

ON REPRESENTATIONS OF CENTAURS IN GREEK VASE-PAINTING.

BEFORE coming to the discussion of the three unpublished vase-paintings which illustrate this article, and of the questions which they suggest (Plates I., II., III.), it will be proper to give some account of the Centaurs in general, as figured on the painted vases of the Greeks.¹ The passages or episodes of the Centaur myth habitually illustrated in this form of art are five in number, viz. :—

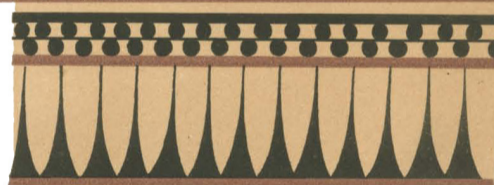
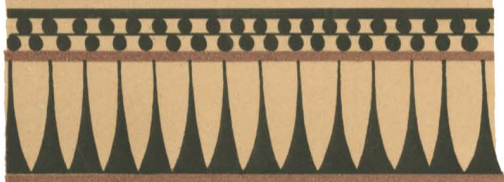
1. *The battle of the Centaurs and Lapithae at the wedding feast of Peirithoos and Hippodameia, or Deidameia, on Mount Pelion*; when the Centaurs, being present as guests, maddened themselves with wine, and one of them seized the bride; whereupon a general conflict ensued, ending in the rout of the monsters and their expulsion from Thessaly.

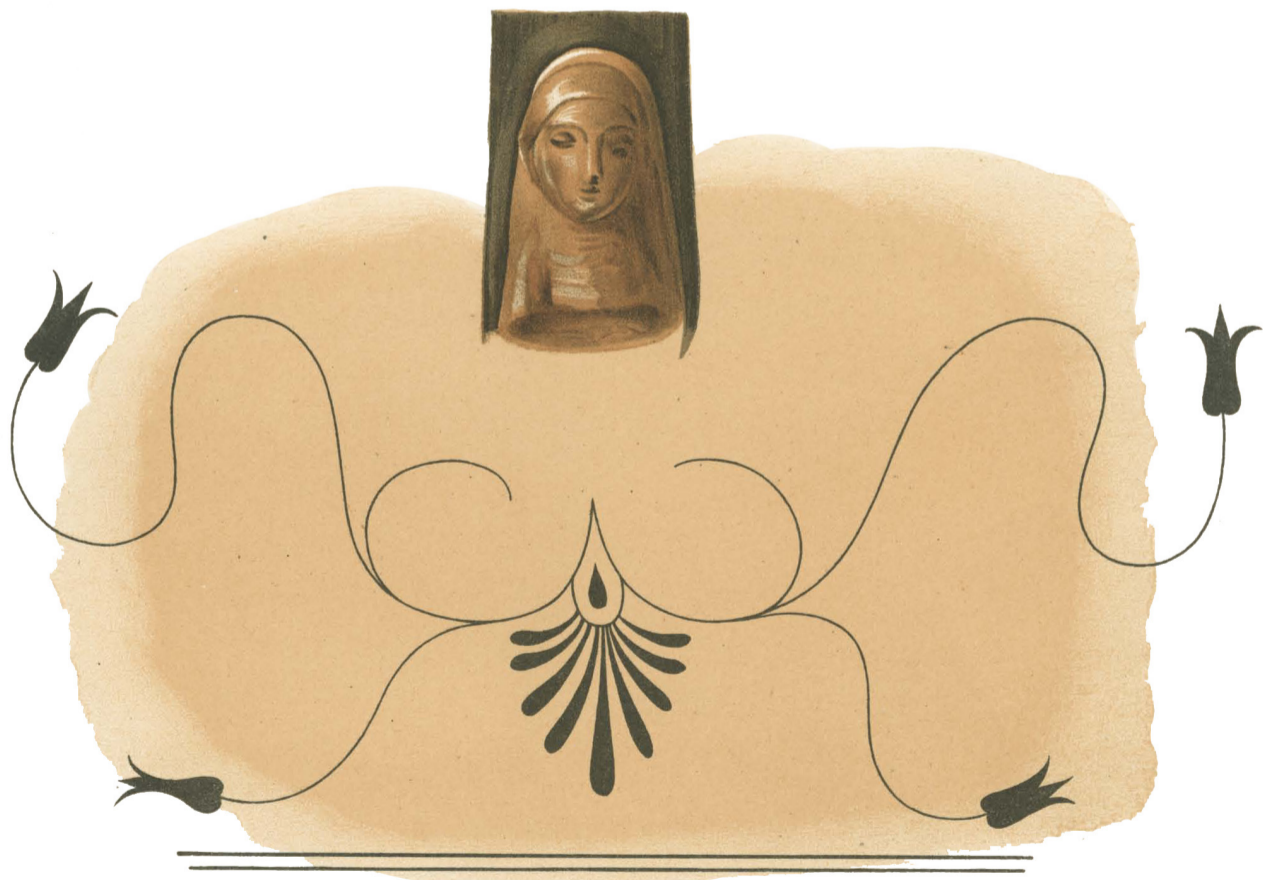
This battle is said by Aelian² to have been made the subject of a separate poem by an early epic writer, Melisandros of Miletus; but neither of Melisandros nor his work have we any other record. In our extant writings, allusion is made to the battle twice in the *Iliad*: once where Nestor extols the Lapith

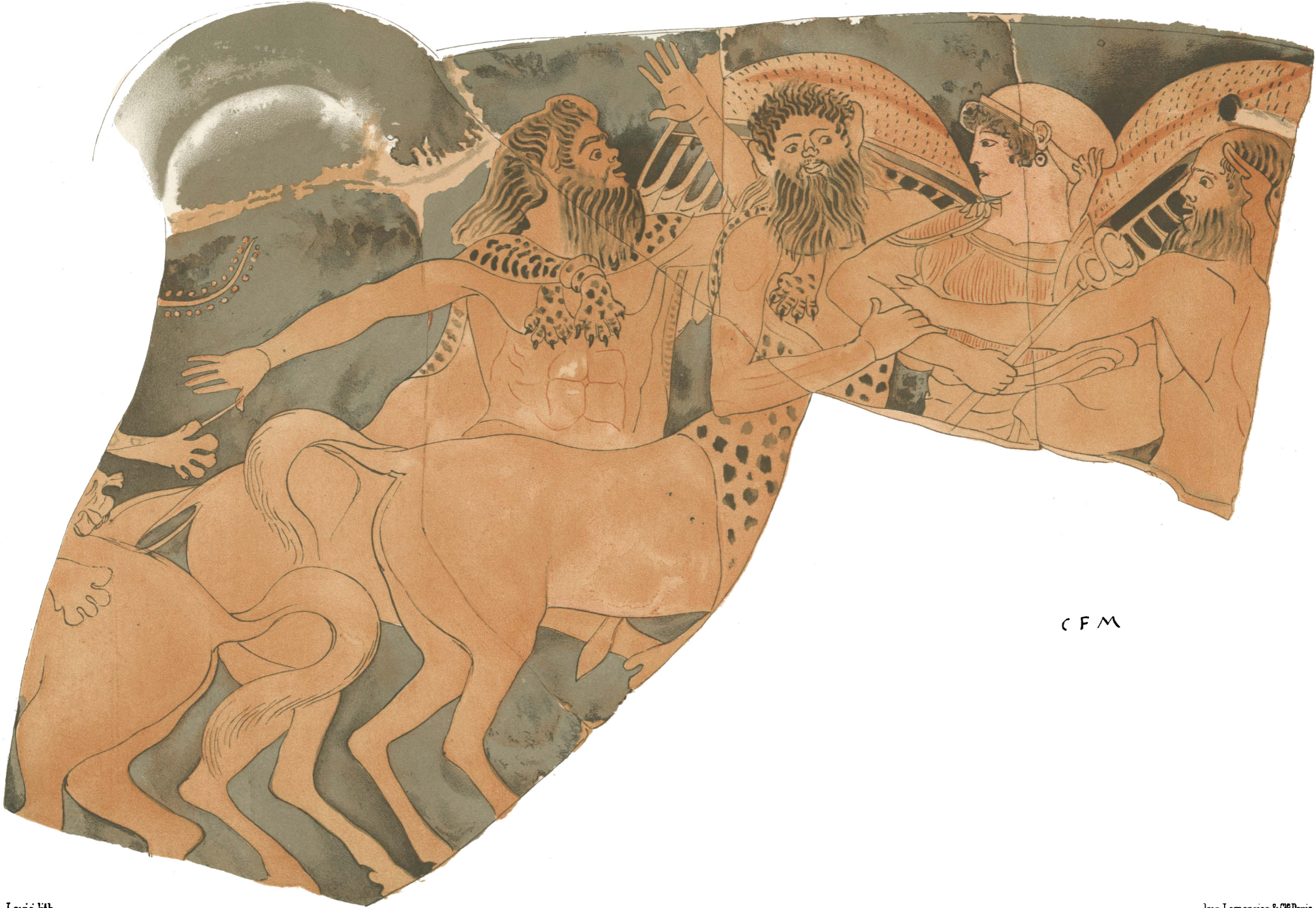
¹ A sketch of some of the characteristic points of the Centaur legend was given by the present writer in the *Cornhill Magazine*, vol. xxxviii. (1878), pp. 284 and 409. The modern literature of this curious subject is contained in: Bochart, *Hierozoicon*, pt. ii. lib. vi., ch. 10; Gaspar Baschet, *Sieur de Méziriac, Comm. sur les Épîtres d'Ovide*, vol. i. p. 149 sqq.; the Abbé Banier, *Mythol. expliquée par l'Histoire*, vol. iii. ch. 12; Fréret and Maizeray in *Mémoires Litt.*, t. viii. p. 319, and t. xii. p. 249;

Millin, *Gal. Encycl.*; Voss, *Mythologische Briefe*, Br. lxxi.; C. A. Böttiger, *Griech. Vasengemälde*, iii. pp. 75—162; Stackelberg, *Der Apollotempel zu Bassae*, p. 66 sqq.; Welcker, *Kl. Schriften*, Th. iii. p. 18 sqq.; Gerhard, *Griech. Myth.*, i. 544, and *Id., Auserl. Vasenbilder*, 121, 130; Preller, *Griech. Myth.*, ii. p. 9, sqq. 194—196; Stephani, *Compte Rendu de la Comm. imp. d'Archéol. de St. Pétersbourg*, 1865, p. 102 sqq.; 1873, p. 90 sqq.; &c.

² *Ael. Var. Hist.* xi. 2.







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warriors, whom he had known in his youth, as having been the mightiest of earthly heroes, and having quelled the mightiest foes, to wit the Centaurs;¹ and again in the catalogue of ships, where the Thessalian leader Polypoites is commemorated as the son begotten of Hippodameia by the Lapith king Peirithoos on the day when he chastised the monsters and drove them from Pelion.² It is to be noted that in neither of these two instances are the monsters called by their name *κένταυροι*; they are spoken of only as mountain-haunting brutes, shaggy brutes, *φῆρες ὄρεσκῶν, φῆρες λαχνήεντες*. In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, the name *κένταυροι* is used in the only passage where they are mentioned, which is in the warning against drunkenness addressed by Antinoos to the disguised Odysseus.³ As the story is there told, the feud is not in the first instance a general one arising at the wedding feast between the whole troop of Centaurs and their hosts, but a consequence of the individual misconduct of one of them, Eurytion, who is forthwith condignly punished, and whose punishment excites the wrath of his fellow monsters. In the Hesiodic *Shield of Herakles*, not the battle itself, but the representation of it as embossed upon the imaginary shield, is described at some length; the Centaurs being called by their name, with the addition of proper names for the individual combatants on either side.⁴ A fragment of Pindar preserved by Athenaeus relates the beginning of the brawl, telling how on the broaching of wine the Centaurs thrust away the milk that had been set before them, and seized the wine and were driven wild by it.⁵ Another fragment of the same author and probably from the same ode, preserved by the scholiast on Apollonios, refers to the incident of the overwhelming of Kaineus, the invulnerable Lapith hero, with rocks.⁶ These are all the explicit and particular references to the celebrated strife of the Centaurs and Lapithae which occur in the earlier Greek writers. For a fuller narrative we must have recourse to authorities of later date, and particularly to Ovid, who in the twelfth book of the *Metamorphoses* tells the story with amplifications which run to the length of 350

¹ *Il.* i. 262 *sqq.*

² *Il.* ii. 741 *sqq.*

³ *Od.* xxi. 295.

⁴ *Hes. Scut. Herc.* 128 *sqq.*, see below,

p. 161.

⁵ *Pind.* ap. *Athen.* xii. 51 (Fr. 143, ed. Bergk).

⁶ *Pind.* Fr. 144, ed. Bergk.

lines, and are partly, it is evident, borrowed from some Greek original.¹ Not to speak of incidental references, the battle is also narrated by Plutarch,² and by several of the mythographers and annalists, particularly Diodoros and Apollodoros.³

For the sculptors and painters of the great age of Greek art this was the central episode of the Centaur myth, and practically put its other episodes out of sight. The reason of this lay in the lead taken among schools of art in that age by the Athenian. Populations claiming descent from Lapith princes had early found their way from Thessaly into Attica, where they had settled in amity with the Ionian tribes. Hence the legend of the intimate friendship between the Lapith King, Peirithoos, and the Athenian hero, Theseus. In the mythic rout of the Centaurs on Mount Pelion, Theseus had borne a prominent part in aid of his friend; having been, according to the common account, an invited guest at the feast, but, according to the *Herakleia* of Herodoros, having only come to the help of the Lapithae when the war was already raging.⁴ The exploits of Theseus on this occasion, along with the same hero's overthrow of the Amazons before the walls of the Akropolis, came to be thought symbolical of the historical victories of Athenian prowess over invading barbarism. Among such victories it is expressly commemorated by Isokrates.⁵ As treated in art by Pheidias and his contemporaries, the victories of Theseus over the Centaurs and the Amazons are types, of which the anti-types are Marathon, Salamis, and Plataiai. Accordingly we find the battle on Mount Pelion represented over and over again in the works of this school; among monuments still extant, in the frieze of the supposed Theseion at Athens, in that of the temple of Apollo at Phigaleia, in the metopes of the Parthenon, and in the recently recovered pedimental composition of Alkamenes for the temple of Zeus at Olympia: among recorded monuments which have perished, in the paintings of Mikon for the temple of Theseus,⁶ the reliefs round the edges of the sandals of the Athenè Parthenos of Pheidias,⁷

¹ *Ov. Met.* xii. 182-535.

² *Plut. Thes.* xxx.

³ *Diod.* iv. 13; *Apollod.* ii. 5, 4.

⁴ *Plut. Thes., loc. cit.*

⁵ *Isokr.* on the Kentauromachia of

Theseus, *Helena*, 16; on the Amazonomachia, *Paneg.*, 68, 70; *Archid.* 42; *Areop.*, 75; *Panathen.*, 193.

⁶ *Paus.* iii. 18, 7.

⁷ *Paus.* i. 17, 2.

and those said to have been wrought in metal by Mys, from the designs of Parrhasios, for the adornment of the Athenè Promachos of the same master after his death.¹ But in the art with which we are here concerned, the art of vase-painting, whether in its earlier or later stages, this particular phase of our myth is far from receiving the same exclusive attention as from the monumental sculptors and painters of the age of Perikles. The potters even of the Athenian Kerameikos had it for their business, not especially to glorify the ancestral achievements of their own race, but to provide acceptable wares for sale in the markets of colonial settlements belonging to all races of the Greeks, as well as in those of foreign communities, and particularly of Etruria. Accordingly they as a rule choose for illustration those myths or portions of myths which were the most universally current in Greek popular tradition. Hence, in relation to the Centaur myth, the particular incident most flattering to Athenian patriotism receives at their hands no more than a fair proportional share of attention.

The most interesting representation of the battle on Mount Pelion is that given on the celebrated archaic vase bearing the names of the potter Ergotimos and the painter Kleitias, known from the name of its discoverer as the François vase,² and preserved in the Etruscan Museum at Florence. In this quaint and elaborate early pictorial epitome of popular mythology, of which the scenes are packed as closely as possible in bands or tiers one above another, the strife between Lapithæ and Centaurs occupies a band on the neck of the vase; a place where it not infrequently occurs again in vases of some centuries later date, when, after the intervening periods of the Rigid and the Perfect styles, the fashion of decorating the surface with numerous superimposed scenes returns in the so-called Rich style of the decadence. In the François vase, where almost every personage and every object is identified by an inscription in a primitive Attic alphabet, the Lapith and Centaur combatants are severally named; their names tallying so closely with those given by Hesiod as to make it clear that the poet and the vase-painter had in their minds an identical version of the story. Theseus is present, and the incident of the overwhelming of

¹ Paus. i. 28, 2.

² *Mon. dell' Inst.* iv. pl. 56; *Arch. Zeitung*, 1850, pl. 23.

Kaineus is prominent. In less primitive ware, where the system of decoration no longer admits the crowding of minute figures, the battle is generally represented by single episodes—the rescue of the bride, the overwhelming of Kaineus, or a single combat between a Centaur and a Greek. A fine example is a *krater* of the Free style at the British Museum, where on one side two Centaurs precipitate rocks upon Kaineus, while a Lapith strikes at a third monster who on the other side drives the sharp butt of an uprooted tree into the breast of his comrade.¹ Generally, when a Centaur is represented wielding his accustomed weapons of branch and boulder against a Greek hero who is not recognizable as Herakles, or against two together, (and such representations occur in all periods of the art), we may consider that the enemy figured is Theseus, or Theseus with Peirithoos, and that the battle in question is the battle on Mount Pelion. So, too, where a Centaur in the act of carrying off a woman is assailed by a hero again not definitely identified as Herakles. Sometimes, in vases of the Perfect style, the incidents of this battle on Mount Pelion are brought within the cycle of properly palaestic representations, and the enemies who contend against the monsters are not warriors using the weapons of warfare, or snatching up for their defence, in accordance with the ancient texts, the furniture of the feast,² but athletes, wearing the usual band about their hair, and putting forth the regular skill of the boxer or pankratiast.³ But as none of our three present illustrations have reference to this particular subject, we need not here discuss it farther.

2. *The encounter of Herakles and the Centaurs on Mount Pholoë in Arcadia*; when the good Centaur Pholos entertained Herakles at his cave, setting roast meat before his guest while he supped on raw himself, but saying that he feared to open the store jar where the Centaurs kept their wine; which however, at the instance of Herakles, he presently opened; and the other Centaurs thereupon gathering about the cave armed with rocks and boughs, Herakles slew the first who entered with brands plucked from the fire, and pursued the rest with his arrows as

¹ *Cat. of Vases in Brit. Mus.*, ii. no. 1266.

² Especially *Ov. Metam.* xii. 235 *sqq.*

³ See particularly the fine example at Florence (Heydemann, *Die Antikensammlungen Mittelitaliens*, Florence, p. 86, no. 16, and pl. iii. no. 1.)

far as Cape Malea, where Cheiron, having been driven by the Lapithæe from Mount Pelion, had at that time his refuge.

This adventure was sometimes regarded as one of the greater *ἀθλα* of Herakles, but more usually as a *πάρρηγον ὁδοῦ* happening in the course of the labour of the Erymanthian boar. From Thessaly, it seems, the Centaur myth had been transplanted to the Peloponnesos; from the mountain-range of Pelion to the mountain-range of Pholoè, between Elis and Arcadia; or else it had sprung up there also in the natural course of things, as being a myth of the mountains common from the earliest times to various races of the Greeks. The two legends are closely associated; the name of Pholos sometimes appearing also in the list of Thessalian Centaurs; and Cheiron in his turn being sometimes represented as associated with Pholos in offering hospitality to Herakles, or again, as meeting his death during the pursuit from Pholoè to Cape Malea. The ordinary account is that the Arcadian horde consisted of fugitives from the rout on Pelion; but a reverse relation between the two branches of the story seems also to have been alleged (see Schol. *Il.* i. 266).

The Arcadian Centaurs are, like the Thessalian, the children of Nephelè, a savage and unapproachable horde, untameable in lust, ungovernable at the taste or smell of wine, subsisting upon the raw flesh of animals of the chase, and accustomed to descend from their mountain solitudes to ravage the adjacent country, armed always either with masses of rock or with severed branches or uprooted trunks of pines. And as in the Thessalian legend there exists along with this savage horde the one humane and wise Centaur Cheiron, so in the Arcadian legend there exists the good Centaur Pholos; not indeed, like Cheiron, a trainer of heroes and husband and sire of beautiful nymphs, but mild and companionable, the host and friend of Herakles, by whose inadvertence (again like Cheiron) he at last meets his death. It is Herakles, the hero of all Greeks in common, but the favourite hero of the Dorians, who in this phase of the myth takes the place of Theseus and his Thessalian allies.

The earliest literary allusion to the story which has reached us is in a fragment of Stesichoros preserved by Athenæus, where the huge cup handed to Herakles by Pholos is described

as a σκύφειον δέπας ἔμμετρον ὡς τριλάγγυρον.¹ The legend of Herakles and Pholos is not mentioned in Homer, Hesiod, or Pindar. We know, however, that it had early entered into the current conception of the popular hero's history. There is good reason to suppose that it was included in the narratives of the two poets, Peisandros of Kameiros and Panyasis of Halikarnassos, who are known to have treated that history in epic form, the former in the seventh and the latter in the fifth century B.C.; as well as in the prose chronicle of Herodoros, a contemporary of Hekataios. 'Ηρακλῆς ὁ παρὰ Φόλω was the title of a comedy by Epicharmos,² and the subject had no doubt been before his time embodied in some of the satyric shows and maskings common among populations of Dorian race. It was figured in archaic works of art like the Amyklaean throne³ and the chest of Kypselos.⁴ We cannot tell whether Quintus Smyrnaeus, imitating the manner of Homer about the fifth century of our own era, is writing out of his own head, or repeating some ancient epic prototype, or using materials supplied by the later mythographers, when he describes the labours of Herakles wrought in relief on the shield of Eurypylos, and among them his adventure with the Centaurs, 'when wine and the spirit of strife stirred up those monsters to fight against him at the house of Pholos.' Some, says the poet, were shown prostrate upon the pines which they grasped in their hands; others still carrying on the fight with the like weapons.⁵ Among the Attic tragedians, this exploit is mentioned in the *Trachiniai* of Sophokles,⁶ and thrice in the *Frenzy of Herakles* of Euripides, once by Amphitryon, once by the chorus, and once by the hero himself.⁷ Readers will also be familiar with the allusion at the end of the *Thalysia* of Theokritos, in which Cheiron is directly associated with Pholos as being present and offering the wine to Herakles.⁸ Other allusions are frequent in later writers.

¹ Stesich. ap. Athen. *Deipnos.*, xi. 499 A.

² Bernhardt, *Grundr. der Griech. Lit.*, 2te Bearb., pt. ii. vol. ii. p. 463, 464.

³ Paus. iii. 18, 10.

⁴ Paus. v. 19, 2. τοξεύοντα δὲ ἄνδρα κενταύρους, τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἀπεκτονότα ἐξ

αὐτῶν, δῆλα Ἡρακλέα τε τὸν τοξεύοντα, καὶ Ἡρακλέους εἶναι τὸ ἔργον.

⁵ Quint. Smyrn. *Posthom.* vi. 273 sqq.

⁶ Soph. *Trach.* 1095 sqq.

⁷ Eur. *Herc. Fur.* 181 sqq., 364 sqq., 1271 sqq.

⁸ Theokr. *Idyll.* vii. 149.

Lucian expressly refers to the attitude in which painters were accustomed to represent Herakles and Pholos reclining together after the meal.¹ Philostratos in the *Ἡρωικός* adds a curious touch when he makes the vine-dresser enlightened by intercourse with the shade of Protesilaos quote, as a proof of the antiquity of poetry, the lines said to have been affixed by Herakles himself to the corpse of the Centaur Asbolos when he hung it up as a prey for the crows after the battle :—²

Ἄσβολος οὔτε θεῶν τρομέων ὄπιν οὐτ' ἀνθρώπων
ὄξυκόμοιο κρεμαστὸς ἀπ' εὐλιπέος [?] κατὰ πεύκης
ἄγκειμαι μέγα δαίπνον ἀμετροβίοις κοράκεσσι.

But for an explicit narration of the adventure and its sequel we must again go to the annalists and mythographers, Apollodoros,³ Diodoros,⁴ and latest of all Tzetzes.⁵ Diodoros in this connection uses a phrase concerning the Centaurs which is contrary to the usual way of speaking about them. Savage senselessness was a part of their accepted character : the saying *νοῦς οὐ παρὰ κενταύροισι* having been supposed to come down from Peisandros. But Diodoros, for the greater renown of Herakles, represents his antagonists as adding skill and sense to their other advantages : *ἔδει γὰρ διαγωνίζεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς ἀπὸ μὲν μητρὸς θεοῦς ὄντας, τὸ δὲ τάχος ἔχοντας ἵππων, ῥώμῃ δὲ δισωμάτων θήρας, ἐμπειρίαν τε καὶ σύνεσιν ἔχοντας ἀνδρῶν*. Apollodoros is particular about the names of the two assailants of the hero, Anchios and Agrios, who first came on and were first slain. Tzetzes, on the other hand, makes Asbolos the original aggressor and inciter of the rest ; hence his gibbeting ; which Tzetzes, with especial praise to Herakles for his verses, recites apparently after Apollodoros.

With the vase-painters, and especially the archaic vase-painters or those who imitated the archaic, painting in the Rigid style with black figures on a yellow or red ground, the exploits of the popular hero Herakles were at all times favourite subjects ; and not the least favourite was his exploit at the cave of Pholos. The representations hitherto known divide themselves into two classes : one (a) in which is depicted the welcome of Herakles

¹ Lucian, *Symp.* 13, 14.

² Philostr. *Heroic.* p. 328.

³ Apollod. ii. 5, 4.

⁴ Dioid. iv. 13.

⁵ Tzetz. *Chil.* v. 111-137.

by Pholos; the other (*b*) the attack by the Centaurs, their repulse and pursuit. The industry of Dr. Stephani¹ has collected thirty-one known examples of group *a*, and fourteen of group *b*. In group *a* twenty-eight are of archaic or pseudo-archaic ware, and three only of the Free style. In group *b*, eleven are archaic or pseudo-archaic, and three again free. The representations are not strictly uniform in either class. In group *a* the huge *πίθος* or stone jar usually occupies the middle place, on one side of which stands Herakles, and on the other Pholos, sometimes seen emerging from his cave, which is represented as a black mass seen in profile and projecting towards the top—the *λάϊνον ἄντρον* of Theokritos. Sometimes they shake hands over the jar, as in a vase at the British Museum,² and sometimes merely converse, as in one at Berlin.³ In these cases the *πίθος* is often represented as covered by a great lid, painted white. Sometimes this lid has been or is being removed, either by a Centaur or by Herakles himself, and in one enigmatical instance Herakles is lifting up, instead of the lid, an unexplained elongated object resembling a human mummy with a snake at its middle.⁴ Sometimes again Herakles is stooping over the opened *πίθος*, and dipping into it with a smaller vessel, *κάνθαρος*, *κύαθος*, or *οἰνοχόη*. Lastly, three vases depict the scene at the point where, according to the passage of Lucian above mentioned, it was commonly represented in the regular works of painting, *i.e.* when Herakles and Pholos are amicably reclining at the feast.⁵ Occasionally one Centaur, or more, is present besides Pholos, and occasionally the personage either of guest or of host is missing, although the scene is otherwise identified.

Passing to group 2 *b*, in which the violence and rout of the Centaurs are exhibited, we find that the actual scene of the conflict is only in one of the instances collected by Dr. Stephani indicated by the presence of the *πίθος*.⁶ The number of the monsters put to flight by Herakles varies from two, the

¹ *Compte Rendu, etc.* 1873, p. 90 *sqq.* and pl. v.

² *Cat. of Vases in the British Museum*, 661.

³ Gerhard, *Auserlesene Vasenbilder*, pl. 119, 7; see also nos. 3 and 5 of the same plate.

⁴ *Compte Rendu, etc.*, 1873, pl. iv.;

and see Stephani, *loc. cit.*

⁵ Stephani, *loc. cit.* nos. 5; 11; 17, = resp. Jahn, *Vasens. Königs Ludwigs*, 661; *Archäol. Zeitung*, 1865, pl. 201; Gerhard, *Auserl. Vasenb.* ii. p. 128, note 24 *e.*

⁶ *Mus. Greg.* ii. pl. 39.

commonest number, to eight, and in one of the richest and most spirited examples of the archaic style amounts to six.¹ In some instances Herakles appears not alone, but in company with his friend Iolaos; and in one at least, that of the Berlin vase last mentioned, there is also present his patron goddess Athenè, whom, together with Hermes, it is the custom of the early vase-painters frequently to represent as standing by this hero in the performance of his labours. Lastly, a small number of vases represent isolated encounters of Herakles with individual Centaurs after the dispersal of the horde; and there are a few more depicting similar actions in which no attribute or cognizance enables us to tell whether the victorious hero is Herakles or Theseus.

To the list of Pholos illustrations briefly reviewed above, I am now enabled, by the kindness of my friend, the distinguished French archaeologist, Mons. O. Rayet, to add another from a vase in his possession (see Plate I.), which differs from those hitherto known both by its greater antiquity and its greater comprehensiveness; inasmuch as it belongs to quite the most primitive period of Greek mythologic art, and unites features hitherto only found apart in the several classes 2 *a* and 2 *b*. We will return to its examination as soon as we have briefly gone over the remaining Centaur subjects known to the vase-painter.

3. *The outrage attempted by Nessos on Deianeira*; when Herakles, having in conflict with Acheloos won the hand of Deianeira, daughter of Oeneus king of Kalydon, comes with her to a swollen ford of the Euenos where the Centaur Nessos acts as ferryman; to whom Herakles confides his wife, but who attempts violence to her on the passage; whereupon the hero slays him with an arrow, but not before he has had time to give Deianeira a philtre of the issue of his wounds, which is destined afterwards to prove fatal to her lord.

Classing this well-known subject as 3 *a*, we may annex to it as 3 *b* a kindred representation from which it is sometimes nearly indistinguishable; viz., the chastisement by Herakles of a similar outrage attempted near Olenos in the Peloponnesos by another Centaur, variously named Eurytion, Monychos, or Dexamenos, upon another lady variously named Deianeira,

¹ Gerhard, *Auserl. Vasenb.* pl. 119, 1.

Mnesimachè, Hippolytè the affianced bride of Azan, or Alkyonè the daughter of Eurystheus. In either case the offending monster is spoken of as one escaped from the slaughter of his comrades either in the Thessalian conflict on Mount Pelion or in the Arcadian conflict on Mount Pholoè. The earliest mention of the Nessos story which has reached us is taken from a lost poem of Archilochos, where the poet was blamed for making Deianeira address a lengthened plaint to Herakles at the moment of the outrage.¹ The story is told, as is well known, at full length by Deianeira herself in the *Trachiniai* of Sophokles,² and again by Ovid³ and Seneca,⁴ as well as, in terms almost identical with one another, by the annalists Diodoros⁵ and Apollodoros;⁶ besides allusions too numerous to catalogue. Among the gallery of pictures described or imagined by the younger Philostratos, is one representing this subject with features which we find actually existing in a mural painting of Pompeii.⁷ In vase-paintings the subject is common enough. One good archaic example at the British Museum⁸ is identified by inscriptions giving the names of the personages, and others are not uncommon. Sometimes additional personages, as the father of the outraged lady, and Hermes or Athenè, or both, stand by. When the lady is seated for the passage on the back of the Centaur, and when Herakles employs against him the bow and arrows required by the story, there can be no doubt that the incident represented is that at the ford of the Euenos. When, on the other hand, as in a fine example at the British Museum, Herakles uses not his bow, but his club; especially if at the same time the Centaur, instead of conveying the lady on his back, has seized and is carrying her violently off; and if a smaller or greater number of unexplained additional personages appear; then we may infer that the subject of the illustration is one of those independent stories to which allusion has already been made.⁹

These stories are confused enough, especially from the way in which the name Dexamenos occurs in them. This

¹ Bergk. *Poet. lyr.*, Archil. Fr. 147.

² Soph. *Trach.* 555-557.

³ *Ov. Met.* ix. 98, *sqq.*; *Heroid.* ix. 141.

⁴ Seneca, *Herc. Oct.* 500, *sqq.*

⁵ Diod. iv. 36.

⁶ Apollod. ii. 7, 6.

⁷ *Mus. Borbon.* vi. 36.

⁸ Hancarville, *Ant. Etr.* iv. pl. 31
Cat. of Vases in the British Museum
vol. i. 932.

⁹ Apollod. ii. 5, 5; Diod. iv. 33
Pedias. de Herc. labor. 5; Paus. vii.
18, 1; *Hyg. fab.* 31, 33.

word would naturally signify the 'host' or 'entertainer,' *i.e.* of Herakles, and sometimes seems to be merely another name for Oeneus, the Aetolian king and father of Deianeira. In Pausanias, Diodoros, and Apollodoros, the name is given to a king of Olenos in Achaia; according to Diodoros it is the daughter of this king, Hippolytè, whom the hero saves from insult by the Centaur Eurytion at her marriage with Azan, or Axas; according to Apollodoros, his daughter Mnesimachè whom the hero saves at her father's request from a forced marriage with the same Eurytion. In all these stories we may recognise the attempts of the populations of the border-land of Elis and Achaia to appropriate to their own country fragments both of the original Thessalian legend of Eurytion and the bride of Peirithoos, and of the original Aetolian legend of Nessos and Deianeira. That such attempts were current as early as the sixth century we can tell from the account attributed to Bacchylides by the scholiast on Od. xxii. 295;¹ and they are not without their reflection in the art of the vase-painters. When, indeed, we find the name Dexamenos transferred in one instance by a vase-painter and in another by a scholiast to the offending Centaur himself, we can only suppose a confusion, originating probably in the carelessness of artists and reacting upon that of commentators.²

In connection with two polychrome vases, one of them of extraordinary richness, found in the Crimea and representing a damsel in the grasp of a Centaur, an avenging Herakles, various bystanders, and two Erôtes in the air above, Dr. Stephani has again collected and discussed, perhaps with some over-refinement of ingenuity and learning, all the evidence available for the illustration of this subject.³ To his discussion of the matter, as it is not touched in any of our present illustrations, we must refer the reader; passing on to

4. *The winning and wedding of Thetis by Peleus*; when Cheiron taught that hero how to overcome the wiles by which the goddess sought to elude him, and afterwards bade them to their wedding feast at his home in the Pelethronian cave.

Among the early Greek epics the *Kypria* of Stasinos was

¹ Bergk, *Poet. lyr.* Bacchyl. Fr. 60.

² Schol. ad. Callim. *Hymn. in Del.*
102; and the inscription on the Naples

vase, *Mus. Borb.* vol. v. pl. 5.

³ *Compte Rendu, etc.*, 1865. p. 102, *sqq.*, and pl. iv.

that which recounted the infancy and early days of Achilles. It is a disputed point whether the wooing and winning of his mother Thetis by his father Peleus was in that body of poetry narrated in full, or only by way of allusion.¹ A nuptial song of Peleus and Thetis is enumerated among the lost works of Hesiod, and may perhaps have formed part of the *Κατάλογος γυναικῶν* or the *Ἡοίαι*;² from it Catullus is by some writers supposed to have taken the materials for his famous *Epythalamium*. Pindar, who in his task of enumerating the family glories of his aristocratic contemporaries has occasion over and over again to tell of the training of their ancestral heroes by Cheiron, alludes several times to the capture by Peleus of his ocean bride according to the instructions of that teacher.³ In the *Iliad* there are allusions of Thetis herself, of Achilles, and of Hera, to her marriage with Peleus,⁴ as well as others to the present given by the gods at the wedding-feast,⁵ and two, in identical words, to the present of the mighty spear given by Cheiron himself, the *ἔγχος*

βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν· τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν
 πάλλειν, ἀλλὰ μιν οἶος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεύς,
 Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν πατρὶ φίλω πόρε Χείρων
 Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς φόνον ἔμμεναι ἠρώεσσι.⁶

Euripides in the *Iphigenia in Aulis* tells explicitly of the marriage and its circumstances;⁷ the meeting of the hero with the goddess, and her magic transformations, are told by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*;⁸ and the whole story, including the point about the assistance of Cheiron, by Apollodoros.⁹

The subject, for the purposes of pictorial representation, divides itself into 4 *a*, the seizure of Thetis by Peleus, and 4 *b*, the marriage. The former was, we know, represented on the chest of Kypselos, and it is a peculiarly favourite subject with the

¹ See Bergk in *Zeitschr. für Alterthumswissenschaft*, 1850, p. 406, *sqq.*, Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, ii. pp. 92, 132; and on the other side Overbeck, *Bildwerke zum theb. u. troisch. Heldenkreis*, pp. 171, 172.

² See Overbeck, *op. cit.* p. 172, note 3, and Markscheffel, *De Catalogo et Eois*.

³ Pind. *Nem.* iii. 56, 95, iv. 60, 68,

Isthm. viii. 59-143.

⁴ *Il.* xviii. 84, 432, xxiv. 59.

⁵ *Il.* xvi. 867, xvii. 195, 443.

⁶ *Il.* xvi. 140, *sqq.* xix. 387, *sqq.*

⁷ Eur. *Iph. in Aul.* 700-707, 1036-1080.

⁸ Ov. *Met.* xi. 220-265.

⁹ Apollod. iii. 13, 5.

vase-painters. Sometimes it is represented with and sometimes without the incidents of transformation; these, when they occur, being symbolically suggested by the addition of a snake, lion, or chimaera, severally or all together, contiguous to some part of the person of Thetis. Both modes of treatment occur in vases alike of the early or black-figured and of the later or red-figured style. Prof. Overbeck in 1857 counted eighteen of the former and twenty of the latter,¹ without, however, claiming completeness for his list; to which would now have to be added at least one signal example of the treatment without transformations, in the shape of the famous Kameiros vase at the British Museum, one of the most beautiful extant examples of the later polychrome style. In these representations the presence of the Centaur Cheiron, indicating by means of his physical *παράστασις* the fact of his counsel and countenance in the undertaking, is frequent, but by no means constant, even when a considerable number of nymphs and other accessory personages, as Eros, Peitho, and the like, is introduced. Well-known examples of the black-figured style are the scene on an amphora from Vulci, now at Munich,² and of the red-figured style that on the lid of a *lekanè* at Naples.³

4 *b*, the marriage of the hero and goddess at the home of Cheiron, is a subject of not nearly so frequent occurrence as the last. In it the presence of Cheiron is naturally indispensable. By far the most important example is that on the François-vase already so often mentioned. Here the veiled bride is seen sitting within a temple or sanctuary, before which stands Peleus receiving the procession of divinities who has come to do honour to his nuptials, and foremost among them Cheiron; who walks step by step with Iris, followed by his wife Chariklo along with Hestia and Demeter, after whom comes Dionysos, then the Hours, and then the long file of Muses and of Gods. Another and later vase shows the same event in a much simpler and more compendious form: Cheiron half emerging from his cave, and holding out an arm to welcome Peleus, who, bearing two spears in his left hand, with his right leads along the downcast Thetis.

¹ Overbeck, *Bildwerke*, etc., p. 172-197.

² Gerh. *Auserl. Vasenb.* pl. 227, Overbeck, *Heroisch. Bildw.*, pl. vii. no. 5.

³ *Mon. dell' Inst.* i. pl. 4; Overbeck, *op. cit.* pl. viii. no. 4.

⁴ Inghirami, *Mus. Chiusino*, i. pl. 46, 47; Overbeck, *op. cit.* pl. viii. no. 6.

Our own Cheiron illustration deals not with this but with a later stage of his relations to Peleus, viz.:—

5. *The bringing of Achilles to the cave of Cheiron*; when Peleus at the desire of Thetis, who is constrained by destiny to leave him, takes their child Achilles to receive from the wise Centaur the training of a hero.

The nurture of Achilles by Cheiron in the Pelethronian cave is a constant feature in the traditions concerning that hero. The account of it was probably incorporated in the same body of epic poetry, the *Kypria*, to which we have referred; though we cannot tell from what precise sources the Roman poet Statius drew the materials for the detailed recital which fills the opening part of his unfinished *Achilleïs*. In the *Iliad* allusion is made to the drugs of which Achilles had learned the use from this master, and which he had given to Patroklos, whom the wounded Eurypylos asks to apply them:—

ἐπὶ δ' ἤπια φάρμακα πάσσε,
ἔσθλα, τά σε προτὶ φασιν Ἀχιλλῆος δεδιδάχθαι,
ὄν Χείρων ἐδίδαξε δικαιοτάτος Κενταύρων.¹

Pindar, on his part, after celebrating the exercise in javelin-play, boar-hunting, and lion-hunting in which Cheiron practises the youth of Achilles, goes on to speak of his tutorship of the child in the same breath as of his good offices at the marriage of his mother:—²

νύμφευσε δ' αὐτὶς ἀγλαόκαρπον
Νηρέος θύγατρα, γόνον τέ οἱ φέρτατον
ἀτίταλλεν ἐν ἀρμένοισι πάντα θυμὸν αὖξων.

For the rest, the description in Statius and the brief account in Apollodoros³ are our principal extant sources. It is a curious fact that among the whole catalogue of other heroes recorded as having shared the education of Cheiron, as Jason, Asklepios, Telamon, and a dozen more,⁴ Achilles is the only one recognized in extant works of painting. There is among the *εἰκόνες* of the elder Philostratus an elaborate description of an Ἀχιλλέως τροφαί;⁵ and the subject, especially one particular presentment

¹ *Il.* xi. 832.

² Pind. *Nem.* iii. 75-100

³ Apollod. iii. 13, 6.

⁴ See, e.g., Pindar, *loc. cit.*, and especially Xenophon, *Cyneget.* 1.

⁵ Philostr. *Imag.* ii. 2.

of it, with Cheiron seated on his hind legs like a dog, and teaching Achilles the use of the lyre, is well known from a Pompeian wall-painting¹ and from gems. By the vase-painters, on the other hand, the life or exercises of Achilles with Cheiron are never represented. Nor do they show any hint of such a subject as that recorded by Pausanias to have been figured on the chest of Kypselos: the visit, namely, paid by Cheiron from his home among the immortals to the Greek camp at Troy in order to console Achilles after he had lost Patroklos. They take only this single scene of the hero's introduction to the master as a child by his father Peleus, accompanied sometimes by his mother Thetis. Prof. Overbeck in 1857 was able to count six, and fully to describe three, vases bearing this representation.² In one Peleus strides hastily forward, carrying the child on his arm, towards the Centaur, who advances to meet him; behind Peleus stands Thetis, behind Cheiron the nymphs, his mother, daughter, and wife. In another Achilles is older, and stands on the ground lifting his left hand either in salutation to his new master or in surprise at his monstrous shape, and in his right holding what seems to be a hoop. In a third Achilles holds out both arms towards Cheiron, while on one side Thetis is standing beside the chariot of Peleus. Another vase representing the same subject was bought two years ago for the Louvre (see Fig. 4). Another, formerly in the Blacas collection, is in the British Museum, and is reproduced in our Plate II.

Besides these five regular classes of Centaur representations, illustrating stock incidents of the myth such as first the epic and afterwards the lyric poets had made universally familiar, we may distinguish two minor and supplementary groups, viz.:

6. *Centaur's in the character of hunters.* This is an aspect in which the monsters are commemorated over and over again by literature. Cheiron, as we have seen, is expressly called by Pindar *φῶρ ἀγρότερος*, and among the exercises in which he trains the young Achilles is the hunting of boars and lions.³ In like manner Philostratos, in summing up the virtues of Cheiron—*θῆρας τε γὰρ ποικίλης ἤπτετο κ.τ.λ.*⁴ Xenophon had put

¹ Zahn, *Die merkwürdigsten Ornamente*, &c., iii. pl. 32.

See also Collignon.

³ Pind. *Nem.* iii. 46.

² Overbeck, *op. cit.* pp. 281-284.

⁴ Philostr. *Heroin*, p. 308.

the name of Cheiron, and the list of his pupils, at the head of his own treatise on the chase. Statius, following probably some Greek authority, contrasts the peaceable avocations of the chase, as followed by Cheiron, with the wars and brawlings of his fellow-monsters:—

——at intra

Centauri stabula alta patent, non aequa nefandis
fratribus; hic hominum nullos experta cruores
spicula, nec truncae bellis genialibus orni,
aut consanguineos fracti crateres in hostes,
sed pharetrae insontes et inania terga ferarum.¹

But of the Centaurs of Arcadia no less, we are told by Oppian how they were wont to catch their supper along the slopes of windy Pholoë:—

ἀμφὶ πόδας Φολόης ἀνεμάδεος ἄγρια φύλα
θηρομυγῆ, μερόπων μὲν ἐπ' ἰξύας, ἰξυόθεν δὲ
ἵππων ἡμιβρότων, ἐπιδόρπιον εὔρετο θήρην.²

A questionable Centaur on some Kameiros gold ornaments holds up an animal of the chase with one hand, and may thus give the earliest instance of this aspect of the monsters in art.³ In all forms of art during the Greco-Roman period, the hunting Centaur is a very favourite subject. His game, in works of this period, is usually the lion and panther, as in the famous Marefoschi mosaic now at Berlin, and in several mural paintings, sarcophagus reliefs, silver utensils, &c. In the picture of Zeuxis described by Lucian, the parent Centaur holds up a lion cub to please his young; Dr. Stephani supposes that this was a novelty, and that the innovation designated by Lucian, when he speaks of Zeuxis having in his picture abandoned τὰ δημώδη καὶ κοινά, was this of making Centaurs lion-hunters. That, however, can hardly be the case, considering the exploits of the pupil of Cheiron against lions as told by Pindar; and considering that the Centaurs early appear with the skins of lions or panthers tied about their throats for a garment; e.g. in our gem, fig. 1 (see p. 129), and in the Phigaleian frieze; compare Pl. III. But it is none the less certain that the vase-painters make the Centaurs almost exclusively hunters, not of large, but of small game.³

¹ Stat., *Achill.*, i. 110 sqq.

² Opp., *Cyueget.* ii. 5.

³ See below, p. 130, and Salzmann, *La Necrop. de Kameiros.*

In the representations of classes 3, 4, and 5, as we have seen, Pholos and Cheiron are accustomed to carry hares, foxes, or birds slung from their shoulders by a pine-branch. But, besides this, there are instances enough to form a distinct though not a numerous group, in which vase-painters have shown Centaurs actually engaged in the chase.¹ These subjects hardly ever form more than a subordinate decoration of the vases where they occur. Sometimes a pair of Centaurs drag each a branch in one hand and a roe by the neck in the other; sometimes one stands alone with roe, fox, hare, or bird slung from his shouldered bough.² On a good example at the British Museum, two, galloping from opposite sides, hurl each a stone at a bird as big as themselves, flying midway between them.³

7. *Centaurs in association with Bacchus and his train.* This is another subject treated very commonly indeed by artists of all kinds in the Greco-Roman period, but very sparingly and ambiguously by the Greek vase-painters. What I have to say about this class of representations will come most conveniently under the discussion of Plate III. And now let us take our three plates in order and detail.

Plate I.—The encounter of Herakles and the Centaurs on Mount Pholoë; see above, Class 2. Small two-handled drinking-cup of the form called by Panofka *kotylos* and by Gerhard *kotylè*,⁴ but rather *skypchos*, the *kotylos* being distinctly characterised by Athenaeus as one-handed. H., ctm. 10, diam., ctm. 14, or across handles, 20.

This cup, found at Corinth and now in the possession of M. Rayet, is technically of the same fabric, though somewhat unusually thin, as several others found in the same neighbourhood, and forming a separate group in the class known generically as Greco-Phoenician.⁵ The wares of this class are distinguished by bands of ornament and figures completely encircling them, such ornaments and figures having their outlines and markings sharply incised, and being painted in a

¹ For all that relates to the hunting habits of Centaurs, consult again Stephani, *Compte Rendu*, &c. 1862, p. 71, and esp. 1867, p. 77, 89, 113.

² e.g. Jahn, *Vasens. Königs Ludwigs*, 155 B, = Micali, *Storia*, 92, 7; *ibid.* 583 B.

³ *Cat. of Vases in B. M.* i. no. 849.

⁴ Jahn, *Vasens. Königs Ludwigs*, no. 18, see *ibid.*, Einleitung, p. cxvii., xcix.

⁵ On the characteristics of this group, see Brunn, *Probleme in der Geschichte der Vasenmalerei*, § 12.

black, or a brown inclining to black, variegated with a red inclining to violet, and more sparingly with white, upon the pale yellow ground of the natural clay. Along with purely Asiatic elements of conventionalised animal and monster upon a flowered background, they early begin to exhibit figures from Greek mythology, often identified by inscriptions in a primitive Doric alphabet. In this part of his work the artist does not usually follow the conventional rigidity of Asiatic design, but tries, in a rude native way, to render for himself the appearances of life and movement.

The cup figured in Plate I. is one of those in which the Oriental elements have been almost entirely replaced by primitive Greek. On the foot of the cup is painted a rude profile (reproduced at the bottom of our plate) of Athenè, a goddess held in especial honour at Corinth, and figured constantly on the coins of the city. Its outer surface is covered, excepting the bands of ornament at top and bottom, with a frieze of figures, from the ground of which the Asiatic rosettes and petals have been banished, and which represents, with a rough vigour and sense of life totally foreign to Asiatic art, the story of the Arcadian Centaurs.¹

The representation unites, as I have said, the subjects 2 *a* (the hospitality of Pholos) and 2 *b* (the battle), which are generally kept apart. Beginning under one handle (at the right of the two bands into which the frieze is divided in our illustration), comes the black projecting object which stands for the cave of Pholos, and from which are suspended what seem to be the bow and quiver of Herakles, besides a third object hard to recognise. Below stands the great πίθος, striped in red and white, and in advance of it an enigmatic object which may be a seat or table, though it rather resembles an altar with firewood. This is a very singular feature in the representation. If Cheiron were concerned, we might account for the altar by remembering that he was said in the *Titanomachia* to have instituted sacrifices as well as of other salutary practices and ordinances,

ἔρκους τ' ἠδ' ἰλαρὰς θυσίας καὶ σχήματ' Ὀλύμπου.

¹ Of the vases yet known, that which offers the closest analogy to our present example is a small *skyphos* of similar form and fabric, with a similar distribution of ornament, and of the same

exceptional thinness, found at Argos, and representing, but with less spirit and movement, the story of Herakles and the Hydra. Pub. by Conze, *Arch. Zeitung*, 1859, pl. 125, 3, and p. 34.

But no such degree of civilization is attributed to Pholos, who is expressly described as an eater of raw meat; and we must probably attribute the altar, if altar it is, to the piety rather of Herakles than of his entertainer. Behind this object, and with his fore-limbs below the knee hidden by it, stands Pholos, with the human part of his body draped: in his left hand he holds a drinking-cup; his right is raised in deprecation at the rude interruption to his hospitality. In advance of him Herakles (figured in the manner of early art, without his cognizances of club and lion's hide) strides out against the foe. He is not using his bow, but hurling boughs or brands which we may suppose taken from the altar beside him; one of these is in either hand; a third flies through the air. This is at variance with the representation on the chest of Kypselos; there, according to Pausanias, Herakles was using his bow, as we see him in the early bronze relief figured below (fig. 1, p. 129) and on other vases; but it tallies with the account as preserved by Apollodoros; as does the overthrow, already achieved, of the foremost monster; and the whole scene might be fairly described in the words of Quintus Smyrnaeus:—

*καὶ ῥ' οὐ μὲν πύκῃσι περὶ δμηθέντες ἔκειντο
τὰς ἔχον ἐν χείρεσσι, μάχης ἄκος, οὐ δ' ἔτι μακρῆς
δηριόωντ' ἐλάτῃσι μεμαότες, οὐδ' ἀπέλληγον
ὑσμίνης.*

The ten unscathed monsters (a larger number than is shown on any other vase) flee precipitately, brandishing their pine boughs. Four face round with some show of resistance; each runs with long steps of his human forelegs, the right leg advanced and the left thrown back, and drags after him his equine termination; in which, on the other hand, the expression of action is not attempted, but the two legs cling helplessly together. The whole system of legs, equine and human, form something like a regular interlacing pattern on the vase. Lastly, coming round to the point at which we started, and with their backs to the cave, stand the quaint little patron figures of Athenè and Hermes, the latter being identified by the herald's wand, and extending his arms in an attitude probably meant to signify sympathetic interest in the proceedings.

Besides affording the most comprehensive illustration of the

Pholos story yet known, and I think the most spirited example of primitive Greek figure-drawing which occurs on a vase of this age and fabric, the design before us is of no small interest in relation to what may be called the natural history of the Centaurs. The question has often been asked, Under what form and lineaments were these monsters originally imagined as existing? It is well known that in Greek art the familiar form of the complete horse, only with the trunk and head of a man substituted for its own neck and head, is a comparatively late invention, and that the Centaur of archaic art was, as we see him in this example, a complete man with the barrel and hinder parts of a horse clumsily attached to the middle of his back. This fact is expressly mentioned by Pausanias in connection with the figure of Cheiron on the chest of Kypselos,¹ and is confirmed by extant monuments. At the present day it is scarcely necessary to argue against one inference which has been drawn from the fact; the inference, namely, that the Centaurs were not originally imagined as monsters combined of man and horse at all, but simply as a kind of wild man of the woods; and that the idea of the man-horse was a later sophistication due to the ingenuity of painters and sculptors. The author of this view was Voss, who propounded it in his series of *Mythologische Briefe*, a work of much learning and much influence, directed against the theories of Heyne, who believed that all the gods of Greece had been originally horned, tailed, or otherwise monstrous.² All the arguments of Voss can in this instance be turned against himself. He urges that Homer says nothing of the horse-shape, but simply uses the word $\phi\acute{\eta}\rho = \theta\acute{\eta}\rho$, which is also used of Satyrs, and may therefore mean a wild man, and not necessarily a brute or half brute. Again, coupling the incomplete Centaur of archaic art with the genealogy of the creatures given in Pindar,³ he infers that a man-centaur was the original, and a horse- or

¹ Paus. iii. 59, 2.

² Voss, J. H., *Mythologische Briefe*, vol. ii. Br. 71.

³ Pind. *Pyth.* ii. 41, *sqq.* of Ixion and the cloud put in place of herself by Hêrê:—

ἄνευ οἱ Χαρίτων τέκεν γόνον ὑπερφίαλον
μόνα καὶ μόνον, οὐτ' ἐν ἄν-

δράσι γερασφόρον οὐτ' ἐν θεῶν νόμοις·
τὸν δυνάμαξε τράφοισα Κένταυρον, ὅτ

ἴπποισι Μαγνητίδεσσι ἐμίγνυτ' ἐν Πα-
λίου

σφυροῖς, ἐκ δ' ἐγένοντο στρατὸς
θαυμαστὸς, ἀμφοτέροις
ὁμοῖοι τοκεῦσι, τὰ ματρὸθεν
μὲν κάτω, τὰ δ' ὕπερθε πατρὸς.

The ordinary genealogy makes them spring direct from the embrace of Ixion and Nephelê, without the intervening savage sire, the eponymous Κένταυρος.

hippo-centaur only a derivative, creation of Greek mythology. Following up this idea, Böttiger made an elaborate attempt to prove that hippo-centaurs were essentially connected with the worship of Dionysos, and belonged to the Asiatic monstrosities made popular by the legend of that god.¹ A conclusive proof, however, that the notion of the Centaur is of Greek and not of Asiatic origin, is the fact that in no single instance (I think) does such a creature appear among the sphinxes and other monsters made up of man and beast which are part of the regular system of conventional ornaments on ware of the class now in question. But on this point we shall have more to say in connection with Plate III. Meantime it is enough to point out that *φῆρ* is probably used of Satyrs only because of their brutal appendages of goat's or horse's ears, tail, or hoofs: while the same word is used of Centaurs not only by Homer, but also by Pindar, who elsewhere expressly speaks of them as being men above and horses below, and in the *Odyssey* the line—

ἔξ οὖ Κενταύροισι καὶ ἀνδράσι νεῖκος ἐτύχθη²—

implies a distinct contrast between the nature of these monsters and of men. In the Homeric hymn to Hermes the four-footed nature of the Centaur is implied no less distinctly, when Apollo says of the reversed tracks of his herds,

βήματα δ' οὐτ' ἀνδρὸς τάδε γίγνεται οὔτε γυναικὸς,
οὔτε λύκων πολιῶν οὐτ' ἄρκτων οὔτε λέοντων,
οὔτε τι κένταυρον λασιαύχενα ἔλπομαι εἶναι,
ᾧστις τοῖα πέλωρα βιβᾶ ποσὶ καρπαλίμοισι.³

On the other hand, the passages brought forward in support of the views of Voss and Böttiger are either corrupt or bear another meaning.⁴ The peculiar genealogy of Pindar, then, instead of pointing to any change or development in the current idea of the creature, is doubtless simply an attempt to

¹ Böttiger, *Vasengemälde*, iii. 94, sqq.

² *Od.* xxi. 304.

³ *Hom. Merc.* 221-5.

⁴ The crucial passage was that in Kallistratos, *Stat.* 12, where he describes the statue of a Centaur as being οὐκ ἀνδρὶ, κατὰ τὴν Ὀμηρεῖον εἰκόνα, ἀλλὰ θηρίῳ παραπλήσιον ἕληεντι. This would hardly in any case bear the meaning forced upon it, that the

Centaur according to Homer had the figure of a man: and a convincing emendation of Niebuhr's gave the true meaning of the passage. For θηρίῳ read βίῳ, and we have a direct quotation of the Homeric simile, τῆς Ὀμηρεῖον εἰκόνας, used in describing the Cyclops, *Od.* ix., 191—

οὐδέ ἐφίκει

ἀνδρὸς γε σιτοφάγῳ, ἀλλὰ βίῳ ἕληεντι.

account for its shape according to the idea already current. In like manner, the uncouth archaic mode of representing the creature is simply a consequence of the weakness of early art, which has not yet found the way to embody the idea better.

The more perfect mode is soon discovered. Monuments which it is impossible to date later than the sixth century B.C., notably the aforesaid François vase, and a fine series of reliefs from Assos at the Louvre,¹ already show the monsters galloping and fighting with the fore as well as the hinder legs of horses. Our own illustration (Plate I.) belongs to a more primitive stage, before the perfect Centaur had been invented. It would be rash to attempt to date it; according to the usual view concerning the antiquity of this class of ware, we might put it back as far as the eighth century B.C.; it can hardly be supposed later than the seventh. It has more of life and spirit, and less of Oriental stiffness, than the bronze relief lately discovered at Olympia,² which contains, along with a band of decorative birds, the same subject of Herakles and the Centaur (Fig. 1.), and also



FIG. 1.

that of the so-called Asiatic Artemis, a female figure with re-curved wings holding up a lion or a leopard in either hand; and which offers no doubt a near approximation to the style of such monuments as the chest of Kypselos and the Amyklaean throne.³

¹ *Mon. dell' Inst.* iv. pl. 34. L. Ross, *Archäol. Aufsätze*, p. 105, note 1, by mistake says the contrary.

² See Curtius, *Das archaische Bronze-relief aus Olympia*, 1880.

³ For this so-called Asiatic Artemis

on the chest of Kypselos, see Paus. v. 19, 1: "Ἄρτεμις δὲ οὐκ οἶδα ἐφ' ὅτῳ λόγῳ πτέρυγας ἔχουσα ἔστιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων, καὶ τῇ μὲν δεξιᾷ κατέχει πάρδαλιν, τῇ δὲ ἑτέρῃ τῶν χειρῶν λέοντα.

On the several plaques of two allied sets of very ancient embossed gold ornaments from Kameiros, we find as in the monuments last named, the so-called Persian Artemis brought into near relation with a primitive Centaur (see above, p. 123); if indeed the monster be in this case a Centaur at all; he has more resemblance to an Assyrian man-bull, being beardless, with stiff masses of hair on either side of his face, and hind legs and tail more like those of a bull than those of a horse.

To complete the reader's idea of the original Greek Centaur, I subjoin cuts of two characteristic early gems (Figs. 2, 3)



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

in the British Museum; of which one represents the monster in the act of hurling rocks, another in that of carrying off a woman.¹ The latter has this peculiarity, that the human forelegs terminate in feet which are not human, but those of horses—a kind of compromise or transition between the earliest and the improved Centaur, of which I only know one other example; viz., in a black-figured vase belonging to Class I., and representing a symmetrically arranged fight between two Centaurs and two Lapithae, at the Louvre. Other examples of the monster in his primitive shape, though not all of primitive date, are well known; and occur both in bronzes and in vases, especially in those found in the tombs of certain localities in Etruria.²

One feature in which our Corinth vase stands alone is in the indication of the shagginess of the monsters by straight incised

¹ Representations exactly analogous to this last, except that the monsters have human forelegs, occur in the rude coinage of Orreskioi, Zaielioi, and... naioi, towns in the Pangæan mountains of Eastern Macedonia.

² See Ross, *Archäol. Aufsätze*, pl. vi. pp. 104-105; Müller-Wieseler,

Denkmäler, Nos. 590, 591, 592; the vase figured No. 591 is now in the British Museum. This and a few similar would seem to be of local Etruscan manufacture; they may therefore perhaps be taken as representing the peculiar Etruscan Centaur, Marês, recorded by Aelian.

markings on their human foreparts, precisely analogous to those employed in mediæval art for the wild man, or man of the woods. These, together with their immense protruding beards, bring directly to the mind the expression of Homer, *φῆρας λαχνήεντας*. Or ought we rather to think of the *χορταίος χιτών*, or tufted dress of grass, which was the costume of actors who played the parts of Seileni and the liké in satyric plays;¹ and to suppose that our draughtsman had formed his notion of the scene after seeing it quaintly enacted by some primitive company of Dorian mummers, precursors of the comedy of Phormis and Epicharmos, who were dressed in costumes of this kind, and carried dummy halves of horses attached to them behind? Of the nature and antiquity of the various branches of Dorian pantomime and satyric show, Peloponnesian, Megarian, and Sicilian, we know too little to guide us in a conjecture of this kind.² Against it is the fact that those representations in which the *χορταίος χιτών*, as the costume of a stage Seilenos or Papposeilenos, are distinctly to be recognised, belong to late periods of art;³ while no indication of shagginess at all appears on the bodies of Centaurs in ordinary vase-paintings, whether archaic or other. And in the archaic period of vase-painting generally, it is certain that the scenes depicted are those made familiar by epic tale and lay rather than by any early form of stage representation. On the whole we shall probably do best to see in a design like that before us the independent attempt of the primitive draughtsman to realise for himself an incident of the universally familiar Herakles legend.

Plate II.—Peleus bringing the child Achilles to Cheiron.

¹ Dion. Hal. vii. 72; Pollux, iv. 118, 142; see Müller, *Archäol. d. Kunst*, § 386, 5; Preller, *Griech. Myth.* i. p. 578, note 4.

² See Bernhardt, *Grundr. der griech. Lit.* 2te Bearb., 2te Th. 2te Abth. pp. 451-471, and Müller, *Gesch. der Dorier*, iii. 7.

³ E.g. incised drawing on a bronze helmet, Gerhard, *Ant. Bildw.* lv. 2, and Müller-Wieseler, *Denkm.* 579; marble group, *Mon. dell' Inst.* 1854, 81; vases, Jahn, *Vasenb.* pl. 1; Overbeck, *Heroisch. Bildw.* ii. 3; and especi-

ally two vases in the British Museum, of which one (Lenormant, *Él. céram.* ii. pl. 69) shows Marsyas in such a tufted garment playing the double pipes before Artemis and Apollo, and another (Coll. Castellani) a reclining woman with whom a Seilenos, or actor representing a Seilenos, plays the game of *κόρταβος*, dancing the while in a manner precisely recalling the lines of Anakreon, xxxviii. 11:—

ἐγὼ γέρον μὲν εἶμι,
 Σειληνὸν δ' ἐν μέσοισι
 μιμούμενος χορεύσω.

Oenochoè; black figures on dark yellow ground. H., ctm. 29, diam., ctm. 16.

This vase, found at Vulci, and formerly in the Blacas collection, is now in the British Museum. It is of fine and precise workmanship, in a style of which the present state of our knowledge does not permit us to say positively whether it belongs to the really archaic or to the pseudo-archaic period of the manufacture. The latter seems indicated, however, by the character of the heads which decorate the attaches, both back and front, of the handle.¹ The representation does not essentially differ from others already known, except by its greater daintiness of execution. It resembles one of those above described after Overbeck, in that Thetis does not herself come upon the scene,² and another in that Achilles is not shown as a stripling on foot, but as a diminutive child seated with his knees tucked up in the arms, or rather between the open hands, of his father.³ (So in Apollonios, *Argon.* i. 557, Chariklo the wife of Cheiron is made to carry the little Achilles *ἔπωλέμιον*, when she goes down to the shore with her husband to wish the Argonauts a good voyage and to give Peleus a last look at his boy.) A conventional tree of very dainty design stands for the forests of Pelion; in front of it Cheiron's dog advances with his head and one forepaw raised inquiringly at the newcomers. Cheiron, wearing a chlamys down to his ankles, and slightly extending his right arm in welcome, carries over his shoulder with his left his customary weapon, a pine; from the branches of which, however, there are not suspended, as there are in most representations both of him and of Pholos, the bodies of hares, foxes, birds, or other small game; compare his qualification *ἀγρότερος*, fond of hunting, in Pindar; and see below, Fig. 4, p. 138. He is figured, as usual until about the fourth century B.C., under the old-fashioned semblance of a complete man, but with the hinder parts of a horse appended to his back.

And this brings us to another question which has been much debated:—What were the precise relations of the wise and

¹ Both in this particular and in the form of the ornament at the back of the vase, though not in colour nor in the shape of the spout, our example offers a somewhat close analogy to that

figured in Lau, *Die griech. Vasen, &c.*, pl. xv. figs. 1, 1a, 1b.

² Overbeck, *Heroisch. Bildw.* p. 283, No. 3.

³ *Ibid.* p. 282, No. 1.

humane Centaur Cheiron, the trainer of heroes in all noble discipline, to his savage brethren, 'nefandis fratribus,' the incarnations of unteachable violence and lust? A very distinguished scholar, F. G. Welcker, still partly under the influence of the theories of Voss, wrote in 1831 to prove that, whatever may have been the case as to the other Centaurs, the heroic Cheiron cannot possibly have been originally conceived under the degraded form of a demi-brute made up of man and horse.¹ Welcker, in 1850, saw reason to modify this opinion; but the precise nature of the relation between Cheiron and the rest of his tribe has never, I think, been satisfactorily set forth. Let us briefly examine it, taking first the literary and then the archaeological evidences.

That Cheiron, then, was a Centaur like the rest the ancient writers imply with one consent, and without hint of any difference between him and them except two: first, the difference in mind and temper, and second, a difference, not quite unanimously stated, of birth and parentage. Homer simply calls him "the justest of the Centaurs," *δικαιότατος Κενταύρων*.² Pindar at the same time includes him in the tribe, and asserts his different descent, by calling him *Κρονίδας Κένταυρος*,³ a Centaur, but a son of Kronos, and not, like the rest, a child or grandchild of Ixion and Nephelè. The same difference and the same identity are again asserted by Pindar when, in speaking of Cheiron, he uses the Homeric word *φήρ* = *θήρ*, a brute, and in the same breath calls him the son of Kronos and of the nymph Philyra, and a friend of man:—

ἤθελον Χείρωνά τε Φιλυρίδαν
 * * * * *
 ζῶειν τὸν ἀποιχόμενον
 Οὐρανίδα γόνον εὐρυμέδοντα Κρόνου
 βάσσαισι τ' ἄρχειν Παλίου φήρ' ἀγρότερον
 νοῦν ἔχοντ' ἀνδρῶν φίλον.⁴

The same account is followed by most, though not quite by all, the other ancient writers who mention the generation of

¹ Welcker, *Kl. Schriften*, Th. iii., zu den *Alterthümern der Heilkunde*, 1, *Cheiron der Philyride*, and *Id.*, *Der epische Cycclus*, ii. p. 410, sqq.
² *Il.* xi. 832.

³ Pind. *Nem.* iii. 47; comp. *Pyth.* iv. 115.

⁴ Pind. *Pyth.* iii. ad. *init*; and compare iv. 119, *Φήρ δέ με θεῖος Ἰδσωνα κικλήσκων προσήδα*.

Cheiron.¹ In giving it, we are told, 'the author of the *Gigantomachia*' added that the visit of Kronos to Philyra was paid in the form of a horse.² It is doubtful what can be the poem here alluded to. The battle of gods and giants on the Phlegraean plain seems to have been unknown to Homer and Hesiod, and to have formed the subject of no early epic composition. The first extant allusion to it is in Pindar.³ It has been conjectured that the reference should rightly be, not to a *Gigantomachia*, but to the *Titanomachia* of Arktinos or Eumelos. In that case, it would be established that the early epic poets thought of Cheiron as a half-horse like the rest; otherwise the attribution of a horse shape to his sire would have no meaning. The story was certainly told in this form by the logographer Pherekydes, whose date is somewhat uncertain, but who was probably a contemporary and survivor of Pindar.⁴ The intervention of Kronos in the form of a horse in the generation of Cheiron is quite analogous to Pindar's own detail concerning the intervention of the Magnesian mares in the generation of the Centaurs. Both have been taken as indicating the gradual working out, within historical times, of the notion of the man-horse in the Greek mind. Both should rather be taken as inventions of the poets to account for a notion which had been current from the first.⁵ The story of Kronos and Philyra is told in full by Apollonios, who explicitly describes Cheiron as being, in consequence of his parentage,

ἄλλα μὲν ἵππων
ἄλλα θεῶν ἀτάλαντον.⁶

So in Ovid, he is explicitly

'semiuir, et flauī corpore mixtus equi.'

¹ See Welcker, *Kl. Schriften*, Th. iii. p. 5, note 13.

² Schol. ad Apollon. i. 554. The same commentator says, in the same connection, that Suidas, ἐν τοῖς Θεοταλικοῖς, represented Cheiron as a son of Ixion like the other Centaurs.

³ Pind. *Nem.* i. 67.

⁴ Pherek. fr. ed. Sturtz, 33.

⁵ This is, indeed, the natural interpretation of the often-quoted words of Galen, when he says that Pindar was quite right as a poet in adopting the

popular myth of the Centaurs, but quite wrong in attempting to improve upon it by explanatory additions. Πίνδαρος δ' εἰ μὲν ὡς ποιητῆς προσέεται τὸ τῶν Κενταύρων μυθολόγημα συγχωρητέον αὐτῷ, εἰ δ' ὡς σόφδς ἀνὴρ καὶ τι περίττοτερον τῶν ἄλλων ἐπίστασθαι προσποιούμενος ἐτόλμα γράφειν (here is quoted Pyth. iv. 45, sqq.) ἐπιτιμητέον αὐτῷ τῇ προσποιήσει τῆς σοφίας. *De us. part.* iii.

⁶ *Argon.* ii. 1231-1243 and in like manner Verg. *Georg.* iii. 92; Ov. *Metam.* vi. 126.

Cheiron, then, as to his physical configuration, was imagined according to our evidences to be a man-horse like the rest: only that his countenance was naturally conceived as noble instead of debased. As to his habits, he lived with the rest on Mount Pelion, and was in some sort their master; Pindar speaks of his 'ruling in the glades of Pelion.' He was thought of as leading the rest to festivity, as at the marriage of Peleus and Thetis,¹ or to a righteous attack on fraudulent men, as in the invocation against dishonest potters of the pseudo-Homeric *Κάμινος*.² He is the hunter of the tribe *par excellence*. But he takes no part in their brawls and blood-shedding; and sometimes he can baffle if he cannot correct the ferocious propensities of his tribe; as when he helps Peleus to defend himself against them by finding for him the sword which his enemies have put away from him during his sleep.³ According to the common account, he shares in the general flight of his race from Thessaly to the Peloponnesos, and there perishes in the same slaughter that overtook the rest at the hands of Herakles. On the other hand, while the rest of his tribe are the terror of mortal women, Cheiron is domesticated in his cave with his mother Philyra, his wife Chariklo,⁴ and his daughter Endeïs, all three of them nymphs. Endeïs was by Aiakos the mother of Peleus, so that Cheiron was not only the teacher but the ancestor of that hero and of Achilles. This account was, however, derived by some, who called Endeïs the daughter not of the Centaur Cheiron, but of the robber Skeiron⁵; but in any case a historical clan, exercising the practice of medicine, called themselves Cheironidai, and claimed lineal descent from the 'divine monster.' Once given the idea of a civilised Centaur side by side with the rest, and these relations with mankind seem to flow naturally from it.

As to the mythologic signification of his descent from Kronos and Philyra—to be descended from Kronos means, of course, no more than to be an object of ancient and immemorial tradition in the land. The nymph Philyra, sometimes spoken of as a Naïd or Okeanid, is in all probability the nymph of a healing tree, the linden or lime. Welcker, finding the form and pronunciation *Φιλυρίδης*, Phillyrides, adopted for the sake of

¹ Eur. *Iph. in Aul.* 1058 sqq.

² Hom. *Καμ.* 17.

³ Apollod. iii. 13, 3.

⁴ Pind. *Pyth.* iv. 102.

⁵ e.g. Paus. ii. 29, 7.

metrical convenience in several Greek and Latin authors,¹ strangely supposed that *φιλύρα* = *φυλλύρα*, and remembering the frequent use of *φύλλα*, *ἤπια φύλλα*, *νόδονα φύλλα*, and the like, for healing herbs, proposed to regard Philyra as personifying the virtues of such herbs in general. But the name Philyra itself, whether in Greek or Latin, as well as the alternative Latin form of the metronymic, Philyreius, has the first syllable short;² and it is most natural to suppose that the mother of Cheiron thus named is the nymph of the tree *φιλύρα* = *tilia* = *linden* (compare the fable of Hyginus, in which she is said to have been transformed into such a tree), just as the mother of Pholos is said to have been the nymph of the tree *μελία*. As to the bearing of this parentage upon the character of Cheiron as the father of medicine and teacher of Asklepios, I do not find in the ancient medical or botanical writers that any special virtues are attributed to this tree. But it is an interesting fact, for the communication of which I am indebted to M. Gennadius, that in modern Greece a sudorific potion much in use among the common people happens to consist of a decoction or *tisane* of the leaves and flowers of the lime; which grows abundantly in Thessaly, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, and also in parts of Greece proper, where it is usually called *φλαμουριά*, but in some districts of the Peloponnese still *φιλουρία*.³ It is possible that in this popular custom we may have the survival of a traditional belief in the virtues of the lime, which, although not recorded by ancient literature, caused the nymph of that tree to be chosen by the imagination of the early Greeks as the mother of Cheiron.

Turning now to the representations of Cheiron on ancient vases, we find that there is, down to a certain period in the history of the art, a distinction made between him and the other Centaurs. We have seen in what clumsy shape the primitive efforts of graphic art embodied the mythic idea of the man-horse (Pl. I. and Figs. 1, 2, 3). And we have seen that in monuments as early as the Assos reliefs and the François vase

¹ e.g. Hes. *Theog.* 1001; Pind. 43; Apollonios, ii. 1233; Verg. *Georg. Pyth.* iii. 1, ix. 30; Apollonios, i. 554; iii. 92; Val. Flacc. v. 153; Ov. *Metam.* ii. 676, vii. 352.

1, 60.

³ See also Koch, *Die Bäume und Sträucher Griechenlands*, p. 234.

² e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* iv. 103, *Nem.* iii.

this helpless monster, with the forelegs of a man, is already replaced by an improved monster with the forelegs of a horse. Replaced, that is, in the case of Centaurs in general, but not yet in the case of Cheiron. In the François vase itself, where the Centaurs engaged against the Lapithae are of the improved kind, enough is left of the defaced figure of Cheiron to make it certain that his lower fore-limbs are still, on the other hand, those of a man. This is the rule during all the early phases of the art, at least down to the end of the fifth century B.C. While the vases, real or imitative, of the black-figured or archaic style which we suppose to be characteristic of the period about Ol. 70-80 habitually show the developed type of Centaur alike in subjects 1, the battle with the Lapithae; 2, the rout at the cave of Pholos; and 3, the chastisement of Nessos or Eurytion, —in subjects 4, the winning or wedding of Thetis, and 5, the reception of Achilles at the Pelethronian cave, the same class of vases invariably show the undeveloped form. While the general horde of Centaurs, both Thessalian and Arcadian, including Pholos himself, have become horses with only the heads and chests of men, Cheiron is a draped philosopher encumbered with half a horse *a tergo*. In his case, then, the vase-painters are exceptionally conservative. They are unwilling, it seems, to increase his activity at the expense of his humanity. Instead of changing his primitive configuration, they retain it, draped in the manner of our illustration. This is the case even in an example of the Free or red-figured style like that lately acquired for the Museum of the Louvre, and shown in a reduced form in the woodcut on the next page (Fig. 4), an example which cannot well be of earlier date than the end of the fifth century B.C. I do not, indeed, know of any instance yet discovered in which the developed form is adopted for Cheiron in this particular subject. In the subject of the wrestling-match of Peleus and Thetis, it is only adopted in vases of the rich style belonging probably to the third or even second century B.C.¹

Among artists whose works have come down to us, the early vase-painters of the fifth century, or those who imitated their manner, are alone in treating Cheiron in the manner we have seen. In all other and later forms of art where Cheiron appears.

¹ e.g. Overbeck, *Heroisch. Bildw.* pl. vii. fig. 8, and viii. fig. 5.

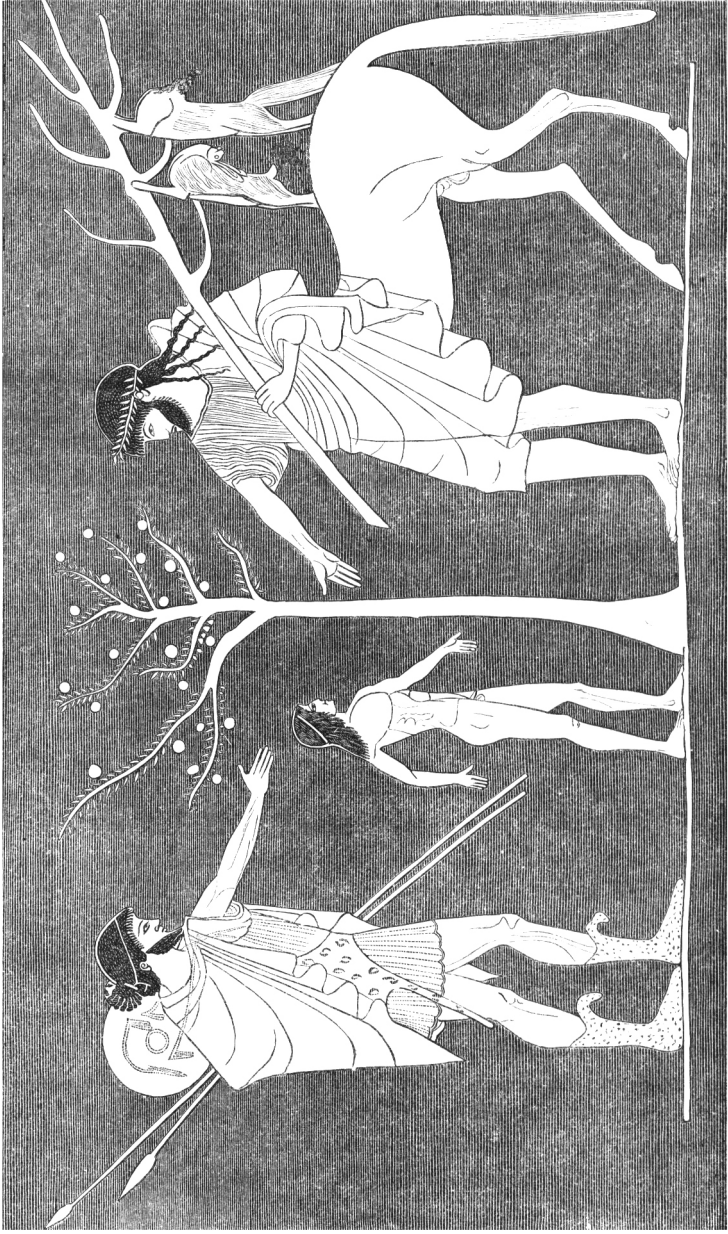


FIG. 4.

as in the mural paintings, gems, and sarcophagi where he is figured as the instructor of Achilles, or in those works where he is represented translated after death to the skies and appearing as the sign of a constellation, or in those, like the well-known Byzantine manuscript of Dioskorides at Vienna, where he figures as the father and instructor of physicians,—in all these alike he is regularly designed in the complete likeness of a developed man-horse. It is possible that the late poet Nonnos may furnish evidence of some exceptional treatment of him on the part of artists of a higher class (in his time, probably, the painted vases of the ancient Greeks were all buried away in tombs), when he writes

ἵππιον εἶδος ἔχοντι Φόλω συνομάρτεε Χείρων
ἀλλοφυῆς ἀδάμαστος ἔχων ἀχάλινον ὑπήνην.¹

The last words no doubt only refer to the point that Cheiron was not, like other Centaurs, harnessed and bridled to the car of Bacchus; but *ἀλλοφυῆς* must indicate some difference of structure or appearance between him and the rest. But Nonnos in his *Dionysiaka* so completely departs from all the known traditions of earlier antiquity concerning these monsters, and so confuses the matter with Asiatic fancies and subtleties, that there is little to the purpose to be learnt from him. The words *ἀνθρώπῳ ὅμοιος* used of Cheiron by Philostratos² in all probability refer to his disposition only, and not to his bodily structure.

Plate III.—Iris surrounded and assaulted by Centaurs. Portion of what must have been a composition of many figures, contained on the fragments of a large *skyphos* formerly in the Campana collection, and now in the Etruscan Museum at Florence.³ Red figures on pale black ground. The markings of the muscles and folds of drapery traced in a darker red: very free, bold, but at the same time accurate drawing, which by the violence of the action depicted might suggest the Alexandrian age, but, by the types both of Centaurs and Iris, has more resemblance to work of the fifth century. Probably not much later than 400 B.C.

Iris, holding the herald's staff (*κηρύκειον*) in her right hand, and wearing a chiton and peplos, with her accustomed head-dress, the *κεκρύφαλον*, and rings in her ears, flies with out-

¹ Nonn. *Dion.* xiv. 50.

² Philostr., *Heroic.* 9.

³ Desc. by Heydemann, *Mittheil-*

ungen aus den Antikensammlungen in Ober- und Mittel-Italien, p. 84, no. 5.

spread wings from left to right. In her flight she is surrounded by three Centaurs of Satyric type, with spotted leopard-skins tied by the claws round their throats and flying from their shoulders. One of these grasps her right fore-arm with his right hand, and the back of her neck and coil with his left; another has laid his right hand on her shoulder and extends his left to her breast; a third farther off seems to shout with his head thrown back, and flings his left arm up and his right behind him. The rear parts only are seen of a fourth, who moves away from this group with his tail whisking and his leopard skin flying. Above him appears the branch of a tree. Iris with an air of dignity turns her head in the opposite direction from her flight, and endeavours to escape by pushing out her elbows against her assailants; her left elbow and hand are concealed in the folds of her peplos.

Ancient literature contains no authority for any such story of the Centaurs and Iris as is here embodied. To be ravishers was an essential part of their savage nature; as such they appear on coins like those of Orreskioi, and in gems like that shown in Fig. 3; and besides the regular legends of the Thessalian Eurytion and Deidameia—of the Aetolian Nessos and Deianeira—of the Eleio-Arcadian Eurytion and Mnesymachè, or Homados and Halkyonè—we have another Arcadian story, how the Centaurs Rhoikos and Hylaios assaulted the huntress Atalantè, and were by her put to flight and slain.¹ But we have no story about the monsters and Iris. Such a story, however, may very naturally have existed. The messenger of the gods is, as we have seen, closely associated with Cheiron in the representation on the François-vase, where she marches beside him to the marriage-solemnity of Peleus and Thetis. It is true that her presence is not mentioned in those extant passages where, if it was a constant part of the tradition, we should expect to find it; as in the beautiful but corrupt chorus of the *Iphigeneia in Aulis* which tells of the dancing, at the feast on 'Centaurs' mountain,' of the golden-sandalled Pierides and the fifty daughters of Nereus; of the ministrations of Ganymedes; the prophecies of Cheiron; and other details of the solemnity.² On the other hand, when

¹ Apollod. iii. 9, 2.

² Eur. *Iph. in Aul.* 1036-1080.

Pindar makes Themis, after counselling the gods to give Thetis in marriage to Peleus, say—

ἰόντων δ' ἐς ἄφθιτον ἄντρον εὐθὺς
Χείρωνος ἀγγελαί,¹

we may suppose as matter of course that Iris would be the messenger chosen to bear the behest. With this clue, and that furnished by the François-vase together, to the presence of Iris on the *Κενταύρων ὄρος*, we may well infer that there existed a story of her having been subject to rudeness at the hands of the horde. The incident is exactly such an one as the writers of comedy would have delighted to work out; and comedies on the story of Cheiron, we know, were numerous.²

But, in the absence of positive evidence to this effect, there is another and perhaps safer way of accounting for the scene depicted on our vase: thus. There happen to be three vases known in which Iris is represented in an attitude and predicament precisely similar to this, only that her assailants are not Centaurs, but Satyrs. Two of these have been long familiar to students, but their explanation was not perfectly free from doubt until the discovery of the third. In each the winged female figure with the caduceus is surrounded by Satyrs in a state of boisterous importunity; but it was open to doubt whether this figure was necessarily Iris, or whether she might not rather be *Εἰρήνη*, Peace (who is known to share the same attributes), or *Ἵσπώρα*, Plenty; in which case the gestures of the Satyrs might be understood as those, not of violence, but of riotous homage and welcome.³ The question, however, was settled by the discovery

¹ Pind. *Isthm.* viii. 41.

² Separate comedies on this theme were, according to Athenaeus, attributed to Epicharmos (*Deipn.* xiv. 648 d), to Pherekrates or Nikomachos (*Ib.* viii. 364 a, ix. 368 a, b), and to Kratinos the younger (*Ib.* xi. 460 f). An instance of an unrecorded Cheiron adventure being copied by vase-painting from the stage is obviously furnished by the well-known vase in the British Museum (Lenormant and De Witte, *El. céram.* ii. pl. xciv. p. 306, sqq.), in which Apollo figures as a quack doctor, to whose stage there mounts a blind Cheiron,

represented by two actors, of whom the hindmost grotesquely shoves the foremost up the ladder; all the personages alike wearing comic masks of the broadest description. Comic masks are also given to the Centaurs and to their driver in that (I believe) unique vase at the Louvre, which represents a team of four of them harnessed abreast to a car.

³ See Welcker, *Alte Denkmäler*, iii. pl. xvi. 1, 2, and p. 243, sqq., where that author gives a full exposition both of his own view and of those of previous inquirers.

of a more elaborate and less ambiguous design of a similar subject on a vase bearing the signature of a well-known master, Brygos, which has passed with the Castellani collection into the British Museum. Here Iris, as well as her assailants, are designated by name.¹ The scene naturally suggests that passage in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes where Iris appears with a message from Zeus, and is challenged and coarsely threatened by Peithetairos.² It is probable that this scene itself was a travesty of similar scenes already familiar on the stage. We know that, according to a scholiast on the passage where it occurs, Iris had been brought on the stage in one of the satyric plays of Sophokles, the *Inachos*. We know also that the poet Achaios wrote a separate satyric drama, to which the same personage, Iris, gave its name.³ Putting these indications together with the passage of Aristophanes, and these together with the design of the contemporary, or nearly contemporary vase-painter, Brygos,⁴ we may conclude with certainty that the mobbing of Iris was a subject familiar at that time both in the satyric and the comic drama of Athens. By the time that Centaurs were getting to be gradually associated as a matter of course with Satyrs, and incorporated in the regular following of Dionysos, it would be natural that a scene, originally introduced on the stage, and from thence into graphic art, with Satyrs for its actors, should be freely imitated by a vase-decorator with Centaurs in the same character. This, if we are to forego the hypothesis of an unrecorded Iris incident in the Pelion legend, is what we must suppose to have happened in the case before us.⁵

And this brings us to another vexed question—To what extent was the fable of the Centaurs originally connected with the worship of Dionysos, and in what sense may these monsters be held, like the Satyrs, to have belonged to his proper following?

¹ See Matz in *Ann. dell' Inst.* vol. xlv. 1872, p. 294 *sqq.*, and *Mon. dell' Inst.* ix. pl. 46; also Urlichs, *Der Vasenmaler Brygos* (Würzburg 1875), p. 5.

² Aristoph. *Nub.* 1190-1261.

³ Nauck, *Trag. Frag.* 582.

⁴ The date of Brygos has been much discussed, and particularly, on grounds

both of art and epigraphy, by Urlichs, *op. cit.*, who agrees with Matz in deciding for the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the fourth, about Ol. 90-100.

⁵ This seems to be the view of Heydemann in his short description, *loc. cit.*

That Satyrs and Centaurs were creatures closely allied and almost interchangeable, that the last, like the first, were essentially satellites of Bacchus, has been by many writers assumed as self-evident.¹ Such writers have been misled, partly by the mythological confusions and aberrations of Nonnos, and partly, and naturally, by the evidences of later art. It is perfectly true that Nonnos, if his evidence were worth anything, countenances this view. He only in one allusion recognizes the constant earlier tradition of the descent of the monsters from Nephelè, the cloud substituted by Hera for herself in the embrace of Ixion.² According to him, the race of hippocentaurs was generated by Zeus from the soil of Cyprus.³ And he describes voluminously another race whom he calls Centaurs also, sons of the Hyades, who had been guardians of the infancy of Bacchus, and who had worn human shape until the jealousy of Hera endowed them with horns, manes, tusks, and the tails (not the bodies) of horses. These he calls the man-shaped Centaurs—

ἀνδροφυῆς δ' ἑτέρη Κενταυρίας ἴκετο φύτλη·

the other kind, the twy-shaped—

Κενταύρων δ' ἑτέρη διφυῆς κεκόρυστο γενέθλη.⁴

According to Nonnos both these kinds of creatures are horned, and both are the regular servants and attendants of Bacchus, forming part of his *thiasos*, and following him in war and revelry. It is also true in the late ages of Greek and Graeco-Roman art Centaurs (and Centauresses, a kind of creature which seems to have been first imagined by the painter Zeuxis) are habitually represented drawing the chariot of Bacchus and Ariadne, attending the god upon his expeditions, fighting against his enemies, or sporting with the Satyrs and Maenads of his rout. Such representations abound on the wall-paintings of the Campanian cities, on gems, on coins, on silver drinking-vessels,⁵ and on the reliefs of sarcophagi (on these

¹ Even K. O. Müller, *Archäol. der Kunst*, § 389, classes the Centaurs with Satyrs, Panes, and Maenads, among the *thiasos* of Bacchus. Preller, *Gr. Mythol.* ii. 14, *sqq.*, is better advised in dissociating them from this connection and grouping them among the mythologic enemies of the heroes.

² Nonn, *Dion.* xvi. 241.

³ *Ibid.* v. 611-615; xiv. 193-202; xxxii. 71, 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* xiv. 143-193.

⁵ e.g. two fine examples in the *Trésor de Bernay* at the *Bibliothèque Nat.* in Paris and another in the *Antiquarium*, Munich.

most commonly of all), in the Roman age ; one such occurs on the frieze of a great temple, that of Teos in Ionia, belonging to the same age. It is no part of my present purpose to collect or compare illustrations of so patent and familiar an archaeological fact.

But going back to early times, we shall find that there seems to exist no such habitual connection, but at most an irregular and incidental contact, between the Centaurs and the Dionysiac cycle. This is especially the case with reference to the Thesalian, which is unquestionably the oldest, branch of the myth. To take literary traditions first: Homer, with whom, as is well known, Dionysos and his cycle play very little part, gives no hint of such connection ; neither does Pindar. And in this matter the early Greek drama seems to have agreed with the early epic and lyric poetry. That in the days of the infant drama Centaurs and heroes were thought of together, and that neither one nor the other seemed to the popular mind to have anything to do with Bacchus, we have proof in the familiar story of the origin of the proverb, *οὐδὲν πρὸς Διόνυσον*. The country folk had been accustomed at the feasts of Bacchus to a dithyramb sung by a chorus in honour of the god ; when innovating poets tried to introduce such matters as 'Ajaxes and Centaurs' they would not have them, saying these had nothing to do with Dionysos.¹ The language of Euripides in the *Iphigeneia in Aulis* seems, indeed, already to indicate the beginning of that association which afterwards became so close. The Centaurs at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis he calls a *thiasos*, and it is to quaff the 'cup of Bacchus' that they assemble :—

ἀνὰ δ' ἐλάταισι στεφανώδει τε χλόῃ
θίασος ἔμολεν ἵπποβάτας
Κενταύρων ἐπὶ δαίτα τὰν
θεῶν κρατῆρά τε Βάκχου.²

But this is the first indication of the kind with which I am acquainted. That the Centaurs are from the first conceived as unable to resist the taste or smell of wine, and that their history turns upon this trait, is quite true ; but the same note

¹ Didymus ap. Casaub. *de Sat. Graec.* read *Γίγαντας* for *Αἴαντας*.
Poes. i. 1, 23. Böttiger proposes to ² *Iph. in Aul.* 1058.

of a savage nature is equally characteristic of Cyclops and other creatures not specifically Bacchic. Between the Arcadian branch of the myth, with Herakles for its chief actor, and the Dionysiac cycle, there is, as we should expect, more connection; though it so happens that our witnesses on the point are all of a late date. We cannot tell what is the antiquity of the genealogy of Pholos given by Apollodoros, a genealogy evidently modelled upon that of Cheiron, and representing him as the son of a tree-nymph, Melia, and of Seilenos, a divinity early included in the Bacchanalian cycle. It is not, at least in an extant literature, until the time of Theokritos that we find Dionysos specifically connected with the Centaurs as the giver to the tribe of the store of wine of which Pholos had charge.¹ Diodoros, indeed, seems to claim an immemorial antiquity for this part of the tradition, when he says that the store had lain for many years awaiting the arrival of Herakles before he came.

The negative evidences of archaeology on the point are more decisive than those of literature. Early art knows nothing of any association of Centaurs either with Bacchus, or with the Satyrs, Seilenoi, and Maenads of his train. This is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the forms in which Satyrs and Centaurs are represented have at first an undeniably near resemblance. The usual Satyr is a prick-eared, snub-nosed man, bush-bearded, and sometimes bald-crowned, with a horse's tail springing from the middle of his back. The primitive Centaur, as we have seen, is no more than a bush-bearded man, frequently also bald-crowned, prick-eared, and snub-nosed, from the middle of whose back there protrudes not merely the tail, but the whole body of a horse. The resemblance cannot be realised in a more pointed form than by comparing the ugly monster on the archaic gem figured on the next page (Fig. 5) with the other ugly monsters represented on the gems of analogous workmanship above given (Figs. 2, 3). A similarly close correspondence between Satyr and Centaur presents itself on the coins of Letè and Oreskioi. Even after the Centaur has

¹ Theokr. *Idyl.* vii., 147. The scholiast on this passage says the gift was a reward to Pholos for adjudging in favour of Dionysos a quarrel between him and Hephaistos for the island of

Naxos. Preller suggests that this account may be due to Stesichoros, who is known to have written (see Schol. *Il.* xxiii. 92) on the Naxian legends of Dionysos and Hephaistos.

received his complete equine body, the snub-nose, the bushy hair and beard, and generally, though not always, the ears pointed now like a horse's and now like a goat's, are kept up in order to maintain his character below the human; and these points continue to give him a physical affinity to the Satyr.



FIG. 5.

The same affinity seems again asserted when, as in the often-mentioned vase of Class I. in the British Museum (No. 1266), a combatant Centaur wears the Bacchic ivy wreath. It may be further attested by the habit which is common to both kinds of creatures, of wearing the skins of lions or panthers about their shoulders; though this peculiarity of the Centaurs may also be explained, as we have seen, simply by their hunting propensities.

On the other hand, the names attributed to the two kinds of creature seem to betoken a radical difference of character between them. Into the names of Centaurs we will inquire directly; those of Satyrs are almost exclusively names of laughter (Γέλως, Σκώψ, Εὔδαιμος), of song (Ἡδυμελής, Εὐμέλπης), or of drink (Οἶνος, Ἡδύοινος, Οἶνοπίων). What is most significant is that Satyrs and Centaurs are never, in early art, found together. Bacchus and his crew do not appear (with the one exception to be noted immediately) in any of the regular Centaur subjects which we have enumerated. On the other hand, no class of representations are so common in vase-painting, and especially in vase-painting of the black-figured and early red-figured kind, as representations from the Bacchanalian cycle; and in these again Centaurs are never mixed up with their horse-tailed cousins, the Satyrs. It is not until quite the decline of the art, the popular and conservative art as we have called it, of vase-painting, that the first signs appear of that fusion of the characters and habits

of the two races under the common leadership of Bacchus, which became universal afterwards. The representation on Plate III., if we are to adopt for it the second of our two proposed interpretations, must be regarded as an instance of the approaching change. The other instances of it which exist, and which would constitute with the above the Class 7 of our enumeration, might almost be counted on the fingers. There is, I think, only one vase in the whole collection at the British Museum which shows Satyrs and Centaurs together: a small *kyathos*, rudely painted in imitation of the archaic style;¹ in front is Pholos pushing the white lid from the *πίθος*; on either side a symbolic eye, and between either eye and the handle a startled Satyr. Munich, again, has only one example of the same collocation, and that is a still ruder imitation of early work, in which a Satyr hops in pursuit of two retreating Centaurs.² Among the vases of Sir William Hamilton was one in which a Centaur was represented carrying in his right hand a Bacchanalian torch, and in his left a shallow cup, while his left arm supported a three-branched bough, apparently of laurel, from one branch of which hung a ribbon, from another a picture, and from the third a bird; while close in front of the Centaur, and looking round to him, marched a diminutive thyrsos-bearing Satyr.³ To frame anything like a complete list of the class would be difficult, inasmuch as, being mostly of insignificant workmanship, they are not figured in illustrated works, and their existence can only be ascertained when they belong to collections that have been fully catalogued.

Our three plates, then, have respectively opened up three questions: Plate I., what was the earliest form of the Centaur? Plate II., what was the relation of Cheiron to the rest of his tribe? and Plate III., what was the relation of the tribe in general to Bacchus and his train? In the observations I have offered on the above questions I have been at pains simply to take the evidence of texts and monuments as we find it, and not to regard any point as determined *à priori* by a theory concerning the origin, derivation, and mythological significance of the

¹ Of the form (Jahn, *Vasens. Königs Ludwigs*, 18), illustrated by Lau, pl. xix. 1. *Cat. of Vases in Brit. Mus.*, vol. i. No. 661.

² Jahn, *op. cit.*, No. 957.

³ Hamilton, *Vases Etrusques*, vol. i. pl. 41.

monsters. But, in order both to test our results and to complete them, it seems necessary to recall the principal explanations of the myth which have been at various times adopted; the more so, as there are some explanations still surviving from pre-philological days which it is high time to dismiss altogether, and one which, on the other hand, agrees far better than the rest with the evidences and with probability.

1. *Κένταυροι ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντεῖν* (or *κεντᾶν*) *ταύρους*. This is the oldest, and has been the most persistent, of the false etymologies of our monsters. It involves two theories: first, that the name Centaur is a name signifying piercer or spearer of bulls; second, that the tribe of primitive hunters, to whom that name was given from their skill, were also the inventors of riding, and hence regarded by populations ignorant of that art as a new kind of animal made up of man and horse. The prevailing ancient view about riding was that the first race of riders known to the Greeks had been the Amazons; but there are also passages connecting the invention with Thessaly (a country in historical times famous for its horses), and specifically either with a tribe of men called Centauri, or with their cousins the Lapithae. Thus Diodoros, Pliny, and Vergil.¹ Pliny makes Bellerophon the first inventor of riding, but says that the bridling and housings of horses were the inventions of Pelethronius (an eponymous hero of whom we do not hear elsewhere), while the Centaurs were those who first found out how to *fight* on horseback. Somewhat differently Vergil:

‘primus Erichthonius currus et quattuor ausus
iungere equos, rapidusque rotis insistere uictor.
frena Pelethronii Lapithae gyrosque dedere
inpositi dorso, atque equitem docuere sub armis
insultare solo, et gressus glomerare superbos.’

Whereto Servius: ‘Pelethronium oppidum est Thessaliae ubi primum domandorum equorum repertus est usus. Nam cum quidam Thessalus rex bobus oestro exagitatis satellites suos ad eos reuocandos ire iussisset, illique cursu non sufficerent, ascenderunt equos, et eorum uelocitate boves secuti eos stimulis ad tecta reuocarunt. Sed hi uisi, aut cum irent uelociter, aut

¹ Diod. iv. 70; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* vii. 202; Verg. *Georg.* iii. 113.

cum eorum equi circa flumen Peneon potarent capitibus inclinatis locum fabulae dederunt: ut Centauri esse crederentur. Qui dicti sunt Centauri ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντᾶν τοὺς ταύρους.' In the above they are merely mounted cattle-drivers, but according to Eustathius more explicitly hunters. Eust. *ad Il.* p. 527, ἵπποκένταυρος, ὁ κεντῶν δηλαδὴ ταύρους κυνηγητικῶς: and *supra* p. 102, δῆλον ὅτι Κένταυροι μὲν ἐκλήθησαν διότι ταύρους κατεκέντησαν ἐνομίσθησαν δὲ σύνθετοι ἐξ ἵππων καὶ ἀνδρῶν διότι ἀρματίζειν ἀφέντες κελητίζειν ἐπιτηδέυσαντο ἡγούν ἀξέυκτους ἵππους ἐποχείσθαι. And to the same effect the scholiast on Pindar, *Pyth.* 78. The author who has most completely worked out this rationalising view is the supposed Palaephatus¹; according to his account Nephelè was a hill town of Thessaly, and when the neighbouring plains, inhabited by the Lapithae, were overrun with wild herds, Peirithoos their king invited the young men of Nephelè to destroy them, who for that purpose caught and tamed horses, but presently turned their skill against their employers, harrying their homesteads and carrying off their women in nightly raids.

A view nearly akin to this was in modern times re-established on the high authority of Boeckh, who, with an approving 'non indocte' for the fancies of Palaephatus, goes on to quote Pliny and Suetonius² to prove that the sport of bull-fighting from horseback had been invented by the Thessalians, and by them first exhibited before the Roman Caesars; adding evidence from other authorities to show that Larissa was a principal seat of the sport; that it survived in Thessaly until the time of Theodosios; and that it had been transplanted to Smyrna, where it flourished under the name of the ταυροκαθάψια, concerning which festival there is a well-known inscription among the Arundel marbles at Oxford.³ Compare the allusion of an earlier age to the customs of the Thessalians in Euripides, *Electra*, 815, *sqq.*

ἐκ τῶν καλῶν κομποῦσι τοῖσι Θεσσαλοῖς
εἶναι τόδ' ὅστις ταῦρον ἀρταμεῖ καλῶς,
ἵππους τ' ὀχμᾶζει.

The same general view had been adopted by C. A. Böttiger, who held the Centaurs of Greek mythology to have arisen by a kind

¹ Palaeph. *de Incred.*

³ Boeckh, *Pind.*, vol. ii., pt. i., p.

² Plin. *Hist. Nat.* viii. 45; Suet. 319, note 2 *ad Schol. Pyth.* 78. *Claud.* 21.

of fusion of the idea of these Thessalian cattle-drivers with ideas of monstrous combinations of man and beast imported from Asia with the worship of Bacchus.

As thus apparently fortified, the derivation was unhesitatingly accepted by writers like Stackelberg and even K. O. Müller, and (in so far as he to the last regarded the Centaur story as a mythic commemoration of the invention of riding) by Welcker.¹ Nevertheless it is a derivation which archaeology as well as etymology, and, I venture to think, common sense, alike decisively condemn.

The etymological difficulty of the absorption of the first τ, so that *κένταυρος* = as it were *ταυροκέντης* = *κέντωρ ταύρων* (compare the Homeric *κέντορες ἵππων*) struck even a mediaeval Byzantine writer like Tzetzes; who proposes another account, saying in his patronizing way that if Palaephatus is right,

*χρῆ κεντοταύρους τὸ λοιπὸν μηδὲ κενταύρους λέγειν,
Παλαίφατε σοφώτατε.*²

But even if this objection were not conclusive against the derivation from the mounted bull-fighters of Thessaly, there are plenty of other reasons to render it untenable. The Centaur myth is essentially a myth of the mountains. Horsemanship is essentially an art of the plain. It is against nature to suppose that the first tribe of riders should have haunted, or been thought of afterwards as having haunted, a region of forests, caves, and precipices. Galen from his point of view writes very good sense when, among his many objections to the notion of such a creature as a Centaur, he alleges the inconvenience of the equine structure for purposes of getting over a mountainous and difficult country.³ That the fable of the man-horse was

¹ Stackelberg, *Der Apollotempel zu Bassae*, p. 66 *sqq.*; Müller, K. O. *Archäol. der Kunst*, § 389, 1, Welcker, *Kl. Schriften*, vol. iii. *loc. cit.*

² Tzetz, *Chil.* vii. 18.

³ Gal. *De Usu part.*, iii. 1, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ταῦτά τις υπερβαίνει πάντα τὰ ἄτοπα * * οὐδὲν αὐτῷ πλέον ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης κατασκευῆς, ὅτι μὴ τὸ τάχος. οὐδὲ τοῦτο αὐτῷ ἄπλως οὐδ' ἐν ἅπασι χωρίοις, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς ὄμαλοις καὶ λείοις πεδίοις μόνοις· εἰ δέ που δέοι πρὸς ὄρειον δραμεῖν ἢ κάταντες ἢ λοξὸν ἢ ἀνώμαλον, ἢ νῦν οὖσα κατα-

σκευῆ τῶν ἀνθρωπίων σκελῶν ἀμείνων μακρῆ. οὕτω τε καὶ ὑπερπηθῆσαι καὶ πέτρας ὄξείας καὶ ὄρθιους ὑπερβῆναι, καὶ ὄλων ἀπάσας τὰς δυσχωρίας διελθεῖν ἀμείνων ὁ ἀνθρώπος τοῦ τερατάδου ἐκείνου Κενταύρου. Another difficulty, which exercises Galen, as to how a Centaur could climb a ladder, seems to have furnished a recognised *blague* upon the comic stage, judging by the grotesque vase, to which we have above referred (p. 141, note 2).

from the first inseparably associated, both in Thessalian and in Arcadian legend, with the wildest mountain summits of the country is proof enough that it did not owe its origin to the facts of riding. So far common sense; the arguments from archaeology are more particular, if they can hardly be more convincing. For one thing, we learn from numismatics that pride in horses is characteristic in Thessaly, as we should expect, of the cities and communities not of the coastward ranges, but of the interior plain. A horse, or the fore part of a horse, appears as a type on coins of Gyrtion, of Krannon, of Larissa very frequently, of the Perrhaiboi, of Phalanna, of Pherai, of Skotussa. Sometimes such a horse is free, sometimes bridled, sometimes mounted; but all such representations are perfectly naturalistic, and of Centaur mythology they show no trace nor reminiscence.¹ On some of the coins of Larissa bearing on the obverse the type of a horse, there appears on the reverse, evidently in allusion to the custom insisted on by Boeckh, the subject of an athlete attacking a bull; attacking, but not, however, *κεντῶν*, inasmuch as he uses no thrusting weapon, but forces back the bull's head by a noose or strap fastened round the horns, in accordance with the words of Pliny, 'cornu intorta cervice.' Thus we find the pride both in horses and in bull-fighting commemorated side by side, without being brought a whit nearer the Centaurs.

Once more, although the Centaurs are hunters, they are hunters in the sense we have seen; according to the Greek vase-painters, hunters chiefly of hares, birds, and foxes; according to the Graeco-Roman mural painters, mosaists, and relief sculptors, chiefly of lions and panthers; but not hunters of bulls. In ancient art I only know of a single instance of a Centaur attacking a bull in a manner consonant with the supposed derivation of its name, and that is in a gem at the British Museum of a quite late period, when we may suppose that derivation to have been already in the air. If Diodoros adds to the weapons borne by the monsters against Herakles axes such as those used for the slaughter of bulls, that is probably also in deference

¹ There is only one horse-bearing district of Thessaly, which shows the figure of a Centaur on its coins; and that is the hill-country of the Magnetes, between Pelion and the sea, a district

which was in fact associated with the Centaur myth as early as Pindar. But these coins are of very late date, and no argument can be drawn from them.

to the same etymology, which had begun to be already current.¹ For the rest, literature and art agree in giving no countenance to the idea of Centaurs going in pursuit of cattle and buffaloes, and little to that of their wielding human or artificial weapons. It is only in quite late instances that we occasionally see them pursuing their game with spears. They do not figure much as κέντροες either in chase or warfare; they are not piercers or thrusters, but smiters, hurlers, and graspers. The weapons with which they are all but exclusively armed are rocks and trees, wielded commonly with both hands; not, it must be confessed, an appropriate armament for the inventors of riding. The exceptions are when, as in the example above-mentioned of Class I. at Florence, one brandishes a table, and the other a large jar, at the brawl with the Lapithae (cf. Ovid, *loc. cit.*, and Virg. *Georg.* ii. 456 :

et magno Hylaeum Lapithis cratere minantem,')

or where, as in not more than two out of the forty-five illustrations of the Pholos story collected by Stephani, human weapons are really attributed to the monsters, as well as rocks and pines.² When Cheiron had been translated to the skies in the character of an archer, although late art had often shown him instructing Achilles in the chase with a bow and arrows, nevertheless the anomaly struck the ancient world, and some would not allow the name of Centaur to this sign, 'quod nemo Centaurus sagittis sit usus.'³ The poets from Hesiod to Quintus Smyrnaeus are unanimous in assigning to the monsters the same weapons, viz. pines and rocks, and most frequently pines, which they carry in the vase pictures.⁴

¹ Diod. iv. 12, 5. Τῶν δὲ Κενταύρων οἱ μὲν πέλκας ἀντορρίζους ἔχοντες ἐπέσειαν, οἱ δὲ πέτρας μεγάλας, τινὲς δὲ λαμπάδας ἡμέμενας, ἕτεροι δὲ βουφόρους πελέκεις.

² Stephani, *Compte rendu*, 1873, p. 95, No. 2 = Jahn, *Vasens. Königs Ludw.* 435; p. 103, No. 13 = *Mus. Greg.* ii. pl. 77, 1.

³ Hygin. *Poet. Astronom.* ii. 27, and to exactly the same effect Eratosth. *Katast.* 28. This is the more noticeable inasmuch as there would seem to be authority for attributing human weapons to Cheiron at least from the time of

Pindar; since it was under his tuition that Achilles learnt to kill wild animals, πτανοῖς βέλεσι. Compare the *spicula* in the passage above quoted from Statius.

⁴ Stephani for once makes a slip, where (*Compte rendu*, 1873, p. 99, note 4) he includes Hesiod among the writers who give spears to the Centaurs. In the lines, καὶ τε συναίγδην ὡσεὶ ζωοὶ περ ἐόντες ἔγχεσιν ἢ δ' ἐλάτης αὐτοσχεδὸν ὠριγνώντο,

the context makes it perfectly clear that the ἔγχεα are the weapons of the Lapithae, the ἐλάται of the monsters.

Surely, then, we have ample reasons for dismissing this derivation for good and all, alike its etymological part from *κεντέιν* or *κεντᾶν ταύρους*, and its quasi-historical part from the supposed invention of horsemanship (by a race of mountaineers) for purposes of cattle-driving or buffalo-hunting.

2. *Κένταυρος ἀπὸ τοῦ κεντέιν αὔραν*. Eustathius, *ad Il.* 102, mentions this as an alternate derivation for the last. It was suggested by the genealogy from Nephelè, and the idea that Nephelè = *αὔρα*. Eustathius, *loc. cit.* of the Pindaric *Κένταυρος* — *κληθέντος, φησίν, οὕτω διότι ὁ Ἰξίων κεντήσας αὔραν ἦτοι ἀερλίαν Νεφέλην ἐγέννησεν αὐτὸν ἐξ ἐκείνης*. Tzetzes, correcting Palaephatus and Pindar in one breath, adopts this derivation, and at the same time¹ explains that *αὔραι* = *δοῦλαι*: that Zeus in the story is a king (it having been in those days the habit of kings to take the name of Zeus), with whose wife, Hera, Ixion fell in love; that Nephelè was the name of a serving-maid who was induced to substitute herself for her mistress; and that from Ixion and this Nephelè sprang Imbros, who was in his turn the progenitor of the Hippocentaurs. To the French rationalizers of mythology this tale of the hospitable king, the amorous guest, and the accommodating serving-maid, naturally commends itself.

The same verbal elements were adopted for the etymology of the word by Schwenck,² who, supposing Centaurs to be divinities of torrent and waterfall (of which account see more below), compared the name of the fountain-nymph *Πληξ-αύρη*, and suggested that *κέντ-αυρος* was formed on the same principles. But if falling waters can be said to lash the air, they can hardly be said, with equal propriety, to stab it.

It is indeed extremely doubtful whether the syllable *κεντ-* of *κεντέω*, *κέντρον*, *κέντωρ* (of which the root according to Curtius appears in the Skr. *çinteir*, a spur), is to be recognised in the name at all. So far as archaeology can have anything to say on an etymological question, it says no; see what has been above remarked concerning the weapons of the monsters. The solitary instance in early or central Greek art in which, to my knowledge, a Centaur is represented fighting in an action

¹ A hint of the same view is given, in passing, Schol. *Il.* ii. 266.

² See Welcker, *Kl. Schriften*, Th. iii. *loc. cit.*

appropriate to the meaning of this word is the unpublished vase at the British Museum where one drives the spiky end of an uprooted tree horizontally into the chest of a sinking Lapith. There seems more likelihood in an independent etymology proposed in 1850 by Ad. Kuhn;¹ viz. :—

3. Gr. *κένταυρος* = Skr. Gandharva. The changes of *κ* for *g* and *ντ* for *ndh* are not regular, but the reasons in support of Kuhn's view are otherwise somewhat cogent. The Gandharvas, it appears, are beings who play a considerable part in the mythology of the Vedas. They represent, according to all modern interpreters, one of the forms in which the clouds are embodied in that mythology. They are not conceived as being themselves partly horses, but as riding in chariots drawn by horses of brightness, many-coloured and fleet. They are skilled in music, prophecy, and song, and they are at the same time prone to lust. They are the wise companions of Indra, and the guardians of the sacred beverage, Soma. With both the good and the bad Centaurs, then, the Gandharvas evidently offer points of analogy. The theory consequently is that the Centaurs represent the Greek development, and the Gandharvas the Vedic development, of an identical mythic name and mythic conception which had its root among the primitive Aryans. The theory has been frequently repeated by recent writers in England. Pott held that the analogy between the two conceptions of the Gandharvas and the Centaurs was striking, but, which seems very unlikely, that the etymology connecting the two words offered serious difficulties.² Ebel in a brief note promised evidence to show not only that *Κένταυρος* = Gandhavi, but that both words contain a first root meaning spur or goad, and a second root meaning horse (a lost *αὔρος* reappearing in the Latin *auriga*).³ On the points of comparative philology involved in the above views I am not able to speak with any authority. But even granting the common origin of the Greek and the Sanskrit myth, it is evident that the two in their developed form differ widely.

To get at the meaning of the Greek myth, it will be best to dismiss all such problematical etymologies as those we have discussed, and, while recognising the probability of an original

¹ *Zeitschr. für vergleich. Sprachforschung*, vol. i. pp. 523–542.

² *Ibid.* vol. vii. p. 81, *sqq.*

³ *Ibid.* v. 41.

connection with the Gandharvas, to take it by itself as it is presented to us by literature and archaeology, and see if it does not contain its own explanation. The result brought out in this method, partially by Gerhard, and more fully, though not yet as fully as the evidences admit, by Preller, seems to me in its main features convincing. I shall now proceed to state this result in my own way, and with some additional arguments.

First of all, then, analogy bids us look for the origin of such a myth as this, not in a circumstance of human progress like the invention of riding, but in some one or other of the processes of nature. The Greek way of thinking about the hostile or capricious forces of nature was to personify them in the form of some animal whose ways their ways seemed to resemble, or else in that of some monster compounded between such an animal and man. Sirens, Harpies, Scylla, the Chimaera, are familiar cases in point. Such animals or monsters in mythology may be identified with natural phenomena the more confidently when they come into the stories of heroes whose career has been, in the first instance, a mythologic image of the career of the sun. And although the solar and physical theory of mythology has undoubtedly been pushed too confidently and too far, and the present course of inquiry tends to limit it by claiming for other elements the place to which they are entitled, nevertheless there are some heroes of mythology, and foremost among them Herakles, the original elements of whose character are unquestionably solar. Neither can it be well doubted that his brutal or monstrous enemies, such as the Lernaean hydra or the Erymanthian boar, originally represented plagues and scourges of nature; the plague of undrained marshes; the scourge of waters pent up in Arcadian valleys till they burst forth with ravage. To this class of conception analogy, then, teaches us to expect that the Centaurs should belong. If we ask to what particular group in the class they belong, and what sort of scourge exactly they represent, the answer seems obvious.

The horse, by the rise and fall of his movement, by his arched and bounding velocity, is the most obvious and most usual symbol for water, and is associated in a hundred ways with Poseidon and his ocean train. The violence of a brood of untamed man-horses we should anticipate to mean, in mythologic

language, the violence of a host of unchecked waters.¹ When the same man-horses are further said to be the children of Nephelè, the Cloud, our anticipation is remarkably confirmed. Their sire or grandsire is Ixion, the murderer, the lawless visitant, who outrages the friendship alike of men and gods, and whom, in regard to his chastisement by perpetual revolution on a wheel of torture, it is tempting to take for an allegory of the whirlwind. But the myth of Ixion is one not easy of interpretation;² and where other arguments seem so conclusive, it is hardly necessary to follow out the question of paternity. The Cloud, at any rate, pours forth her brood among the caves and cliffs of Pelion. What can that brood be if not rains and floods? Compare the following words of Theophrastos, writing purely as a meteorologist, and without thought of symbolism or personification—*ἐὰν ἐπὶ τὸ Πήλιον νεφέλη προσίζη, ὅθεν ἂν προσίζη ἐντεῦθεν ὕδωρ ἢ ἀνεμὸν σημαίνει*³—with those in which a Roman poet writes of the generation of the Centaurs :

‘illic semiferos Ixionidas Centauros
feta Pelethroniis nubes effudit in antris.’⁴

Can we escape the conclusion that the two are unconsciously referring to the same phenomenon? Devastating torrents are the progeny which follow the settling of the cloud upon the mountain-side. And what are their weapons of devastation? By the consent, as we have seen, of poets and artists, their weapons are rocks and pines. This seems to put our interpretation almost beyond the reach of doubt. One of the most striking and universal phenomena of mountain torrents in flood time is the accumulation of trees and boulders, which by damming increase the force of the flood until they are carried away, when they add to the ruin of inundation. Take again two passages in which a Greek and a Roman poet respectively describe the coming down of the Centaurs. In the *Hercules Furens*, the chorus, after commemorating the rout of the monsters by the

¹ A point in favour of my argument, to which my attention has been drawn by Prof. Percy Gardner, is that on some of the Thessalian coins already alluded to; e.g. those of Pherai, where the fore half of a horse is represented cut off, emerging from amidst rocks, the

representation is clearly meant to be metaphorical, and to symbolize the sacred spring or fountain of the town.

² See Pott, *loc. cit.*

³ Theophr. *De Sign. Pluv.* 22.

⁴ Luc. *Phars.* vi. 386.

hero, calls the rivers, hills, and devastated pastures of the plain to witness :—

ξύνοιδε Πηνειὸς ὁ καλλιδίνας
μακραί τ' ἄρουραι πεδίων ἄκαρποι
καὶ Πηλιάδες θεράπναι
σύγχορτοί θ' Ὀμόλας ἔναυ-
λοι, πεύκαισιν ὄθεν χέρας
πληροῦντες χθόνα Θεσσαλῶν
ἵππειαις ἐδάμαζον.¹

That a real cavalry should come down with armfuls of pine-trees to destroy the crops is an absurdity ; but that a metaphorical cavalry, that of the floods, should do so, is none.

In the *Aeneid* there is this similitude :—

' ceu duo nubigenae cum uertice montis ab alto
descendunt Centauri Homolen Othrynque nivalem
linquentes cursu rapido ; dat euntibus ingens
silua locum, et magno cedunt uirgulta fragore.'²

But it is in the account given by Diodoros of the Arcadian version of the myth that its physical significance seems to come most transparently to the surface. Diodoros (having of course no notion of the identity of floods with Centaurs) relates how those monsters were helped in their fight against Herakles by floods, caused by their mother, the Cloud, on their behalf : *συνηγωνίζετο δ' αὐτοῖς ἡ μήτηρ Νεφέλη πολλὸν ὄμβρον ἐκχεύουσα, δι' οὗ τοὺς μὲν τετρασκελεῖς οὐκ ἔβλαπτε, τῷ δὲ δυσὶν ἐρηρισμένῳ σκέλεσι τὴν βᾶσιν ὀλισθηρὰν κατεσκευάζεν.*³ Again, the store of wine which it is so perilous to open is represented by the same Diodoros as having been deposited with Pholos by Dionysos on the understanding that it was only to be opened when Herakles should pass that way.⁴ In other words, may we not say, the imprisoned forces of the earth's fertility are left in charge of the genius of the mountain, only to be unlocked at the approach of the sun in spring ; and their unlocking is the signal for the breaking forth of the torrents ? Nay, it has been suggested, though no doubt too fancifully, that the lid of the *πίθος*, removed in the story by Herakles, stands for the

¹ Eur. *Herc. Fur.* 368 sqq.

² Verg. *Aen.* vii, 674 sqq.

³ Diod. iv, 12, 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*

snows of winter upon the mountain disappearing before the sun; and that this is the reason why, in the traditional practice of the vase-painters, it is painted white.

One great virtue of this theory is that, while it accounts so completely and naturally for the bad Centaurs, it seems also to account equally well for the good. It is a very clumsy way of explaining why the mythical tribe of man-horses should include, along with its savage majority, the humane exception Cheiron, to say that although the wild bull-drivers, whose memory was handed down in this form, were ferocious, yet they knew some of the secrets of medicine and properties of herbs. If on the other hand the ferocious tribes are not to be taken literally, but as representing the terror of the mountain floods, what do Cheiron and Pholos stand for then? The obvious answer seems to be that which, in the case of Cheiron, has been worked out by Preller in a manner which leaves little to be added. The two good Centaurs would, according to this view, represent the peaceful and beneficent aspect of the same forces of which the multitude of bad Centaurs represent the turbulent and desolating aspects. They are the kindly powers of the mountain flood. The wholesomeness of the air of Pelion, the healing virtues of its herbs and waters, whereby it became the legendary home of Asklepios and the historical sanatorium of Greece, are attested from a great variety of sources. The wise and prophetic Cheiron of the Thessalian fountains would thus be a nobler counterpart—nobler, because first conceived as existing in a region which was the cradle both of the heroic legends and the healing arts of Greece—of the wise and prophetic Seilenos (for Seilenos is also a water-god¹) of the fountains of Phrygia. An underlying physical connection of this kind between Cheiron and the other Centaurs seems in truth to furnish the only possible reason why he should have been mythologically inseparable from them in the manner we have seen, notwithstanding his different character and the different genealogy devised for him by the poets.

The next thing is to see how this account of the monsters, which seems so plausible thus far, is borne out by their names;

¹ See Jahn, *Ficoronische Cista*, p. 371, and Preller. *Gr. Myth.* i. 573 sqq.

not, I mean, by their tribal or generic name of Centaur, of which enough has been said, but by their individual names as recorded in poems and the inscriptions of vases.

Let us first take the four names of Centaurs that are common and universal in all traditions concerning the monsters: Cheiron, the sage of the Pelethronian cave; Eurytion or Eurytos, the constant name of the ravisher both in the Thesalian and the Eleio-Arcadian tales; Nessos, the offender at the ford of the Euenos; and Pholos, the Arcadian counterpart of Cheiron.

Cheiron is no water-name, but is, of course, connected with *χείρ*, and denotes manual skill; especially in this case the skill of surgery, chirurgery, *χειρουργία*: compare Pind. *Nem.* iii. 53, *sqq.*:—

*βαθυμήτα Χείρων τράφε λιθίνῳ
Ἴάσῳ ἔνδον τέγει καὶ ἔπειτεν Ἀσκλαπιόν,
τὸν φαρμάκων δίδαξε μαλακὸ χεῖρα νόμον.*

The only signs of a water origin in his lineage are, first, the description of his mother Philyra as a Naïd or Okeanid, and second, the introduction in the account followed by Tzetzes of a sire, Imbros, between himself and his progenitor Kronos.

Eurytion (in Ovid Eurytos) may either be a name from *εὐρύς*, or else from *εὐ* and *ρύτος* (*ρέω, ρέυσω, ῥόος, ῥεῦμα, κ.τ.λ.*). Pape¹ holds for the first derivation: Eurytion, Eurytos = Germ. *Breitung, Breitingen*. But Pott² has shown what seems conclusive reasons for adopting the second. Comparing, for the suffix in the form Eurytion, *Θεοδοτίων = Θεόδοτος*, he goes on to show that Eurytos is a name common in mythology, and especially common among the enemies of Herakles. *E.g.* the cowherd of Geryones and the king of Oechalia, father of Iolè, are both so-called. In one instance, where the name occurs in the feminine, its connection with the powers of the flood is patent:—Alkippè, the daughter of Ares and Agraulos, is assailed, according to Apollodoros, by one *Halirrthothios*, the son of Poseidon and the nymph *Eurytè*.³ It seems safe,

¹ *Wörterbuch der gr. Eigennamen*, sub voce.

² Pott in *Zeitschr. für vergleich. Sprachforschung*, vii. 81, *sqq.* Mytho-etymologica, Ixion, Eurytos.

³ Apollod. iii. 14, 2, 2. *ταύτην βιάζομενος Ἀλιρρόθιος ὁ Ποσειδάωνος καὶ Νύμφης Ἐυρίτης ὑπὸ Ἄρεως φαραθείς κτείνεται.*

then, to adopt the etymology from *ῥυτός*, and to regard the Centaur Eurytion, like the various analogously named enemies of the sun-hero Herakles, as a demon of rain and flood. Pott goes on to ask whether the name of another Centaur, *Ῥοϊκος*, Rhoikos (who with Hylaios offered violence to Atalantè, and who is described as whirling beneath the crest of Mount Oeta elms which the north wind could hardly overthrow¹), is not to be considered as = *ῥοϊκός*, from *ῥόος*, *ῥοή*, rather than as = *ῥοικός* = *ῥαιβός* = uarus. We have besides, from some later Greek development of the myth turned to account by Ovid, the name of a female Centaur Okyroè (*Ἔκυρρόη*).

Nessos furnishes a quite certain case in favour of our reading of the myth. His station is at the Euenos, and the exploit of Herakles against him is closely analogous to the previous exploit against the river-god Acheloos. His name is assigned by Curtius to the root *νεδ* (Skr. *nad*, whence *nada*, a river), to roar or bellow; compare the names of the Thracian river Nestos and the Peloponnesian Neda.² It is also a singular circumstance, pointing in the same direction, that the Lokroi Ozolai should, in historical times, have derived their name from the foeter (*ἄζος*, *ἄζη*) of the springs issuing from a certain mountain of their territory where they supposed the Centaur Nessos to have been buried, and which was called in consequence *Τάφιος* or *Ταφιασσός*.³

Pholos, the eponymous Centaur of the mountain Pholoè, bears a name of very doubtful etymology. Preller suggests that *φολόη* = *θολόη* (*θόλος*, a vault or dome) by the Aeolo-Doric change of *φ* for *θ*.⁴ Gerhard on the other proposes *φωλεός* a den (*φωλάς*, *φωλεύω*). In either case the etymology affords no clue to the myth, and the only tangible connection of Pholos with water-streams is through his father, Seilenos, who, as we have said, was in the first instance a fertilizing deity of fountains and

¹ See above, p. 140, note 1, and cf. Lucan, *Phars.* vi. 389:

'teque sub Oetaeo torquentem uertice uulsas

Rhoece ferox quae uix Boreas inuertet ornos.'

In the form of the name, which is also that of a giant, the Latin poets vary

between Rhoecus and Rhoetus; see Hor. *Od.* ii. 9, 23; iii. 4, 55; Ov. *Met.* xii. 271, *sqq.*; Verg. *Georg.* ii. 456.

² Curtius, *Greek Etym.* vol. i. 243; and comp. Preller, *Gr. Myth.* ii. 246.

³ Strab. ix. 427; Paus. x. 38, 2; Plut. *Quaest. Gr.* 15.

⁴ Preller, *Gr. Myth.* ii. 194, n. 3.

gardens, and whose name seems to have borne in Italy the sense of water-spring.

Among these four Centaurs of constant occurrence we have, then, two, Cheiron and Pholos, whose parentage only is more or less distinctly aqueous; while the other two, Nessos and Eurytion, are declared by their names to be themselves creatures of the flood. To these two we may probably add Rhoikos, and from later traditions certainly Imbreus (compare the above-mentioned Imbros from Tzetzes) and Crenaeos¹ = Κρηναῖος: compare Πηγασός, the winged horse of the fountain Peirenè.² Into the same connexion we are certainly justified in bringing the names Phrixos (Diod. iv. 13; compare the φρίσσοντες ὄμβροιοι of Pind. *Pyth.* iv. 44) and Ripheus (Ov. *Met.* xii. 352; compare Pind. *Pyth.* iv. ῥίπαλ' κυμάτων ἀνέμων τε).

Let us now take in alphabetical order the several names of Centaurs recorded by our two earliest authorities, namely, Hesiod, and the decorators of the François vase. Each of these, we shall find, is one of a group or family of names of similar meaning, which we can collect from passages referring to Centaurs in later writers; and principally from the passages cited above of Diodoros, Apollodoros, and Ovid.

Agrios: Fr. v., and again in Apollod., Diod. (the latter in form Ἀργεῖος), &c. The wild one. This is simply a name of savagery; to the same family belong two names of Greek form in Ovid, Apheidas and Bianor.

Arktos: Hes. and Ovid. The bear. This is one of a group of Centaur names associating the monsters with the beasts of the forest, of which others are found in Ovid; e.g. Lycabas, Lycidas, Lycos, Lycotas. Two other names from the same source associate them, as we have already observed, with the chase; namely Thereus and Dictys.

Asbolos: Fr. v. Ηασβολος: another vase at Berlin, (Gerhard, *Etrusk. u. Campan. Trinkschalen* 13) Hes., Ov., in dub. name Astylos? Philostr., Tzetzes. In the latest as in the earliest

¹ Ov. *Met.* xii. 310, 313.

² It is a fact worth noticing in this connection, that a vase in the British Museum, to which allusion has already been made, and which is probably of local Etruscan manufacture, shows Pegasus and a Centaur together; the

latter being of the primitive shape, and flinging one human foreleg in a kind of grotesque *cancan* over the body of the former. For other traditions connecting Pegasus with the Centaurs, see Schol. *ad Il.* i. 226.

accounts, the Centaur bearing this curious name plays an important part. If the name is identical with the word ἄσβολος, ἄσβόλη = soot, itself of obscure etymology, we can only associate it with a certain number of other Centaur names given by Ovid and denoting agencies of fire; e.g. Phlegraeos, Pyracmos.

Dryalos: Hes. He of the oaks. This is one of the names associating Centaurs with forest-trees. Dryalos, from δρῦς, an oak, is, according to Hesiod, one of two sons of the pine, Πενκείδαι. . There are a number of other Centaur names of kindred meaning, e.g.

Hylaios: Fr. v. Ἡυλαῖος; Berlin vase *supr. cit.*; Diod., Verg. *Georg.* iii. 45; Ov. *Met.* ii. 191; Stat. *Theb.* xii. 535, &c.; &c.). He of the woods. This name, from woods in general, is one of those most commonly given to a Centaur. In the two vases quoted, Hylaios brandishes a bough, according to his name. Vergil and Statius describe his part in the Lapith quarrel; Diodoros and Ovid his chastisement by Atalantè. Other names of kindred meaning, besides Dryalos and the patronymic Peukeides above quoted, are Daphnis (Diod. iv. 13), Elatos (Apollod. ii. 5, 4), the Centaur through whose arm the arrow of Herakles passes before it wounds Cheiron; Hylonomè, the female Centaur in Ovid; Orneus, *ibid.*

Melanchaites: Fr. v. Μελανῖτες, Hes. apparently as an epithet of Mimas—

Ἄρκτον τ' Οὔρειόν τε μελαγχαίτην τε Μίμαντα,

Diod. iv. 13. The black-haired. This is simply a picturesque or descriptive name, and may be classed with the name of shagginess, Cometes (Ovid), the horse names Hippotion (Diod.), Hippasos (Ovid), Monychos (Luc. *Phars.* vi. 388; comp. μόνυχες ἵπποι), and the colour names, Melaneus, Pyrrhus (see below), Phaeocomes (Ovid).

Mimas: Hes. This is also the name of a giant, and again of a mountain, and probably signifies merely hugeness; while a definite association with mountains is proclaimed in

Oreios: Fr. v. (the characters are not quite clear, and have been variously read *Opeios* and *Opebios*). Hes. Οὔρειος. Paus. iii. 18, 16, quotes the name Ὀρειος of a Centaur figured on the Amyklaean throne. Diod. iv. 13; and frequently. He of the mountains. This is the only name which any Centaur bears in

common with a Satyr.¹ Of the same family is the next and equally general name,

Petraios: Fr. v. Berlin vase *supr. cit.* Hes., Ovid. He of the rocks. In the François-vase this rock-Centaur is figured as wielding a tree like his brother of the woods, Hylaios; in the Berlin vase they are armed according to the respective significance of their names.

Perimedes: Hes. The wondrous wise. This name, given by Hesiod to one of the Peukeidae, seems unfitted for that of a combatant Centaur; but has its counterpart in others that occur in Ovid, *e.g.* Medon, Pisenor.

Pyrrhos: Fr. v. Πυρος. The bay. For this name, descriptive of colour, and its congeners, see above, Melanchaites.

Lastly, a family of names not represented in our two oldest written lists of Centaurs is one akin by its meaning to the root *veð* of Nessos, and signifying noise and uproar; *e.g.* Homados (Ὅμαδος, Diod. iv. 13), Doupon (Δούπων, *ibid.*); compare Erigdoupos, Bromos, Teleboas, in Ovid.

The result, then, of our examination of the individual names of Centaurs is that they resolve themselves into several groups: one directly betraying a connection with water-floods (Eurytion, Nessos, Rhoikos most probably, Imbros or Imbreus, Phrixos, Ripheus, Okyroè); another with wild beasts and with the chase (Arktos, Lycabas, Lycos, Lycotas, Thereus, Dictys); another and smaller apparently with fire and smoke (Asbolos, Phlegnaeos, Pyrannos); another and considerable group with woods and trees (Dryalos, the Peukeidai, Hylaios, Daphnis, Elatos, Orneus, Hylonomè); another with mountains and rocks (Oreios, Petraios): a very small group with wisdom and persuasion (Perimedes, Medon, Pisenor); a last group, thus bringing us round again to our torrents, with clamour and uproar (Homados, Doupon, Erigdoupos, Teleboas). Two other groups are merely descriptive: the one of savagery (Agrios, Apheidas, Bianor), the other of equine appearance or colour (Melanchaites, Cometes, Hippotion, Hippasos, Monychos, Phaeocomes, Melaneus, Pyrrhus). The elemental and nature-groups are vastly preponderant; and the general result certainly tends to strengthen

¹ Jahn, *Vasenb.* (Hamburg, 1839), gives a list of satyr names, pp. 17-28. That which he reads Eurytion, merely

from the precedent of the Centaur so called, stands in the vase in the ambiguous form ΕΥΑΥΤΙΩΝ.

our interpretation of our myth, as a myth, so far as the Centaurs are concerned, of the mountain storms and floods.

Who the antagonists of the Thessalian Centaurs in their mountain warfare may be, is not an easy question to answer. Preller was most probably wrong in connecting the name of the Lapithae (from whose character for violence came the words *λαπαλίζειν*, *λαπιστήης*) with the Latin *lapis*. Is it not more likely to be allied to the root *rap-* of *rapio*? According to Stackelberg, the name *λιάπεθες* was still current in the early years of this century as a name for the robber bands infesting the Thessalian mountains. There seems no sufficient evidence, either from etymology or from the tenor of the myth itself, for deciding whether it originally expressed the conflict of one set of physical powers against another—powers of assault against powers of resistance—as Preller was inclined to suppose, or the conflict of physical powers against man. In favour of the former view we have the argument that the Lapithae, like the Centaurs, were fabled to be the offspring of Ixion,¹ and that several of their genealogies, as that of Kaineus from Elatè, and of their names, as Dryas, Hypseus, Charaxos, point to the pine, the oak, the peak, and the ravine, no less than those of their antagonists. On the other hand, it is certain that in the imagination of the historical Greeks the Lapithae were a race of their own heroic progenitors, and with all their fierceness represented the forces of humanity, and in a measure of civilization, in conflict with forces inhuman and monstrous. But the two explanations do not in fact exclude each other. This or that physical process of nature does no more than provide the mould in which a myth is originally cast. Into that mould a whole history of unrecorded human achievement is afterwards compressed. Thus, whether the myth of the Centaurs and Lapithae was originally a myth of the powers of nature on both sides or on one, it in course of time certainly absorbed into itself the memories of human struggles. To the physical significance which imprinted its original form on the story there was added a weighty accretion of significance, ethical, political, and historical. The accounts of the exploits of Greek heroes against monstrous foes may be ever so much

¹ But see Schol. *Il.* i. 226, for descendants of the nymph Stilbé and another genealogy, making them the of Apollo.

accounts, in the first instance, of solar or other physical processes; they are also, in the next instance, accounts of the achievements of generation after generation of primitive men, stemmers of torrents, drainers of marshes, clearers of forest, hunters of noxious beasts, pioneers, reclaimers, and founders of civilization.

There remains a final and cogent argument in favour of the view we have been defending concerning the Centaurs. We have seen that this view has the merit of explaining one difficulty about them, that of the identity between the sage Cheiron and his evil horde. It also explains another, that of the different relation which we have shown to subsist at different periods between the Centaurs and the *thiasos* of Bacchus. There is no question, of course, but that Satyr and Seilenos are personified powers of nature; powers of nature's fertility, of her exuberance, of the teeming life that is in her tilled and in her solitary places, of the moisture in the stream, the sap in the tree and the liquor in the fruit. If the Centaurs are kindred powers, the likeness between the shapes in which they were conceived as respectively existing is self-explained. It is natural that two nearly allied sets of personifications should be invested with nearly the same physical attributes. But the two sets were called to different destinies. The Centaurs, representing powers of inundation, that ravage as well as fertilise, were conceived as engaged in deadly warfare with ancestral man. Not so the Satyrs, representing powers of fertility only. Both are half brutal, but the Centaurs alone are terrible; the Satyrs are gross and freakish merely. Monsters that were from the first conceived as the typical enemies of heroes held a very different place in the Greek imagination from monsters that were conceived as merely the roguish sprites of the woodland. The *γένος οὔτιδανῶν Σατύρων καὶ ἀμηχανοέργων*¹ are a much less serious and formidable kind of creature than the *τετρασκελὲς ὕβρισμα Κενταύρων γένος*.² The latter belong to the oldest and gravest epic and heroic legends; *κάρτιστοι μὲν ἔσαν καὶ καρπίστοις ἐμάχοντο*; it is only in the popular burlesques of such legends that the former have their part. While the strife against the Centaurs was celebrated as all but the earliest

¹ Hesiod, ap. Strab. 471.

² Eur. *Herc. fur.* 181; comp. Soph. *Trach.* 1085:—

διφυῆ τ' ἄμικτον ἵπποβάμονα στρατὸν
θηρῶν, ὕβριστήν ἄνομον ὑπέροχον βίαν.

deed of Greek prowess, wherein took part in their youth heroes who were old at the siege of Troy, and fathers whose sons sailed with Jason to Kolchis, the Satyrs were only thought of as frolic imps, lurking in field and woodland under the leadership of the old Seilenos. As the popular worship of Dionysos extended and complicated itself, with a mingling of Greek elements and elements imported from Thrace and from Asia, Satyr and Seilenos were early enrolled as his appropriate ministers and attendants. But this was not the case with the Centaurs. Dionysos being the great god of the earth's fertility in all its forms, these monsters of the flood came indeed within the scope of the ideas relating to him. He crosses their story here and there, and in the Arcadian version of the story, at least, it is at the broaching of his intoxicating gift that their violence is fabled to break forth. But they were not enrolled among his regular following until the heroic myths had lost their power and their weight of meaning in the declining days of the Greek imagination. As long as the Greeks took in solemn earnest the ancestral traditions of their race, as long as the Athenian sculptors saw in the struggles of Theseus and Herakles against these monsters so many struggles of civilization against savagery, of disciplinæ against lawlessness, of Hellas against barbarism, and tried to embody them in forms worthy of that conception, so long there was little likelihood of the mighty Centaurs being identified with the merely mischievous Satyrs. Even the facial resemblance between them is in some of the works of the Athenian school nearly wanting. The sculptors of that school, in the Olympian pediment, the Phigaleian frieze, and the Parthenon metopes, vary as to the adoption or omission of the degrading feature of animal ears. They express upon the countenances of the monsters violent expressions of lust, pain, and rage, but otherwise raise them much above mere types of grotesqueness and debasement, and in a few instances (particularly in the Parthenon metopes) even ennoble them within a few degrees of the heroes against whom they contend. But this heroic spirit was of short duration. It was almost extinct after the close of the Peloponnesian War. The second great Attic school, working in the first half of the fourth century B.C., transformed the spirit of art; playful or pathetic invention took the place of the old ethical and political seriousness. Then the original, the

mythologic affinity between the Centaur and the Satyr was free to assert itself, and to bring together the trivial creature and the terrible, with his terror taken out of him, in the modes so abundantly illustrated in later monuments. How far this consummation may have been prepared by the travesties of heroic legends exhibited on the comic and satyric stage we have not sufficient evidence to show. The innovation of Zeuxis concerning Centaureesses and little Centaurs, of which we have already spoken, is the first recorded step in the descent; of this particular innovation the vase-paintings show no trace nor reflection. The incorporation of the Centaurs among the increasingly popular cycle of Dionysos and his satellites is another step; and of that, as we have seen, the vase-paintings show but few scattered evidences before the extinction of the art. Meantime the serious literature of Greece from Homer downwards, and her popular art from the earliest times almost to the latest, keep the two orders of beings apart. *Kômos* and *Gelôs*, *Skôps* and *Simos*, *Kissos*, *Oinopiôn*, and *Dorkis*, may play the apes of heroes at the shows of Bacchus; but *Cheiron* and *Pholos*, *Nessos*, *Eurytion* and *Asbolos*, *Hylaios*, *Petraios*, and *Oreios* had been themselves the equal friends or foes of heroes amid the imagined greatness of the past. If they are worth the study we have been expending upon them, it is because of the dignity which they derive from that association.

SIDNEY COLVIN.