SCENES FROM EURIPIDES. RUGBY EDITION. THE CYCLOPS

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SCENES

FROM

EURIPIDES

Rugby Edition.

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THE CYCLOPS

NEW EDITION.

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PREFACE TO THE CYCLOPS.

THE vintage or feast of Dionysus at Athens was originally celebrated with choric songs interspersed with rude dialogue. It was half farce, half revel, but was regarded as a religious rite in honour of the merry god. Out of this was gradually developed the tragedy. In the time of Euripides, these tragedies were exhibited in threes, generally concluding with what was called a Satyric play, of a more jocular cast, and more closely resembling the old Dionysiac drama. The whole four were by one author and were called a tetralogy.

The Satyric drama was quite distinct from the comedy proper, as it always contained some heroic character, was written in tragic metre (with one or two licenses), and was acted along with tragedies.

The Cyclops is interesting, as being the only true Satyric drama extant. The Alcestis contains a Satyric element, and was the closing piece of a tetralogy; but it is more nearly allied to a tragedy proper.

The story is taken from the ninth book of the Odyssey.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Σειληνός, leader of the Satyrs.

Χόρος of Satyrs.

Ὀδυσσεύς, with his sailors.

Κύκλωψ, the one-eyed giant Polyphemus.

The scene is the entrance of a large rocky cavern at the foot of Aetna. In the cave are seen the drinking troughs and pens for the goats.

In the distance is seen the sea-coast, with a ship at anchor in the bay.

The scene is the same all through the play.

ARGUMENT.

SILENUS and the Satyrs, sailing in search of DIONYSUS, are cast ashore on Sicily, where the CYCLOPS POLYPHEMUS captures them and makes them his slaves. On the same coast ULYSSES and his crew chance to land, in want of provisions, and falling in with SILENUS, readily bribe him with wine to give them kids and cheeses.

Suddenly the CYCLOPS appears, drives the Greeks into his den, and makes a meal of two of them. Ulysses with the help of the Satyrs lays a plot to escape. He makes the giant drunk, and drives a red-hot stake into his eye. When he is thus blinded, they escape, and mount their ship, followed by the Satyrs, and vainly threatened by POLYPHEMUS, who ascends a height to pelt the boat with stones.

SCENE I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

Enter SILENUS, *a stout bald-headed old man, with a short, thick, and very red nose; he has pointed ears, bristly hair, two little horns on his forehead, and a tail like a goat. He is carrying an iron rake, and looks utterly squalid and miserable.*

ΣΕ. Ὦ Βρόμιε, διὰ σὲ μυρίους ἔχω πόνους
νῦν, χὤτ' ἐν ἥβῃ τοὐμὸν ἠὐσθένει δέμας·
πρῶτον μέν, ἡνίκ' ἐμμανὴς Ἥρας ὕπο
νύμφας ὀρείας ἐκλιπὼν ᾤχου τροφούς·
ἔπειτά τ', ἀμφὶ γηγενῆ μάχην δορός, 5
ἐνδέξιος σῷ ποδὶ παρασπιστὴς γεγώς,
Ἐγκέλαδον, ἰτέαν εἰς μέσην θενών, δορὶ
ἔκτεινα· [*smacking his forehead doubtfully*]
φέρ' ἴδω· τοῦτ' ἰδὼν ὄναρ λέγω;
[*joyfully*] οὐ μὰ Δί', ἐπεὶ καὶ σκῦλ' ἔδειξα Βακχίῳ.
καὶ νῦν ἐκείνων μείζον' ἐξαντλῶ πόνον. 10
ἐπεὶ γὰρ Ἥρα σοὶ γένος Τυρσηνικὸν
λῃστῶν ἐπῶρσεν, ὡς ὁδηθείης μακράν,
ἐγὼ πυθόμενος σὺν τέκνοισι ναυστολῶ
σέθεν κατὰ ζήτησιν· ἐν πρύμνῃ δ' ἄκρᾳ
αὐτὸς λαβὼν ηὔθυνον ἀμφῆρες δόρυ· 15
παῖδές τ' ἐρετμοῖς ἥμενοι γλαυκὴν ἅλα
ῥοθίοισι λευκαίνοντες ἐζήτουν σ', ἄναξ.