THE TRAGEDIES OF
ÆSCHYLUS

A New Translation

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY, AND AN APPENDIX OF
RHYMED CHORAL ODES

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PROMETHEUS BOUND.
ARGUMENT.

In the old time, when Cronos was sovereign of the Gods, Zeus, whom he had begotten, rose up against him, and the Gods were divided in their counsels, some, the Titans chiefly, siding with the father, and some with the son. And Prometheus, the son of Earth or Themis, though one of the Titans, supported Zeus, as did also Okeanos, and by his counsels Zeus obtained the victory, and Cronos was chained in Tartarus, and the Titans buried under mountains, or kept in bonds in Hades. And then Prometheus, seeing the miseries of the race of men, of whom Zeus took little heed, stole the fire which till then had belonged to none but Hephæstos and was used only for the Gods, and gave it to mankind, and taught them many arts whereby their wretchedness was lessened. But Zeus being wroth with Prometheus for this deed, sent Hephæstos, with his two helpers, Strength and Force, to fetter him to a rock on Caucaosos.

And in yet another story was the cruelty of the Gods made known. For Zeus loved Io, the daughter of Inachos, king of Argos, and she was haunted by visions of the night, telling her of his passion, and she told her father thereof. And Inachos, sending to the God at Delphi, was told to drive Io forth from her home. And Zeus gave her the horns of a cow, and Hera, who hated her because she was dear to Zeus, sent with her a gadfly that stung her, and gave her no rest, and drove her over many lands.

Note.—The play is believed to have been the second of a Trilogy, of which the first was Prometheus the Fire-giver, and the third Prometheus Unbound.
Dramatis Personae.

Prometheus.
Okeanos.
Hephaestos.
Hermes.
Strength.
Force.

Chorus of Ocean Nymphs.
PROMETHEUS BOUND.

SCENE.—Skythia, on the heights of Caucasos. The Euxine seen in the distance.

Enter HEPHAESTOS, STRENGTH, and FORCE, leading PROMETHEUS in chains.¹

Strength. Lo! to a plain, earth’s boundary remote, We now are come,—the tract as Skythian known, A desert inaccessible: and now, Hephaestos, it is thine to do the hosts The Father gave thee, to these lofty crags To bind this crafty trickster fast in chains Of adamantine bonds that none can break; For he thy choice flower stealing, the bright glory Of fire that all arts spring from, hath bestowed it On mortal men. And so for fault like this He now must pay the Gods due penalty, That he may learn to bear the sovereign rule Of Zeus, and cease from his philanthropy.

Heph. O Strength, and thou, O Force, the host of Zeus, As far as touches you, attains its end, And nothing hinders. Yet my courage fails

¹ The scene seems at first an exception to the early conventional rule, which forbade the introduction of a third actor on the Greek stage. But it has been noticed that (1) Force does not speak, and (2) Prometheus does not speak till Strength and Force have retired, and that it is therefore probable that the whole work of nailing is done on a lay figure or effigy of some kind, and that one of the two who had before taken part in the dialogue then speaks behind it in the character of Prometheus. So the same actor must have appeared in succession as Okeanos, Io, and Hermes.
To bind a God of mine own kin by force
To this bare rock where tempests wildly sweep;
And yet I needs must muster courage for it:
'Tis no slight thing the Father's words to scorn.
O thou of Themis [to PROMETHEUS] wise in counsel son,
Full deep of purpose, lo! against my will,¹
I fetter thee against thy will with bonds
Of bronze that none can loose, to this lone height,
Where thou shalt know nor voice nor face of man,
But scorching in the hot blaze of the sun,
Shalt lose thy skin's fair beauty. Thou shalt long
For starry-mantled night to hide day's sheen,
For sun to melt the rime of early dawn;
And evermore the weight of present ill
Shall wear thee down. Unborn as yet is he
Who shall release thee: this the fate thou gain'st
As due reward for thy philanthropy.
For thou, a God not fearing wrath of Gods,
In thy transgression gav'st their power to men;
And therefore on this rock of little ease
Thou still shalt keep thy watch, nor lying down,
Nor knowing sleep, nor ever bending knee;
And many groans and wailings profitless
Thy lips shall utter; for the mind of Zeus
Remains inexorable. Who holds a power
But newly gained ² is ever stern of mood.

*Strength.* Let be! Why linger in this idle pity?
Why dost not hate a God to Gods a foe,
Who gave thy choicest prize to mortal men?

*Hepha.* Strange is the power of kin and intercourse.³

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¹ Prometheus (Forethought) is the son of Themis (Right) the second occupant of the Pythian Oracle (Eumen. v. 2.) His sympathy with man leads him to impart the gift which raised them out of savage animal life, and for this Zeus, who appears throughout the play as a hard taskmaster, sentences him to fetters. Hephaestos, from whom this fire had been stolen, has a touch of pity for him. Strength, who comes as the servant, not of Hephaestos, but of Zeus himself, acts, as such, with merciless cruelty.

² The generalised statement refers to Zeus, as having but recently expelled Cronus from his throne in Heaven.

³ Hephaestos, as the great fire-worker, had taught Prometheus to use the fire which he afterwards bestowed on men.
Strength. I own it; yet to slight the Father's words, 40
How may that be? Is not that fear the worse?
Heph. Still art thou ruthless, full of savagery.
Strength. There is no help in weeping over him:
Spend not thy toil on things that profit not.
Heph. O handicraft to me intolerable!
Strength. Why loath'st thou it? Of these thy present
sights
That craft of thine is not one whit the cause.
Heph. And yet I would some other had that skill.
Strength. *All things bring toil except for Gods to
reign; 1
For none but Zeus can boast of freedom true.
Heph. Too well I see the proof, and gainsay not.
Strength. Wilt thou not speed to fix the chains on him,
Lest He, the Father, see thee loitering here?
Heph. Well, here the handcuffs thou may'st see pre-
pared.
Strength. In thine hands take him. Then with all thy
might
Strike with thine hammer; nail him to the rocks.
Heph. The work goes on, I ween, and not in vain.
Strength. Strike harder, rivet, give no whit of ease:
A wondrous knack has he to find resource,
Even where all might seem to baffle him.
Heph. Lo! this his arm is fixed inextricably.
Strength. Now rivet thou this other fast, that he
May learn, though sharp, that he than Zeus is duller.
Heph. No one but he could justly blame my work.
Strength. Now drive the stern jaw of the adamant
wedge
Right through his chest with all the strength thou hast.
Heph. Ah me! Prometheus, for thy woes I groan.
Strength. Again, thou'rt loth, and for the foes of Zeus
Thou groanest: take good heed to it lest thou
Ere long with cause thyself commiserate.
Heph. Thou see'st a sight unsightly to our eyes.

(1) Perhaps, "All might is ours except o'er Gods to rule."
Strength. I see this man obtaining his deserts: Nay, cast thy breast-chains round about his ribs.

Heph. I must needs do it. Spare thine o'er much bidding;

Go thou below and rivet both his legs.  
Strength. Nay, I will bid thee, urge thee to thy work.
Heph. There, it is done, and that with no long toil.
Strength. Now with thy full power fix the galling fetters:

Thou hast a stern o'erlooker of thy work.

Heph. Thy tongue but utters words that match thy form.

Strength. Choose thou the melting mood; but chide not me
For my self-will and wrath and ruthlessness.

Heph. Now let us go, his limbs are bound in chains.
Strength. Here then wax proud, and stealing what belongs
To the Gods, to mortals give it. What can they
Avail to rescue thee from these thy woes?
Falsely the Gods have given thee thy name,
Prometheus, Forethought; forethought thou dost need
To free thyself from this rare handiwork.

[Exeunt HEPHAESTOS, STRENGTH, and FORCE, leaving PROMETHEUS on the rock.

Prom. Thou firmament of God, and swift-winged winds,
Ye springs of rivers, and of ocean waves
That smile innumerable! Mother of us all,
O Earth, and Sun's all-seeing eye, behold,
I pray, what I a God from Gods endure.

(1) The words indicate that the effigy of Prometheus, now nailed to the rock, was, as being that of a Titan, of colossal size.
(2) The touch is characteristic as showing that here, as in the Eumenides, Eschylus relied on the horribleness of the masks, as part of the machinery of his plays.
(3) The silence of Prometheus up to this point was partly, as has been said, consequent on the conventional laws of the Greek drama, but it is also a touch of supreme insight into the heroic temper. In the presence of his torturers, the Titan will not utter even a groan. When they are gone, he appeals to the sympathy of Nature.
Behold in what foul case
I for ten thousand years
Shall struggle in my woe,
In these unseemly chains.
Such doom the new-made Monarch of the Blest
Hath now devised for me.
Woe, woe! The present and the oncoming pang
I wail, as I search out
The place and hour when end of all these ills
Shall dawn on me at last.
What say I? All too clearly I foresee
The things that come, and nought of pain shall be
By me unlocked-for; but I needs must bear
My destiny as best I may, knowing well
The might resistless of Necessity.
And neither may I speak of this my fate,
Nor hold my peace. For I, poor I, through giving
Great gifts to mortal men, am prisoner made
In these fast fetters; yea, in fennel stalk
I snatched the hidden spring of stolen fire,
Which is to men a teacher of all arts,
Their chief resource. And now this penalty
Of that offence I pay, fast riveted.
In chains beneath the open firmament.

Ha! ha! What now?
What sound, what odour floats invisibly?
Is it of God or man, or blending both?
And has one come to this remotest rock
To look upon my woes? Or what wills he?

(1) The legend is from Hesiod, (Theogon. v. 537.) The fennel, or narthex, seems to have been a large umbelliferous plant, with a large stem filled with a sort of pith, which was used when dry as tinder. Stalks were carried as wands (the thyrsi) by the men and women who joined in Bacchanalian processions. In modern botany, the name is given to the plant which produces Asafetida, and the stem of which, from its resinous character, would burn freely, and so connect itself with the Promethean myth. On the other hand, the Narthex Asafetida is found at present only in Persia, Afghanistan, and the Punjab.

(2) The ocean nymphs, like other divine ones, would be anointed with ambrosial unguents, and the odour would be wafted before them by the rustling of their wings. This too we may think of as part of the "stage effects" of the play.
Behold me bound, a God to evil doomed,
The foe of Zeus, and held
In hatred by all Gods
Who tread the courts of Zeus:
And this for my great love,
Too great, for mortal men.
Ah me! what rustling sounds
Hear I of birds not far?
With the light whirr of wings
The air re-echoeth:
All that draws nigh to me is cause of fear.  

Enter Chorus of Ocean Nymphs, with wings, floating in the air.

Chor. Nay, fear thou nought: in love
All our array of wings
In eager race hath come
To this high peak, full hardly gaining o’er
Our Father’s mind and will;
And the swift-rushing breezes bore me on:
For lo! the echoing sound of blows on iron
Pierced to our cave’s recess, and put to flight
My shamefast modesty,
And I in unshod haste, on winged car,
To thee rushed hitherward.

Prom. Ah me! ah me!
Offspring of Tethys blest with many a child,
Daughters of Old Okeanos that rolls
Round all the earth with never-sleeping stream,
Behold ye me, and see
With what chains fettered fast,
I on the topmost crags of this ravine
Shall keep my sentry-post unenviable.

Chor. I see it, O Prometheus, and a mist

(1) The words are not those of a vague terror only. The sufferer knows that his tormentor is to come to him before long on wings, and therefore the sound as of the flight of birds is full of tears.
(2) By some stage mechanism the Chorus remains in the air till verse 290, when, at the request of Prometheus, they alight.
Of fear and full of tears comes o'er mine eyes,
Thy frame beholding thus,
Writhing on these high rocks
In adamantine ills.
New pilots now o'er high Olympos rule,
And with new-fashioned laws
Zeus reigns, down-trampling right,
And all the ancient powers He sweeps away.

Prom. Ah! would that 'neath the Earth, 'neath Hades too,
Home of the dead, far down to Tartaros
Unfathomable He in fetters fast
In wrath had hurled me down:
So neither had a God

Nor any other mocked at these my woes;
But now, the wretched plaything of the winds,
I suffer ills at which my foes rejoice.

Chor. Nay, which of all the Gods
Is so hard-hearted as to joy in this?
Who, Zeus excepted, doth not pity thee
In these thine ills? But He,
Ruthless, with soul unbent,
Subdues the heavenly host, nor will He cease
Until his heart be satiate with power,
Or some one seize with subtle stratagem
The sovrän might that so resistless seemed.

Prom. Nay, of a truth, though put to evil shame,
In massive fetters bound,
The Ruler of the Gods
Shall yet have need of me, yes, e'en of me,
To tell the counsel new
That seeks to strip from him
His sceptre and his might of sovereignty.

(1) Here, as throughout the play, the poet puts into the mouth of his
*drāmatos person* words which must have seemed to the devout Athenians sacrilegious enough to call for an indictment before the Areiopagus. But the final play of the Trilogy came, we may believe, as the *Eumenides* did in its turn, as a reconciliation of the conflicting thoughts that rise in men's minds out of the seeming anomalies of the world.
In vain will He with words
Or suasion’s honeyed charms
Sooth me, nor will I tell
Through fear of his stern threats,
Ere He shall set me free
From these my bonds, and make,
Of his own choice, amends
For all these outrages.

Chor. Full rash art thou, and yield’st
In not a jot to bitterest form of woe;
Thou art o’er-free and reckless in thy speech:
    But piercing fear hath stirred
    My inmost soul to strife;
For I fear greatly touching thy distress,
As to what haven of these woes of thine
Thou now must steer: the son of Cronos hath
    A stubborn mood and heart inexorable.

Prom. I know that Zeus is hard,
And keeps the Right supremely to himself;
    But then, I trow, He’ll be
    Full pliant in his will,
    When He is thus crushed down.
Then, calming down his mood
Of hard and bitter wrath,
He’ll hasten unto me,
As I to him shall haste,
For friendship and for peace.

Chor. Hide it not from us, tell us all the tale:
For what offence Zeus, having seized thee thus,
So wantonly and bitterly insults thee:
If the tale hurt thee not, inform thou us.

Prom. Painful are these things to me o’en to speak:
Painful is silence; everywhere is woe.
For when the high Gods fell on mood of wrath,
And hot debate of mutual strife was stirred,
Some wishing to hurl Cronos from his throne,
That Zeus, forsooth, might reign; while others strove,
Eager that Zeus might never rule the Gods:
Then I, full strongly seeking to persuade
The Titans, yea, the sons of Heaven and Earth,
Failed of my purpose. Scorning subtle arts,
With counsels violent, they thought that they
By force would gain full easy mastery.
But then not once or twice my mother Themis
And Earth, one form though bearing many names,\(^1\)
Had prophesied the future, how 'twould run,
That not by strength nor yet by violence,
But guile, should those who prospered gain the day.
And when in my words I this counsel gave,
They deigned not e'en to glance at it at all.
And then of all that offered, it seemed best
To join my mother, and of mine own will,
Not against his will, take my side with Zeus,
And by my counsels, mine, the dark deep pit
Of Tartaros the ancient Cronos holds,
Himself and his allies. Thus profiting
By me, the mighty ruler of the Gods
Repays me with these evil penalties:
For somehow this disease in sovereignty
Inheres, of never trusting to one's friends.\(^2\)
And since ye ask me under what pretence
He thus maltreats me, I will show it you:
For soon as He upon his father's throne
Had sat secure, forthwith to divers Gods
He divers gifts distributed, and his realm
Began to order. But of mortal men
He took no heed, but purposed utterly
To crush their race and plant another new;
And, I excepted, none dared cross his will;
But I did dare, and mortal men I freed
From passing on to Hades thunder-stricken;

(1) The words leave it uncertain whether Themis is identified with Earth, or, as in the *Eumenides,* (v. 2,) distinguished from her. The Titans as a class, then, children of Okeanos and Cthôn, (another name for Land or Earth,) are the kindred rather than the brothers of Prometheus.

(2) The generalising words here, as in v. 36, appeal to the Athenian hatred of all that was represented by the words tyrani and tyranny.
And therefore am I bound beneath these woes,
Dreadful to suffer, pitable to see:
And I, who in my pity thought of men
More than myself, have not been worthy deemed
To gain like favour, but all ruthlessly
I thus am chained, foul shame this sight to Zeus.

Chor. Iron-hearted must he be and made of rock
Who is not moved, Prometheus, by thy woes:
Fain could I wish I ne'er had seen such things,
And, seeing them, am wounded to the heart.

Prom. Yea, I am piteous for my friends to see.
Chor. Did'st thou not go to farther lengths than this?
Prom. I made men cease from contemplating death.¹
Chor. What medicine did'st thou find for that disease?
Prom. Blind hopes I gave to live and dwell with
them.

Chor. Great service that thou did'st for mortal men!
Prom. And more than that, I gave them fire, yes I.
Chor. Do short-lived men the flaming fire possess?
Prom. Yea, and full many an art they'll learn from it.
Chor. And is it then on charges such as these
That Zeus maltreats thee, and no respite gives
Of many woes? And has thy pain no end?
Prom. End there is none, except as pleases Him.
Chor. How shall it please? What hope hast thou?
See'st not
That thou hast sinned? Yet to say how thou sinned'st
Gives me no pleasure, and is pain to thee.
Well! let us leave these things, and, if we may,
Seek out some means to 'scape from this thy woe.

Prom. 'Tis a light thing for one who has his foot
Beyond the reach of evil to exhort
And counsel him who suffers. This to me
Was all well known. Yea, willing, willingly

(1) The state described is that of men who "through fear of death are
all their lifetime subject to bondage." That state, the parent of all
superstition, fostered the slavish awe in which Zeus delighted. Promes-
hians, representing the active intellect of man, bestows new powers, new
interests, new hopes, which at last divert them from that fear.
I sinned, nor will deny it. Helping men,  
I for myself found trouble: yet I thought not  
That I with such dread penalties as these  
Should wither here on these high-towering crags,  
Lighting on this lone hill and neighbourless.  
Wherefore wail not for these my present woes,  
But, drawing nigh, my coming fortunes hear,  
That ye may learn the whole tale to the end.  
Nay, hearken, hearken; show your sympathy  
With him who suffers now. 'Tis thus that woe,  
Wandering, now falls on this one, now on that.  

Chor. Not to unwilling hearers hast thou uttered,  
Prometheus, thy request,  
And now with nimble foot abandoning  
My swiftly rushing car,  
And the pure æther, path of birds of heaven,  
I will draw near this rough and rocky land,  
For much do I desire  
To hear this tale, full measure, of thy woes.  

Enter OKEANOS, on a car drawn by a winged gryphon.  

Okean. Lo, I come to thee, Prometheus,  
Reaching goal of distant journey;  
Guiding this my winged courser  
By my will, without a bridle;  
And thy sorrows move my pity.  
Force, in part, I deem, of kindred  
Leads me on, nor know I any,  
Whom, apart from kin, I honour  
More than thee, in fuller measure.  
This thou shalt own true and earnest:  
I deal not in glozing speeches.  
Come then, tell me how to help thee:  
Ne'er shalt thou say that one more friendly  
Is found than unto thee is Okean.  

Prom. Let be. What boots it? Thou then too art come

(1) The home of Okeanos was in the far west, at the boundary of the great stream surrounding the whole world, from which he took his name.
To gaze upon my sufferings. How did'st dare
Leaving the stream that bears thy name, and caves
Hewn in the living rock, this land to visit,
Mother of iron? What then, art thou come
To gaze upon my fall and offer pity?
Behold this sight: see here the friend of Zeus,
Who helped to seat him in his sovereignty,
With what foul outrage I am crushed by him!

_Okean._ I see, Prometheus, and I wish to give thee
My best advice, all subtle though thou be.
Know thou thyself, and fit thy soul to moods
To thee full new. New king the Gods have now;
But if thou utter words thus rough and sharp,
Perchance, though sitting far away on high,
Zeus yet may hear thee, and his present wrath
Seem to thee but as child's play of distress.
Nay, thou poor sufferer, quit the rage thou hast,
And seek a remedy for these thine ills.
A tale thrice-told, perchance, I seem to speak:
Lo! this, Prometheus, is the punishment
Of thine o'er lofty speech, nor art thou yet
Humbled, nor yieldest to thy miseries,
And fain would'st add fresh evils unto these.
But thou, if thou wilt take me as thy teacher,
Wilt not kick out against the pricks; seeing well
A monarch reigns who gives account to none.
And now I go, and will an effort make,
If I, perchance, may free thee from thy woes;
Be still then, hush thy petulance of speech,
Or knowest thou not, o'er-clever as thou art,
That idle tongues must still their forfeit pay?

_Prom._ I envy thee, seeing thou art free from blame
Though thou shared'st all, and in my cause wast bold;

(1) One of the sayings of the Seven Sages, already recognised and quoted as a familiar proverb.
(2) See note on _Agam._ 1602.
(3) In the mythos, Okeanos had given his daughter Heaione in marriage to Prometheus after the theft of fire, and thus had identified himself with his transgression.
Nay, let me be, nor trouble thou thyself;  
Thou wilt not, canst not soothe Him; very hard  
Is He of soothing. Look to it thyself,  
Lest thou some mischief meet with in the way.

Okean. It is thy wont thy neighbours' minds to school  
Far better than thine own. From deeds, not words,  
I draw my proof. But do not draw me back  
When I am hastening on, for lo, I deem,  
I deem that Zeus will grant this boon to me,  
That I should free thee from these woes of thine.

Prom. I thank thee much, yea, ne'er will cease to thank;  
For thou no whit of zeal dost lack; yet take,  
I pray, no trouble for me; all in vain  
Thy trouble, nothing helping, e'en if thou  
Should'st care to take the trouble. Nay, be still;  
Keep out of harm's way; sufferer though I be,  
I would not therefore wish to give my woes  
A wider range o'er others. No, not so:  
For lo! my mind is wearied with the grief  
Of that my kinsman Atlas,¹ who doth stand  
In the far West, supporting on his shoulders  
The pillars of the earth and heaven, a burden  
His arms can ill but hold: I pity too  
The giant dweller of Kilikian caves,  
Dread portent, with his hundred hands, subdued  
By force, the mighty Typhon,² who arose

¹ In the Theogony of Hesiod, (v. 509,) Prometheus and Atlas appear as the sons of two sisters. As other Titans were thought of as buried under volcanoes, so this one was identified with the mountain which had been seen by travellers to Western Africa, or in the seas beyond it, rising like a column to support the vault of heaven. In Herodotos (iv. 174) and all later writers, the name is given to the chain of mountains in Libya, as being the "pillar of the firmament;" but Humboldt and others identify it with the lonely peak of Teneriffe, as seen by Phoenician or Hellenic voyagers. Teneriffe, too, like most of the other Titan mountains, was at one time volcanic. Homer (Odysse. i. 53) represents him as holding the pillars which separate heaven from earth; Hesiod (Theogon. v. 517) as himself standing near the Hesperides, (this too points to Teneriffe) sustaining the heavens with his head and shoulders.

² The volcanic character of the whole of Asia Minor, and the liability to earthquakes which has marked nearly every period of its history, led men to connect it also with the traditions of the Titans, some accordingly
"'Gainst all the Gods, with sharp and dreadful jaws
Hissing out slaughter, and from out his eyes
There flashed the terrible brightness as of one
Who would lay low the sovereignty of Zeus.
But the unsleeping dart of Zeus came on him,
Down-swooping thunderbolt that breathes out flame,
Which from his lofty boastsings startled him,
For he i' the heart was struck, to ashes burnt,
His strength all thunder-shattered; and he lies
A helpless, powerless carcass, near the strait
Of the great sea, fast pressed beneath the roots
Of ancient Ætna, where on highest peak
Hephaestos sits and smites his iron red-hot,
From whence hereafter streams of fire shall burst,\(^1\)
Devouring with fierce jaws the golden plains
Of fruitful, fair Sikelia. Such the wrath
That Typhon shall belch forth with bursts of storm,
Hot, breathing fire, and unapproachable,
Though burnt and charred by thunderbolts of Zeus.\(^2\)
Not inexperienced art thou, nor dost need
My teaching: save thyself, as thou know'st how;
And I will drink my fortune to the dregs,
Till from his wrath the mind of Zeus shall rest.\(^3\)

\textit{Okean.} Know'st thou not this, Prometheus, even this,
Of wrath's disease wise words the healers are?

\textit{Prom.} Yea, could one soothe the troubled heart in time,
Nor seek by force to tame the soul's proud flesh.

\textit{Okean.} But in due forethought with bold daring blent,
What mischief see'st thou lurking? Tell me this.

\textit{Prom.} Toil bootless, and simplicity full fond.

\(^1\) The words point probably to an eruption, then fresh in men's memories, which had happened B.C. 476.
\(^2\) By some editors this speech from "No, not so," to "th. u know: t how," is assigned to Okeanos.
Okean. Let me, I pray, that sickness suffer, since
'Tis best being wise to have not wisdom's show.
Prom. Nay, but this error shall be deemed as mine.
Okean. Thy word then clearly sends me home at once.
Prom. Yea, lest thy pity for me make a foe. .
Okean. What! of that new king on his mighty throne?
Prom. Look to it, lest his heart be vexed with thee.
Okean. Thy fate, Prometheus, teaches me that lesson.
Prom. Away, withdraw! keep thou the mind thou
hast.
Okean. Thou urgest me who am in act to haste;
For this my bird four-footed flaps with wings
The clear path of the ether; and full fain
Would he bend knee in his own stall at home. [Exit.

Stroph. I.

Chor. I grieve, Prometheus, for thy dreary fate,
Shedding from tender eyes
The dew of plenteous tears;
With streams, as when the watery south wind blows,
My cheek is wet;
For lo! these things are all unenviable,
And Zeus, by his own laws his sway maintaining,
Shows to the elder Gods
A mood of haughtiness.

Antistroph. I.

And all the country echoeth with the moan,
And poureth many a tear
For that magnific power
Of ancient days far-seen that thou did' st share
With those of one blood sprung;
And all the mortal men who hold the plain
Of holy Asia as their land of sojourn,
They grieve in sympathy
For thy woes lamentable.

Stroph. II.

And they, the maiden band who find their home
On distant Colchian coasts,
Fearless of fight,¹
Or Skythian horde in earth’s remotest clime,
By far Maeotic lake; ³

Antistroph. II.

*And warlike glory of Arabia’s tribes,³
Who nigh to Caucasos
In rock-fort dwell,
An army fearful, with sharp-pointed spear
Raging in war’s array.

Strophe. III.

One other Titan only have I seen,
One other of the Gods.
Thus bound in woes of adamantine strength—
Atlas, who ever groans
Beneath the burden of a crushing might,
The out-spread vault of heaven.

Antistroph. III.

And lo! the ocean billows murmur loud
In one accord with him; ⁴
The sea-depths groan, and Hades’ swarthy pit
Re-echoeth the sound,
And fountains of clear rivers, as they flow,
Bewail his bitter griefs.

Prom. Think not it is through pride or stiff self-will
That I am silent. But my heart is worn,
Self-contemplating, as I see myself
Thus outraged. Yet what other hand than mine

---

(1) These are, of course, the Amazons, who were believed to have come through Thraké from the Tauric Chersonesos, and had left traces of their name and habits in the Attic traditions of Theseus.
(2) Beyond the plains of Skythia, and the lake Maeotis (the sea of Azov) there would be the great river Oceanos, which was believed to flow round the earth.
(3) Sarmatia has been conjectured instead of Arabia. No Greek author sanctions the extension of the latter name to so remote a region as that north of the Caspian.
(4) The Greek leaves the object of the sympathy undefined, but it seems better to refer it to that which Atlas receives from the waste of waters around, and the dark world beneath, than to the pity shown to Prometheus. This had already been dwelt on in line 421.
Gave these young Gods in fulness all their gifts?
But these I speak not of; for I should tell
To you that know them. But those woes of men,¹
List ye to them,—how they, before as babes,
By me were roused to reason, taught to think;
And this I say, not finding fault with men,
But showing my good-will in all I gave.
For first, though seeing, all in vain they saw,
And hearing, heard not rightly. But, like forms
Of phantom-dreams, throughout their life's whole length
They muddled all at random; did not know
Houses of brick that catch the sunlight's warmth,
Nor yet the work of carpentry. They dwelt
In hollowed holes, like swarms of tiny ants,
In sunless depths of caverns; and they had
No certain signs of winter, nor of spring
Flower-laden, nor of summer with her fruits;
But without counsel fared their whole life long,
Until I showed the risings of the stars,
And settings hard to recognise.² And I
Found Number for them, chief device of all,
*Groupings of letters, Memory’s handmaid that,
And mother of the Muses.³ And I first
Bound in the yoke wild steeds, submissive made
Or to the collar or men's limbs, that so
They might in man's place bear his greatest toils;
And horses trained to love the rein I yoked
To chariots, glory of wealth's pride of state; ⁴
Nor was it any one but I that found

¹ The passage that follows has for modern paleontologists the interest of coinciding with their views as to the progress of human society, and the condition of mankind during what has been called the "Stone" period. Comp. Lucretius, v. 956-964.
² Comp. Mr. Blakesley's note on Herod. ii. 4, as showing that here there was the greater risk of faulty observation.
³ Another reading gives perhaps a better sense—
⁴ "Memory, handmaid true
And mother of the Muses."

⁴ In Greece, as throughout the East, the ox was used for all agricultural labours, the horse by the noble and the rich, either in war chariots, or stately processions, or in chariot races in the great games.
Sea-crossing, canvas-winged cars of ships:
Such rare designs inventing (wretched me!)
For mortal men, I yet have no device
By which to free myself from this my woe.  

Chor. Foul shame thou sufferest: of thy sense bereaved,
Thou errest greatly: and, like leech unskilled,
Thou losest heart when smitten with disease,
And know'st not how to find the remedies
Wherewith to heal thine own soul's sicknesses.

Prom. Hearing what yet remains thou'lt wonder more,
What arts and what resources I devised:
And this the chief: if any one fell ill,
There was no help for him, nor healing food,
Nor unguent, nor yet potion; but for want
Of drugs they wasted, till I showed to them
The blendings of all mild medicaments,
Wherewith they ward the attacks of sickness sore.
I gave them many modes of prophecy;
And I first taught them what dreams needs must prove
True visions, and made known the ominous sounds
Full hard to know; and tokens by the way,
And flights of taloned birds I clearly marked,—
Those on the right propitious to mankind,
And those sinister,—and what form of life
They each maintain, and what their enmities
Each with the other, and their loves and friendships;
And of the inward parts the plumpness smooth,

(1) Compare with this the account of the inventions of Palamedes in Sophocles, Fragm. 379.
(2) Here we can recognise the knowledge of one who had studied in the schools of Pythagoras, or had at any rate picked up their terminology. A more immediate connexion may perhaps be traced with the influence of Epimenides, who was said to have spent many years in searching out the healing virtues of plants, and to have written books about them.
(3) The lines that follow form almost a manual of the art of divination as then practised. The "ominous sounds" include chance words, strange cries, any unexpected utterance that connected itself with men's fears for the future. The flights of birds were watched by the diviner as he faced the north, and so the region on the right hand was that of the sunrise, light, blessedness; on the left there were darkness and gloom and death.
And with what colour they the Gods would please,
And the streaked comeliness of gall and liver:
And with burnt limbs enwrept in fat, and chine,
I led men on to art full difficult:
And I gave eyes to omens drawn from fire,
Till then dim-visioned. So far then for this.
And 'neath the earth the hidden boons for men,
Bronze, iron, silver, gold, who else could say
That he, ere I did, found them? None, I know,
Unless he fain would babble idle words.
In one short word, then, learn the truth condensed,—
All arts of mortals from Prometheus spring.

Chor. Nay, be not thou to men so over-kind,
While thou thyself art in sore evil case;
For I am sanguine that thou too, released
From bonds, shalt be as strong as Zeus himself.

Prom. It is not thus that Fate's decree is fixed;
But I, long crushed with twice ten thousand woes
And bitter pains, shall then escape my bonds;
Art is far weaker than Necessity.

Chor. Who guides the helm, then, of Necessity?

Prom. Fates triple-formed, Erinnyes unforgetting.

Chor. Is Zeus, then, weaker in his might than these?

Prom. Not even He can 'scape the thing decreed.

Chor. What is decreed for Zeus but still to reign?

Prom. Thou may'st no further learn, ask thou no more.

Chor. 'Tis doubtless some dread secret which thou hidest.

Prom. Of other theme make mention, for the time
Is not yet come to utter this, but still
It must be hidden to the uttermost;
For by thus keeping it it is that I
Escape my bondage foul, and these my pains.

STROPH. I.

Chor. Ah! ne'er may Zeus the Lord,
Whose sovran sway rules all,
His strength in conflict set
Against my feeble will!
Nor may I fail to serve
The Gods with holy feast
Of whole burnt-offerings,
Where the stream ever flows
That bears my father’s name,
The great Okeanos!
Nor may I sin in speech!
May this grace more and more
Sink deep into my soul
And never fade away!

\[\text{Antistrophe I.}\]

Sweet is it in strong hope
To spend long years of life,
With bright and cheering joy
Our heart’s thoughts nourishing,
I shudder, seeing thee
Thus vexed and harassed sore
By twice ten thousand woes;
For thou in pride of heart,
Having no fear of Zeus,
In thine own obstinacy,
Dost show for mortal men,
Prometheus, love o’ermuch.

\[\text{Strophe II.}\]

See how that boon, dear friends,
For thee is bootless found.
Say, where is any help?
What aid from mortals comes?
Hast thou not seen this brief and powerless life,
Fleeting as dreams, with which man’s purblind race
Is fast in fetters bound?
Never shall counsels vain
Of mortal men break through
The harmony of Zeus.

\[\text{Antistrophe II.}\]

This lesson have I learnt
Beholding thy sad fate,  
Prometheus! Other strains  
Come back upon my mind,  

When I sang wedding hymns around thy bath,  
And at thy bridal bed, when thou did'st take  
In wedlock's holy bands  
One of the same sire born,  
Our own Hesione,  
Persuading her with gifts  
As wife to share thy couch.

\textit{Enter Io in form like a fair woman with a heifer's horns,}¹  
\textit{followed by the Spectre of Argos.}  

\textit{Io.} What land is this? What people? Whom shall I  
Say that I see thus vexed  
With bit and curb of rock?  
For what offence dost thou  
Bear fatal punishment?  
Tell me to what far land  
I've wandered here in woe.  
Ah me! ah me!  

Again the gadfly stings me miserable.  
Spectre of Argos, thou, the earth-born one—  
Ah, keep him off, O Earth!  

I fear to look upon that herdsman dread,  
Him with ten thousand eyes:  
Ah Io! he cometh with his crafty look,  
Whom Earth refuses even dead to hold; ³

(1) So Io was represented, we are told, by Greek sculptors, (Herod. ii. 41,) as Isis was by those of Egypt. The points of contact between the myth of Io and that of Prometheus, as adopted, or perhaps developed, by \textit{AESCHYLOS}, are—(1) that from her the destined deliverer of the chained Titan is to come; (2) that both were suffering from the cruelty of Zeus; (3) that the wanderings of Io gave scope for the wild tales of far countries on which the imagination of the Athenians fed greedily. But, as the \textit{Suppliants} may serve to show, the story itself had a strange fascination for him. In the birth of Epaphos, and Io's release from her frenzy, he saw, it may be, a reconciliation of what had seemed hard to reconcile, a solution of the problems of the world, like in kind to that which was shadowed forth in the lost \textit{Prometheus Unbound}.  

(3) Argos had been slain by Hermes, and his eyes transferred by Hera to the tail of the peacock, and that bird was thenceforth sacred to her.
But coming from beneath
He hunts me miserable,
And drives me famished o'er the sea-beach sand.

STROPH.
And still his waxed reed-pipe soundeth clear
A soft and slumberous strain;
O heavens! O ye Gods!
Whither do these long wanderings lead me on?
For what offence, O son of Cronos, what,
Hast thou thus bound me fast
In these great miseries?
Ah me! ah me!

And why with terror of the gadfly's sting
Dost thou thus vex me, frenzied in my soul?
Burn me with fire, or bury me in earth,
Or to wild sea-beasts give me as a prey:
Nay, grudge me not, O King,
An answer to my prayers:

Enough my many-wandered wanderings
Have exercised my soul,
Nor have I power to learn
How to avert the woe.

(To Prometheus). Hear'st thou the voice of maiden
crowned with horns?

Prom. Surely I heard the maid by gadfly driven,
Daughter of Inachos, who warmed the heart
Of Zeus with love, and now through Hera's hate
Is tried, perforce, with wanderings over-long?

ANTISTROPH.
Io. How is it that thou speak'st my father's name?
Tell me, the suffering one,
Who art thou, who, poor wretch,
Who thus so truly nam'st me miserable,
And tell'st the plague from Heaven,
Which with its haunting stings
Wears me to death? Ah woe!

And I with famished and unseemly bounds
Rush madly, driven by Hera's jealous craft.
Ah, who of all that suffer, born to woe,
Have trouble like the pain that I endure?
   But thou, make clear to me
   What yet for me remains,
What remedy, what healing for my pangs,
   Show me, if thou dost know:
   Speak out and tell to me,
   The maid by wanderings vexed.

Prom. I will say plainly all thou seek'st to know;
Not in dark tangled riddles, but plain speech,
As it is meet that friends to friends should speak;
Thou see'est Prometheus who gave fire to men.

Io. O thou to men as benefactor known,
Why, poor Prometheus, sufferest thou this pain?

Prom. I have but now mine own woes ceased to wail.

Io. Wilt thou not then bestow this boon on me?

Prom. Say what thou seek'st, for I will tell thee all.

Io. Tell me, who fettered thee in this ravine?

Prom. The counsel was of Zeus, the hand Hephæstos'.

Io. Of what offence dost thou the forfeit pay?

Prom. Thus much alone am I content to tell.

Io. Tell me, at least, besides, what end shall come
To my drear wanderings; when the time shall be.

Prom. Not to know this is better than to know.

Io. Nay, hide not from me what I have to bear.

Prom. It is not that I grudge the boon to thee.

Io. Why then delayest thou to tell the whole?

Prom. Not from ill will, but loth to vex thy soul.

Io. Nay, care thou not beyond what pleases me.

Prom. If thou desire it I must speak. Hear then.

Chor. Not yet though; grant me share of pleasure too.
Let us first ask the tale of her great woe,
While she unfolds her life's consuming chances;
Her future sufferings let her learn from thee.

Prom. 'Tis thy work, Io, to grant these their wish,
On other grounds and as thy father's kin: 1

(1) Inachus the father of Io (identified with the Argive river of the same name) was, like all rivers, a son of Okeanós, and therefore brother to the nymphs who had come to see Prometheus.
For to bewail and moan one’s evil chance,
Here where one trusts to gain a pitying tear
From those who hear,—this is not labour lost.

Io. I know not how to disobey your wish;
So ye shall learn the whole that ye desire
In speech full clear. And yet I blush to tell
The storm that came from God, and brought the loss
Of maiden face, what way it seized on me.
For nightly visions coming evermore
Into my virgin bower, sought to woo me
With glozing words. "O virgin greatly blest,
Why art thou still a virgin when thou might’st
Attain to highest wedlock? For with dart
Of passion for thee Zeus doth glow, and fain
Would make thee his. And thou, O child, spurn not
The bed of Zeus, but go to Lerna’s field,
Where feed thy father’s flocks and herds,
That so the eye of Zeus may find repose
From this his craving.” With such visions I
Was haunted every evening, till I dared
To tell my father all these dreams of night,
And he to Pytho and Dodona sent
Full many to consult the Gods, that he
Might learn what deeds and words would please Heaven’s
lords.
And they came bringing speech of oracles
Shot with dark sayings, dim and hard to know.
At last a clear word came to Inachus
Charging him plainly, and commanding him
To thrust me from my country and my home,
To stray at large¹ to utmost bounds of earth;
And, should he gainsay, that the fiery bolt
Of Zeus should come and sweep away his race.
And he, by Loxias’ oracles induced,

¹The words used have an almost technical meaning as applied to
animals that were consecrated to the service of a God, and set free to
wander where they liked. The fate of Io, as at once devoted to Zeus and
animalised in form, was thus shadowed forth in the very language of the
Oracle.
Thrust me. against his will, against mine too,
And drove me from my home; but spite of all,
The curb of Zeus constrained him this to do.
And then forthwith my face and mind were changed;
And horned, as ye see me, stung to the quick
By biting gadfly, I with maddened leap
Rushed to Kerchneia's fair and limpid stream,
And fount of Lerna. And a giant herdsman,
Argos, full rough of temper, followed me,
With many an eye beholding, on my track:
And him a sudden and unlooked-for doom
Deprived of life. And I, by gadfly stung,
By scourge from Heaven am driven from land to land.
What has been done thou hearest. And if thou
Can'st tell what yet remains of woe, declare it;
Nor in thy pity soothe me with false words;
For hollow words, I deem, are worst of ills.

Chor. Away, away, let be:
Ne'er thought I that such tales
Would ever, ever come unto mine ears;
Nor that such terrors, woes, and outrages,
Hard to look on, hard to bear,
Would chill my soul with sharp goad, double-edged.
Ah fate! Ah fate!
I shudder, seeing Io's fortune strange.

Prom. Thou art too quick in groaning, full of fear:
Wait thou a while until thou hear the rest.
Chor. Speak thou and tell. Unto the sick 'tis sweet
Clearly to know what yet remains of pain.

Prom. Your former wish ye gained full easily.
Your first desire was to learn of her
The tale she tells of her own sufferings;
Now therefore hear the woes that yet remain
For this poor maid to bear at Hera's hands.
And thou, O child of Inachos! take heed

(1) Lerna was a lake near the mouth of the Inachos, close to the sea. Kerchneia may perhaps be identified with the Kenchreae, the haven of Korinth in later geographies.
To these my words, that thou may'st hear the goal
Of all thy wanderings. First then, turning hence.
Towards the sunrise, tread the untended plains,
And thou shalt reach the Skythian nomads, those
Who on smooth-rolling waggons dwell aloft
In wicker houses, with far-darting bows
Duly equipped. Approach thou not to these,
But trending round the coasts on which the surf
Beats with loud murmurs, traverse thou that clime.
On the left hand there dwell the Chalybes,
Who work in iron. Of these do thou beware,
For fierce are they and most inhospitable;
And thou wilt reach the river fierce and strong,
True to its name. This seek not thou to cross,
For it is hard to ford, until thou come
To Caucasus itself, of all high hills
The highest, where a river pours its strength
From the high peaks themselves. And thou must cross
Those summits near the stars, must onward go
Towards the south, where thou shalt find the host
Of the Amazons, hating men, whose home
Shall one day be around Thermódon's bank,
By Themiskyra, where the ravenous jaws
Of Salmydessos ope upon the sea,
Treacherous to sailors, steyped stern to ships.

(1) The wicker huts used by Skythian or Thrakian nomads (the Càl-
muokes of modern geographers) are described by Herodotos (iv. 46) and
are still in use.
(2) Sc, the N.E. boundary of the Euxine, where spurs of the Caucasus
ridge approach the sea.
(3) The Chalybes are placed by geographers to the south of Colchis.
The description of the text indicates a locality farther to the north.
(4) Probably the Araxes, which the Greeks would connect with a word
conveying the idea of a torrent dashing on the rocks. The description
seems to imply a river flowing into the Euxine from the Caucasus, and
the condition is fulfilled by the Hypanis or Kouban.
(5) When the Amazons appear in contact with Greek history, they are
found in Thrace. But they had come from the coast of Pontos, and near
the mouth of the Thermón, (Thermeh.) The words of Prometheus point
to yet earlier migrations from the East.
(6) Here, as in Soph. Antig. (970) the name Salmydessos represents the
rockbound, havenless coast from the promontory of Thynias to the en-
trance of the Bosphorus, which had given to the Black Sea its earlier name
of Axenos, the "inhospitable."
And they with right good-will shall be thy guides;
And thou, hard by a broad pool's narrow gates,
Wilt pass to the Kimmerian isthmus. Leaving
This boldly, thou must cross Meotian channel; 1
And there shall be great fame 'mong mortal men
Of this thy journey, and the Bosphoros 2
Shall take its name from thee. And Europe's plain
Then quitting, thou shalt gain the Asian coast.
Doth not the all-ruling monarch of the Gods
Seem all ways cruel? For, although a God,
He, seeking to embrace this mortal maid,
Imposed these wanderings on her. Thou hast found,
O maiden! bitter suitor for thy hand;
For great as are the ills thou now hast heard,
Know that as yet not e'en the prelude's known. 760

Io. Ah woe! woe! woe!

Prom. Again thou groan'st and criest. What wilt do
When thou shalt learn the evils yet to come?

Chor. What! are there troubles still to come for her?

Prom. Yea, stormy sea of woe most lamentable.

Io. What gain is it to live? Why cast I not
Myself at once from this high precipice,
And, dashed to earth, be free from all my woes?

Far better were it once for all to die
Than all one's days to suffer pain and grief. 770

Prom. My struggles then full hardly thou would'st bear,
For whom there is no destiny of death;
For that might bring a respite from my woes:
But now there is no limit to my pangs
Till Zeus be hurled out from his sovereignty.

Io. What! shall Zeus e'er be hurled from his high
state?

(1) The track is here in some confusion. From the Amazons south of
the Caucasus, Io is to find her way to the Tauric Chersonese (the Crimea)
and the Kimmerian Bosphorus, which flows into the Sea of Azov, and so to
return to Asia.

(2) Here, as in a hundred other instances, a false etymology has become
the parent of a myth. The name Bosphorus is probably Asiatic not Greek,
and has an entirely different signification.
Prom. Thou would'st rejoice, I trow, to see that fall.
I. How should I not, when Zeus so foully wrongs me?
Prom. That this is so thou now may'st hear from me.
I. Who then shall rob him of his sceptred sway?
Prom. Himself shall do it by his own rash way.
I. But how? Tell this, unless it bringeth harm.
Prom. He shall wed one for whom one day he'll grieve.
I. Heaven-born or mortal? Tell, if tell thou may'st.
Prom. Why ask'st thou who? I may not tell thee that.
I. Shall his bride hurl him from his throne of might?
Prom. Yea; she shall bear child mightier than his sire.
I. Has he no way to turn aside that doom?
Prom. No, none; unless I from my bonds be loosed.¹
I. Who then shall loose thee 'gainst the will of Zeus?
Prom. It must be one of thy posterity.
I. What, shall a child of mine free thee from ills?
Prom. Yea, the third generation after ten.²
I. No more thine oracles are clear to me.
*Prom. Nay, seek not thou thine own drear fate to know.
I. Do not, a boon presenting, then withdraw it.
Prom. Of two alternatives, I'll give thee choice.
I. Tell me of what, then give me leave to choose.
Prom. I give it then. Choose, or that I should tell
Thy woes to come, or who shall set me free.
Chor. Of these be willing one request to grant
To her, and one to me; nor scorn my words;
Tell her what yet of wanderings she must bear,
And me who shall release thee. This I crave.
Prom. Since ye are eager, I will not refuse

(1) The lines refer to the story that Zeus loved Thetis the daughter of Nereus, and followed her to Caucasus, but abstained from marriage with her because Prometheus warned him that the child born of that union should overthrow his father. Here the future is used of what was still contingent only. In the lost play of the Trilogy the myth was possibly brought to its conclusion and connected with the release of Prometheus.

(2) Heracles, whose genealogy was traced through Alcmene, Perseus, Danaë, Danae, and seven other names, to Epaphos and Io.
To utter fully all that ye desire.
Thou, write it in the tablets of thy mind.
When thou shalt cross the straits, of continents
The boundary,¹ take thou the onward path
On to the fiery-hued and sun-tracked East.
[And first of all, to frozen Northern blasts
Thou’lt come, and there beware the rushing whirl,
Lest it should come upon thee suddenly,
And sweep thee onward with the cloud-rack wild;]³
Crossing the sea-surf till thou come at last
Unto Kisthene’s Gorgoneian plains,
Where dwell the grey-haired virgin Phorkides,³
Three, swan-shaped, with one eye between them all
And but one tooth; whom nor the sun beholds
With radiant beams, nor yet the moon by night:
And near them are their winged sisters three,
The Gorgons, serpent-tressed, and hating men,
Whom mortal wight may not behold and live.
*Such is one ill I bid thee guard against;
Now hear another monstrous sight: Beware
The sharp-beaked hounds of Zeus that never bark,⁴
The Gryphons, and the one-eyed, mounted host
Of Arimaspian, who around the stream
That flows o’er gold, the ford of Pluto, dwell: ⁵

¹ Probably the Himmessian Bosporos. The Tanais or Phasis has, however, been conjectured.
² The history of the passage in brackets is curious enough to call for a note. They are not in any extant, but they are found in a passage quoted by Galen (v. p. 454,) as from the Prometheus Bound, and are inserted here by Mr. Paley.
³ Kisthene belongs to the geography of legend, lying somewhere on the shore of the great ocean-river in Lybia or Ethiopia, at the end of the world, a great mountain in the far West, beyond the Hesperides, the dwelling-place, as here, of the Gorgons, the daughters of Phorkys. Those first-named are the Graiae.
⁴ Here, like the “ wingèd hound” of v. 1043, for the eagles that are the messengers of Zeus.
⁵ We are carried back again from the fabled West to the fabled East. The Arimaspian, with one eye, and the Grypes or Gryphons, (the griffins of medieval heraldry,) quadrupeds with the wings and beaks of eagles, were placed by most writers (Herod. iv. 18, 27) in the north of Europe, in or beyond the terra incognita of Skythia. The mention of the “ford of Pluto” and Ἐθiopia, however, may possibly imply (if we identify it,
Draw not thou nigh to them. But distant land
Thou shalt approach, the swarthy tribes who dwell
By the sun’s fountain, 1 Ἐθιοπία’s stream:
By its banks wend thy way until thou come
To that great fall where from the Bybline hills
The Neilos pours its pure and holy flood;
And it shall guide thee to Neilotic land,
Three-angled, where, O Io, ’tis decreed
For thee and for thy progeny to found
A far-off colony. And if of this
Aught seem to thee as stammering speech obscure,
Ask yet again and learn it thoroughly:
Far more of leisure have I than I like.

Chor. If thou hast aught to add, aught left untold
Of her sore-wasting wanderings, speak it out;
But if thou hast said all, then grant to us
The boon we asked. Thou dost not, sure, forget it.

Prom. The whole course of her journeying she hath heard,
And that she know she hath not heard in vain
I will tell out what troubles she hath borne
Before she came here, giving her sure proof
Of these my words. The greater bulk of things
I will pass o’er, and to the very goal
Of all thy wanderings go. For when thou cam’st
To the Molossian plains, and by the grove 3
Of lofty-ridged Dodona, and the shrine
Oracular of Zeus Thesprotian,
And the strange portent of the talking oaks,

Mr. Paley does, with the Tartessos of Spain, or Baetis—Guadalquivir—
that Ἐθιοπίαs followed another legend which placed them in the West.
There is possibly a paronomasia between Pluto, the God of Hades, and
Plutos, the ideal God of riches.

1 The name was applied by later writers (Quintus Curtius, iv. 7, 22; Lucretius, vi. 848) to the fountain in the temple of Jupiter Ammon in the
great Oasis. The “river Ἐθιοπίς” may be purely imaginary, but it may
also suggest the possibility of some vague knowledge of the Niger,
or more probably of the Nile itself in the upper regions of its course.
The “Bybline hills” carry the name Byblos, which we only read of as
belonging to a town in the Delta, to the Second Cataract.

2 Comp, Sophocles, Trachin, v. 1168.
By which full clearly, not in riddle dark,
Thou wast addressed as noble spouse of Zeus,—
If aught of pleasure such things give to thee,—
Thence strung to frenzy, thou didst rush along
The sea-coast's path to Rhea's mighty gulf,¹
In backward way from whence thou now art vexed,
And for all time to come that reach of sea,
Know well, from thee Ionian shall be called,
To all men record of thy journeyings.
These then are tokens to thee that my mind
Sees somewhat more than that is manifest.
What follows (to the Chorus) I will speak to you and her
In common, on the track of former words
Returning once again. A city stands,
Canobos, at its country's furthest bound,
Hard by the mouth and silt-bank of the Nile;
There Zeus shall give thee back thy mind again,²
With hand that works no terror touching thee,—
Touch only—and thou then shalt bear a child
Of Zeus begotten, Epaphos, "Touch-born,"
Swarthy of hue, whose lot shall be to reap
The whole plain watered by the broad-streamed Neilos:
And in the generation fifth from him
A household numbering fifty shall return
Against their will to Argos, in their flight
From wedlock with their cousins.³ And they too,
(Kites but a little space behind the doves)
With eager hopes pursuing marriage rites
Beyond pursuit shall come; and God shall grudge
To give up their sweet bodies. And the land

¹ The Adriatic or Ionian Gulf.
² In the Suppliant [sic], Zeus is said to have soothed her, and restored her
to her human consciousness by his "divine breathings." The thought
underlying the legend may be taken either as a distortion of some primitive
tradition, or as one of the "unconscious prophecies" of heathenism.
The deliverer is not to be born after the common manner of men, and is
to have a divine as well as a human parentage.
³ See the argument of the Suppliant [sic], who, as the daughters of Danaos,
descended from Epaphos, are here referred to. The passage is noticeable
as showing that the theme of that tragedy was already present to the
poet's thoughts.
Pelasgian shall receive them, when by stroke
Of woman's murderous hand these men shall lie
Smitten to death by daring deed of night:
For every bride shall take her husband's life,
And dip in blood the sharp two-edged sword
(So to my foes may Kypris show herself!)
Yet one of that fair band shall love persuade
Her husband not to slaughter, and her will
Shall lose its edge; and she shall make her choice
Rather as weak than murderous to be known.
And she at Argos shall a royal seed
Bring forth (long speech 'twould take to tell this clear)
Famed for his arrows, who shall set me free
From these my woes. Such was the oracle
Mine ancient mother Themis, Titan-born,
Gave to me; but the manner and the means,—
That needs a lengthy tale to tell the whole,
And thou can'st nothing gain by learning it.
Io. Eleleu! Oh, Eleleu!

The throbbing pain inflames me, and the mood
Of frenzy-smitten rage;
The gaffy's pointed sting,
Not forged with fire, attacks,
And my heart beats against my breast with fear.
Mine eyes whirl round and round:
Out of my course I'm borne
By the wild spirit of fierce agony,
And cannot curb my lips,
And turbid speech at random dashes on
Upon the waves of dread calamity.

(1) Argos. So in the Suppliants, Pelasgos is the mythical king of the Apian land who receives them.
(2) Hypermnestra, who spared Lyceus, and by him became the mother of Abas and a line of Argive kings.
(3) Heracles, who came to Cacusos, and with his arrows slew the eagle that devoured Prometheus.
(4) The word is simply an interjection of pain, but one so characteristic that I have thought it better to reproduce it than to give any English equivalent.
STROPH. 1.

Chor. Wise, very wise was he
Who first in thought conceived this maxim sage,
   And spread it with his speech,—
That the best wedlock is with equals found,
And that a craftsman, born to work with hands,
   Should not desire to wed
Or with the soft luxurious heirs of wealth,
Or with the race that boast their lineage high.

ANTISTROPH. 1.

Oh ne'er, oh ne'er, dread Fates,
May ye behold me as the bride of Zeus,
The partner of his couch,
Nor may I wed with any heaven-born spouse!
For I shrink back, beholding Io's lot
   Of loveless maidenhood,
Consumed and smitten low exceedingly
By the wild wanderings from great Hera sent!

STROPH. II.

To me, when wedlock is on equal terms,
   It gives no cause to fear:
Ne'er may the love of any of the Gods,
The strong Gods, look on me
   With glance I cannot 'scape!

ANTISTROPH. II.

That fate is war that none can war against,
   Source of resourceless ill;
Nor know I what might then become of me:
   I see not how to 'scape
The counsel deep of Zeus.

Prom. Yea, of a truth shall Zeus, though stiff of will,
Be brought full low. Such bed of wedlock now
Is he preparing, one to cast him forth
In darkness from his sovereignty and throne.
And then the curse his father Cronos spake

(1) The maxim, "Marry with a woman thine equal," was ascribed to Pittacus.
Shall have its dread completion, even that
He uttered when he left his ancient throne;
And from these troubles no one of the Gods
But me can clearly show the way to 'scape.
I know the time and manner: therefore now
Let him sit fearless, in his peals on high
Putting his trust, and shaking in his hands
His darts fire-breathing. Nought shall they avail
To hinder him from falling shamefully
A fall intolerable. Such a combatant
He arms against himself, a marvel dread,
Who shall a fire discover mightier far
Than the red levin, and a sound more dread
Than roaring of the thunder, and shall shiver
That plague sea-born that causeth earth to quake,
The trident, weapon of Poseidon's strength:
And stumbling on this evil, he shall learn
How far apart a king's lot from a slave's.

Chor. What thou dost wish thou mutterest against Zeus.

Prom. Things that shall be, and things I wish, I speak.

Chor. And must we look for one to master Zeus?
Prom. Yea, troubles harder far than these are his.
Chor. Art not afraid to vent such words as these?
Prom. What can I fear whose fate is not to die?
Chor. But He may send on thee worse pain than this.
Prom. So let Him do: nought finds me unprepared.
Chor. Wisdom is theirs who A drasteia worship.¹
Prom. Worship then, praise and flatter him that rules;
My care for Zeus is nought, and less than nought:
Let Him act, let Him rule this little while,

¹ The Euhemerism of later scholiasts derived the name from a king Adrastus, who was said to have been the first to build a temple to Nemesis, and so the power thus worshipped was called after his name. A better etymology leads us to see in it the idea of the "inevitable" law of retribution working unseen by men, and independently even of the arbitrary will of the Gods, and bringing destruction upon the proud and haughty.
E'en as He will; for long He shall not rule
Over the Gods. But lo! I see at hand
The courier of the Gods, the minister
Of our new sovereign. Doubtless he has come
To bring me tidings of some new device.

Enter HERMES.

Herm. Thee do I speak to,—thee, the teacher wise,
The bitterly o'er-bitter, who 'gainst Gods
Hast sinned in giving gifts to short-lived men—
I speak to thee, the filcher of bright fire.
The Father bids thee say what marriage thou
Dost vaunt, and who shall hurl Him from his might;
And this too not in dark mysterious speech,
But tell each point out clearly. Give me not,
Prometheus, task of double journey. Zeus
Thou seest, is not with such words appeased.

Prom. Stately of utterance, full of haughtiness
Thy speech, as fits a messenger of Gods.
Ye yet are young in your new rule, and think
To dwell in painless towers. Have I not
Seen two great rulers driven forth from thence? 1
And now the third, who reigneth, I shall see
In basest, quickest fall. Seem I to thee
To shrink and quail before these new-made Gods?
Far, very far from that am I. But thou,
Track once again the path by which thou camest;
Thou shalt learn nought of what thou askest me.

Herm. It was by such self-will as this before
That thou did'st bring these sufferings on thyself.

Prom. I for my part, be sure, would never change
My evil state for that thy bondslave's lot.

Herm. To be the bondslave of this rock, I trow,
Is better than to be Zeus' trusty herald!

Prom. So it is meet the insulter to insult.

Herm. Thou waxest proud, 'twould seem, of this thy
doom.

(1) Comp. Agam. 162-3.
Prom. Wax proud! God grant that I may see my foes
Thus waxing proud, and thee among the rest!
Herm. Dost blame me then for thy calamities?
Prom. In one short sentence—all the Gods I hate,
Who my good turns with evil turns repay.
Herm. Thy words prove thee with no slight madness
plagued.
Prom. If to hate foes be madness, mad I am.
Herm. Not one could bear thee wert thou prosperous.
Prom. Ah me!
Herm. That word is all unknown to Zeus.
Prom. Time waxing old can many a lesson teach.
Herm. Yet thou at least hast not true wisdom learnt.
Prom. I had not else addressed a slave like thee.
Herm. Thou wilt say nought the Father asks, 'twould
seem.
Prom. Fine debt I owe him, favour to repay.
Herm. Me as a boy thou scornest then, forsooth.
Prom. And art thou not a boy, and siller far,
If that thou thinkest to learn aught from me?
There is no torture nor device by which
Zeus can impel me to disclose these things
Before these bonds that outrage me be loosed.
Let then the blazing levin-flash be hurled;
With white-winged snow-storm and with earth-born
thunders
Let Him disturb and trouble all that is;
Nought of these things shall force me to declare
Whose hand shall drive him from his sovereignty.
Herm. See if thou findest any help in this.
Prom. Long since all this I've seen, and formed my
plans.
Herm. O fool, take heart, take heart at last in time,
To form right thoughts for these thy present woes.
Prom. Like one who soothes a wave, thy speech in vain
Vexes my soul. But deem not thou that I,
Fearing the will of Zeus, shall e'er become
As womanised in mind, or shall entreat
Him whom I greatly loathe, with upturned hand,
In woman's fashion, from these bonds of mine
To set me free. Far, far am I from that.

Herm. It seems that I, saying much, shall speak in vain;
For thou in nought by prayers art pacified,
Or softened in thy heart, but like a colt
Fresh harnessed, thou dost champ thy bit, and strive,
And fight against the reins. Yet thou art stiff
In weak device; for self-will, by itself,
In one who is not wise, is less than nought.
Look to it, if thou disobey my words,
How great a storm and triple wave of ills,¹
Not to be 'scaped, shall come on thee; for first,
With thunder and the levin's blazing flash
The Father this ravine of rock shall crush,
And shall thy carcasse hide, and stern embrace
Of stony arms shall keep thee in thy place.
And having traversed space of time full long,
Thou shalt come back to light, and then his hound,
The wingèd hound of Zeus, the ravening eagle,
Shall greedily make banquet of thy flesh,
Coming all day an uninvited guest,
And glut himself upon thy liver dark.
And of that anguish look not for the end,
Before some God shall come to bear thy woes,
And will to pass to Hades' sunless realm,
And the dark cloudy depths of Tartaros.²
Wherefore take heed. No feigned boast is this,

(1) Either a mere epithet of intensity, as in our "thrice blest," or rising from the supposed fact that every third wave was larger and more impetuous than the others, like the fluctus decumanus of the Latins, or from the sequence of three great waves which some have noted as a common phenomenon in storms.

(2) Here again we have a strange shadowing forth of the mystery of Atonement, and what we have learnt to call "vicarious" satisfaction. In the later legend, Cheiron, suffering from the agony of his wounds, resigns his immortality, and submits to die in place of the ever-living death to which Prometheus was doomed.
But spoken all too truly; for the lips
Of Zeus know not to speak a lying speech,
But will perform each single word. And thou,
Search well, be wise, nor think that self-willed pride
Shall ever better prove than counsel good.

Chor. To us doth Hermes seem to utter words
Not out of season; for he bids thee quit
Thy self-willed pride and seek for counsel good.
Hearken thou to him. To the wise of soul
It is foul shame to sin persistently.

Prom. To me who knew it all
He hath this message borne;
And that a foe from foes
Should suffer is not strange.
Therefore on me be hurled
The sharp-edged wreath of fire;
And let heaven's vault be stirred
With thunder and the blasts
Of fiercest winds; and Earth
From its foundations strong,
E'en to its deepest roots,
Let storm-wind make to rock;
And let the Ocean wave,
With wild and foaming surge,
Be heaped up to the paths
Where move the stars of heaven;
And to dark Tartaros
Let Him my carcase hurl,
With mighty blasts of force:
Yet me He shall not slay.

Herm. Such words and thoughts from one
Brain-stricken one may hear.
What space divides his state
From frenzy? What repose
Hath he from maddened rage?
But ye who pitying stand
And share his bitter griefs,
Quickly from hence depart,
Lest the relentless roar  
Of thunder stun your soul.  

*Chor.* With other words attempt  
To counsel and persuade,  
And I will hear: for now  
Thou hast this word thrust in  
That we may never bear.  
How dost thou bid me train  
My soul to baseness vile?  
With him I will endure  
Whatever is decreed.  
Traitors I've learnt to hate,  
Nor is there any plague  
That more than this I loathe.  

*Herm.* Nay then, remember ye  
What now I say, nor blame  
Your fortune: never say  
That Zeus hath cast you down  
To evil not foreseen.  
Not so; ye cast yourselves:  
For now with open eyes,  
Not taken unawares,  
In Ate's endless net  
Ye shall entangled be  
By folly of your own.  

[A pause, and then flashes of lightning and peals of thunder.]

*Prom.* Yea, now in very deed,  
No more in word alone,  
The earth shakes to and fro,  
And the loud thunder's voice  
Bellows hard by, and blaze

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(1) It is noticeable that both *Eschylus* and *Sophocles* have left us tragedies which end in a thunderstorm as an element of effect. But the contrast between the *Prometheus* and the *Oedipus at Colonus* as to the impression left in the one case of serene reconciliation, and in the other of violent antagonism, is hardly less striking than the resemblance in the outward phenomena, which are common to the two.
The flashing levin-fires;
And tempests whirl the dust,
And gusts of all wild winds
On one another leap,
In wild conflicting blasts,
And sky with sea is blent:
Such is the storm from Zeus
That comes as working fear,
In terrors manifest.

O Mother venerable!
O Æther! rolling round
The common light of all,
See'st thou what wrongs I bear?