύζων πυλεῶνα. 105

Τόσσοι ἄρα κτύπος ὦρτο θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνιόντων,
καὶ χθόνιαι σάλπιγγες ἐπέβρεμον· ἀμφοτέρους δὲ
ῥάβδον ἐλαφρίζων ἀνεσείρασε μείλιχος Ἑρμῆς·

* To Nonnos Apollo is the Sun, though originally there is no connexion between them. Here, then, Fire is fighting Water.