

THE
GOLDEN FLEECE:

OR,

JASON IN COLCHIS,

AND

MEDEA IN CORINTH;

A CLASSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA,

IN TWO PARTS, 

BY J. R. PLANCHÉ, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"Fortunio," "The White Cat," "Beauty and the Beast,"

"The Sleeping Beauty" "Grist to the Mill,"

"The Fair One with the Golden Locks," "Somebody Else,"

"The Drama at Home," "Graciosa and Percinet,"

Correctly Printed from the Prompt Book, with Exits

Entrances, &c.

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET

ON

EASTER-MONDAY, MARCH 24th, 1845.

LONDON:

S. G. FAIRBROTHER, 31, BOW STREET,

AND

W. STRANGE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1845.

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S. G. FAIRBROTHER, PRINTER, BOW STREET

COVENT GARDEN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE FIRST PART.

Entirely original, founded on the third and fourth books of "the Argonautics," a poem by the late Apollonius Rhodius, Esq., principal Librarian to his Egyptian Majesty. Ptolemy Evergetes, professor of Greek Poetry in the Royal College of Alexandria, &c. &c., and entitled

JASON IN COLCHIS.

Æetes, King of Colchis (*Possessor of the original Golden Fleece*) Mr JAMES BLAND
Jason, (*Commander of "the Argo," and son of Æson, the deposed King of Iolchos*)..Miss P. HORTON
Anonymous, (*Capt. of the Royal Guards*) Mr CAULFIELD
Medea (*Daughter of Æetes, an enchanting creature*) Madame VESTRIS
Argonauts (i. e. *Crew of "the Argo"*)

By a number of Young Persons under Fifty,
Colchian Nobles, Sages, Guards, &c.

THE SECOND PART.

Very freely translated from the popular tragedy of Euripides, and particularly adapted to the Haymarket stage, under the title of

MEDEA IN CORINTH.

Creon, (*King of Corinth*) Mr JAMES BLAND
(**Who, by particular desire, and on this occasion only, has most obligingly consented to be twice the King he usually is at this festive season.**)
Jason (*Married but not settled, exceedingly classical but very far from correct*) .Miss P. HORTON
Medea, . . (*Jason's lawfully wedded wife, and mother of two fine boys, both likely to do well, which it more than can be said of their parents*) Madame VESTRIS
Mermeros, } *the two fine boys aforesaid* { Master ELDER
Pheres, } } Master YOUNGER
Psuche, (*a good old soul—nurse to the two fine boys aforesaid*) Miss CARRE
Corinthians, Guards, &c.

N.B.—The public is respectfully informed, that in order to produce this Grand Classical Work in a style which may defy competition in any other establishment, the lessee has, regardless of expense, engaged

Mr CHARLES MATHEWS

To represent the whole body of the Chorus, rendering at least fifty-nine male voices entirely unnecessary.

The stage, which has been constructed after the approved fashion of the revived Greek theatre, will be partially raised, but the prices of admission remain exactly as before. It is requisite to observe, that frequent change of scene being contrary to the usage of the ancient Greek Drama, several of the most

SPLENDID PICTORIAL EFFECTS

Will be left entirely to the imagination of the audience.

ARGUMENT.

As the facts upon which the first part of this classical extravaganza is founded, are fully detailed in "the Argonautics," of Apollonius Rhodius, and do not admit of dispute, of course there can be no argument at all on the subject. But the case is different as regards the second part, inasmuch as Ælian declares that Medea did not murder her children, as represented by Euripides; but that they were disposed of, to use a mild phrase, by the people of Corinth, in revenge for the destruction of Creon and his daughter, by the very-much-injured-and-undoubtedly-with-sufficient-provocation-to-distraction-driven-better-half of Jason. The same erudite historian also states, that the Corinthians actually paid five golden talents to Euripides to lay the *guilt* on Medea; and the author of the present drama has, therefore, most generously expended the only talent he possessed, in altering the catastrophe so as to redeem the character of the unfortunate heroine. It may be as well also to mention that two characters in the Medea of Euripides, viz., Ægeus, King of Athens, and the pedagogue entrusted with the education of Medea's children, have been omitted in this version. The monarch, because he is supposed to be at home—and the schoolmaster, because he is known to be abroad.

THE
GOLDEN FLEECE

PART FIRST.

JASON IN COLCHIS.

THE PALACE OF ÆETES, KING OF
COLCHIS.

Three doors in centre ; a large arch, R. & L.

As the curtain rises, the ship Argo comes into port. ÆETES attended, enters and takes his seat. JASON and the Argo, nauts enter. Enter CHORUS in front of the raised stage-stopping ÆETES, who is about to speak.

Cho. Friends, countrymen, lovers, first listen to me,
I'm the Chorus : Whatever you hear or you see,
That you don't understand, I shall rise to explain—
It's a famous old fashion that's come up again,
And will be of great service to many fine plays,
That nobody can understand now-a-days;
And think what a blessing, if found intervening,
When the author himself scarcely knows his own
meaning.
You may reap from it too, an advantage still further
When an actor is bent upon marriage or murder,
To the Chorus his scheme he, in confidence, mentions
'Stead of telling the pit all his secret intentions ;
A wondrous improvement you all will admit,
And the secret is just as well heard by the pit.

Verbum sat:—To the wise, I'll not put one more
word in,
Or instead of a Chorus they'll think me a burden,
But just say, this is Colchis, and that's King Æetes,
And this is young Jason, be coming to meet is.
And there are the forty odd friends of young Jason,
And that's their ship Argo, just entering the bason.
At the end of each scene I shall sing you some history
Or clear up whatever is in it of mystery,
But I can't tell you why—unless English I speak,
For this very plain reason—there's no Y in Greek.
[Retires.]

Æet. Ye who have dared to tread on Colchian ground,
Who and what are ye ? whence and whither bound ?

Jas. Hail, great Æetes, if you are no less—
My name is Jason, now perhaps you'll guess
My errand here.

Æet We are not good at guessing ;
Speak, and remember whom you are addressing !
Son of the Sun, and grand-son of the Ocean,
Of anything like nonsense we've no notion !

AIR.—JASON.

"I am a brisk and lively lad."
I am a brisk and lively lad
As ever sail'd the seas on,
Cretheus was old Æson's dad,
And I'm the son of Æson !
With a yeo, yeo, yeo, yeo, &c.
A martyr to rheumatic gout
A feeble, king was he, sir;
So uncle Pelias kicked him out,
And packed me off to sea, sir.
With a yeo, yeo, yeo, yeo, &c
And now I've with a jolly crew,
Sailed in the good ship Argo,
To rub off an old score with you,
Then back again to Pago.
With a yeo, yeo, yeo, yeo, &c.

Æet. Yeo! yeo! yeo! yeo!—I never heard such lingo,
Speak in plain words, you rascal, or by jingo—

Jas. In one word, then—you killed my cousin Phryxus
And we are come for vengeance!

Æet. [Aside] There he nicks us

- My good young man, it is so long ago,
I scarce remember if I did or no;
Some little circumstance may have occurred
Of that description, but upon my word—
- Jas.* Nay, no evasion, you owe reparation.
- Æet.* I plead the statute, then, of limitation.
- Jas.* Of limitation, in a case of murther?
- Æet.* Why pursue such a subject any further?
- Jas.* Pursue a subject!—I pursue a king,
And to the grindstone mean his nose to bring.
- Æet.* [*aside*] Bring my nose to the grindstone! Father
Phoebus!
- There is no modus in this fellow's "rebus;"
He looks determind, bullying's no use,
To save my bacon, I must cook his goose!
[*aloud*] What reparation then may purchase peace ?
- Jas.* The restoration of the golden fleece,
Of which you fleeced my cousin!
- Æet.* Pray be cool,
All this great cry for such a little wool!
To take it if you can, sir, you are free,
No difficulty will be made by me ;
But there are some obstructions in the way,
Which must all be surmounted in one day.
- Jas.* To them I must beg immediate introduction.
- Æet.* Two bulls are one.
- Jas.* One bull, or one obstruction?
- Æet.* Two savage bulls, that breathe out fire and smoke,
You'll have to catch and break them to the yoke,
Then plough four acres, yonder crag beneath,
And sow them with a set of serpent's teeth,
From which will spring o'ldiers a fine crop,
Whose heads, to save your own, you off must chop;
Then if the dragon set to guard the treasure
Will let you, you may take it at your pleasure.
- Jas.* In one day this must all be done?
- Æet.* Just so.
- Jas.* Anything else in a small way?
- Æet.* Why no.
- There's nothing else occurs to me at present.
- Jas.* What will occur to me, is most unpleasant.
- Æet.* It's optional, you know, you needn't do it
Unless you like.
- Jas.* Honour compels me to it
- Offi.* The princess.

Enter MEDEA.

Jan. Gods !—a goddess, sure I gaze on.

Æet. My daughter, sir,—Medea, Mr Jason !

[introduces them.]

QUARTETTO.

" *Donna del Lago.*"

JASON, MEDEA, ÆETES and ANONYMOUS.

Jas. To Kalon,—to sail on

In quest of, who would deign now ?

Eureka! To seek a

Supremer bliss were vain now!

Pros Theon! my knee on!

I sink before such beauty!

Medea! to thee a

Poor Grecian pays his duty.

Med. [*aside*] O Jason ! thy face on

I wish I ne'er had look'd sir!

So spicy and nice he

Is—I'm completely hooked, sir !

His glances like lances,

Right through my heart he throws, O!

Enraptured! I'm captured

By that fine Grecian nose, O !

Æet. [*aside*] By Jupiter Ammon !

If me he thinks to gammon,

Despite of his mettle

His hash I soon will settle;

I'll hang at least forty

Of these bold Argonauts,

I'll scuttle the Argo

And confiscate the cargo!

Med. [*aside*] Sure there ne'er was such a duck, sir ?

Down he seems upon his luck, sir!

I will cheer him—safely steer him;

I for him will run a muck, sir,

Teach him bow to plough and sow.

Jas. [*aside*] Overboard my cares I'd chuck, sir,

If to Greece with me she'd go.

Æet. [*to JAS*] Pray, walk in, and take pot luck, sir,

[*Aside*] For full soon to pot you go!

Staring like a pig that's stuck, sir,

To the ground he seems to grow !

Anon. [*aside*] Down he seems upon his luck, sir,

To a goose he can't say " boh!"

Exeunt ÆT. JAS. & ARC.

Med. Too lovely youth! wou'd I had ne'er set eyes on him
 Papa had better mind what tricks he tries on him.
 Oh Eros ! vulgarly called Cupid, Oh !
 Thou god of love. In all the Greek I know,
 And that's not much, I will apostrophize thee !
 In vain the heart of mortal woman flies thee;
 I, even I, feel sure that very soon I
 Shall be on that young man, exceeding spoony !

AIR.—MEDEA.

"John Anderson."

You wanton son of Venus,
 My heart in twain you've rent;
 Against no other maiden,
 Could your wicked bow be bent ?
 It may seem very bold, but
 I love young Jason so;
 If he were to pop the question, I
 Don't think I could say, "no."
 If be wool gathering go, love,
 My wits the wool shall gather—
 In one boat we will row, love,
 In spite of wind and weather;
 And if to Davy Jones, love,
 We hand and hand should go,
 We'll sleep together in the old
 Boy's locker down below.

[*Exit MED.*—*CHO. advances.*

Cho. Young ladies, I'm sure you need no explanation,
 Of the cause of Medea's extreme perturbation;
 And yet he's so handsome—this young Grecian
 swain,
 You'll none of you say that the cause is too plain.
 However, my business at present is merely
 To tell what may not have appeared quite so clearly :
 The cause of the voyage, which the ship Argo
 Young Jason has taken ; and why this embargo
 Is laid on the fleece, which lies here on the shelf;
 And as I'm the Chorus I'll sing it myself.

SONG.—CHORUS.

"The Tight Little Island."

There reigned once on a time, o'er Bœotia's clime,
 A King, (Athamas he's known by name as;)
 He pack'd off his first wife, and thought her the worst wife,
 Till the second the first proved the same as.

This second was Ino, who, you know
 Was very displeasing to Juno,
 And a shocking step-mother the children of t'other
 Found her to their cost, pretty soon, oh!
 She threatened with slaughter her step-son and daughter,
 But a ram with a fine golden fleece, sir,
 Flew up thro' the sky, with them so very high,
 They could not see the least spot of Greece, sir!
 They got in a deuce of a fright, sir,
 Poor Helle, she couldn't hold tight, sir!
 She fell in the sea, but the young fellow, he
 Came over to Colchis all right, sir!
 What do you think this nice man did, as soon as he landed
 And found himself safe, the young sinner ?
 He saw the king's daughter, made love to, and caught her,
 And had the poor ram killed for dinner.
 'Twas very ungrateful you'll say, sir,
 But, alas! of the world it's the way, sir,
 When all a friend can, you have done for a man,
 He'll cut you quite dead the next day, sir !
 But his father-in-law, who the golden fleece saw,
 Thought " Oh! oh ! two can play at that game, sir,"
 And so one fine morning, without any warning,
 He served Master Phryxus the same, sir.
 Before they knew what he was at, sir,
 He'd killed him as dead as a rat, sir.
 He stuck him right thro', 'twas a wrong thing to do,
 But Kings don't stick at trifles like that, sir.
 Well, to finish my song, which is getting too long,
 He hung up this famed golden fleece, sir.
 On a tree in his park, and by way of a lark,
 Set a dragon to act as police, sir;
 If Medea don't help him, you see, sir,
 Sharp work it for Jason will be sir,
 The Altar of Hecat'
 They're coming to speak at,
 But of course that's betwixt you and me, sir. [CHO. retires

Enter MEDEA, bearing a small golden box, and JASON.

Jas. Turn, fair enchantress, too bewitching maid !
 A doating lover supplicates your aid ;
 A thousand charms all own that you possess,
 Spare one to get me out of this sad mess.

Lo, I implore you! sinking on my sad knee—
Remember Theseus and Ariadne,
To thread the labyrinth, a clue she gave him,
And from the beast (half bull, half man) to save him,
Went the whole hog.

Med. She did, I don't deny it,
And brought her pigs to a fine market by it.
Deceived, deserted on destruction's brink,
She rushed to Bacchus—that is, took to drink.
To draw a parallel:—should Fate decree
As A to B, so C would be to D.

Jas. If I be C, and D my friend in need,
When C proves false to D may C be d—d!

Med. Great Hecate! hear my ditto to that oath,
And for the same dark journey book us both.
If true to Jason I do not remain,
Send me to Hades by the first down train
Now mark this box of ointment, do not doubt—
Whate'er your foes this salve will sarve 'em out,
Who it anointed, you may boldly take
Each bull by the horns, nor fear a bull to make.
Thro' the hard soil 'twill speed the plough and bear,
In all thy labours, more than the plough's share.
When sown the serpent's teeth, prepare to fight;
It's no use showing teeth if you can't bite.
But as the soldiers rise, first take a sight at 'em,
Then pick up the first stone and shy it right at 'em ;
On which, each thinking it was thrown by t'other,
They'll all draw swords and cut down one another.
An easy victory you thus may reap—
As to the dragon pa has set to keep
Watch o'er the fleece, so vigilant and grim,
I'll mix a dose that soon shall doctor him.

Jot. My dear Medea! O, Medea my dear!
How shall I make my gratitude appear ?
If I succeed, I swear, to Greece I'll carry you,
And there, as sure as you're alive, I'll marry you.

Med. Enough ; I take your word and you my casket.
My heart was Jason's ere he came to ask it.
But oh, beware! I give you early warning;
If, your pledged faith and my fond passion scorning,
You with another venture to philander,
To the infernal regions off I'll hand her,
And lead you such a life as, on my word, will
Make e'en the cream of Tartarus to curdle.

You were about to say; but answer me,
Have I done wrong ?

CHORUS. You—

MEDEA. Interrupt me not.

Have I done wrong, I ask ? if so, in what ?

CHORUS. I—

MEDEA. Ah! your silence answers me too plainly.

CHORUS. But—

MEDEA. And you offer consolation vainly.

'Gainst Fate's decree to strive, who has the brass ?

For what must be, comes usually to pass.

So let me haste and pack up my portmanteau—

I've got that horrid dragon to enchant, too !

CHORUS. If I might ask—

MEDEA. How that I mean to do ?

In confidence, I don't mind telling you.

This dragon is a very artful dodger,

And sleeps with one eye open—the sly codger!

Now, as we daren't approach, a stick to pop in it,

The only chance is, if he gets a drop in it;

For though notoriously a scaly fellow,

He has not the least objection to get mellow,

At any one's expense, except his own.

He's partial to an ardent spirit, known

By several names, and worshipped under all;

Some "Cupid's eye water" the liquor call.

"White Satin" come, whilst others, wisely viewing

The baneful beverage, brand it as "Blue Ruin."

A plant called Juniper the juice supplies,

And oft beneath the Hyperborean skies,

A bowl-full, mixed with raisins of the sun,

Gay youths and maidens set on fire for fun,

And call it snap-dragon. Now, my specific

Is this—I'll brew a potent soporific,

And in it steep a branch of this fell tree,

Which, when the dragon sniffs, with eager glee,

He'll fall o'erpower'd by its strong aroma,

Into what doctors call a state of coma,

And if into his eyes he gets a drop,

'Twill change the coma into a full stop.

Then off with Jason and the Golden Fleece,
I fly to Thessaly, "as slick as grease."

DUET.—*French Air.*

MEDEA	<i>and</i>	CHORUS.
Now farewell; for I must go,		Oh.
To invoke my magic Ma,		Ah.
Then to pack my portmanteau,		Oh.
Ere I plunder poor papa.		Ah.
When from Colchis far away.		Eh.
With the only Greek I know,		Oh.
To my Jason I will say—		Eh.
"Zoe mou sas agapo."		Oh.

[*Exit* MEDEA.]

CHORUS. Æetes comes, looking as black as thunder,
And when you hear the cause you'll say "no
wonder;"
For Jason, aided by Medea's spell,
Has done the trick, and done the king as well.
You'll think, perhaps, you should have seen him do it,
But 't isn't classical—you'll hear, not view it.
Whatever taxed their talent or their means,
These sly old Grecians did *behind* the scenes;
So fired with the example, boldly we
Beg you'll suppose whate'er you wish to see.

Enter ÆETES, *attended,* and JASON.

SONG and CHORUS.—JASON, ÆETES, OFFICER, and
CHORUS.—*Heiterersinn Polka*

ÆETES. OFFICER. & CHO.	}	Here's a precious row, sir! What shall we/will you do now sir? He takes the bulls And down he pulls, And yokes them to the plough. He tills the acres four, sir, And what's the greater bore, sir, The teeth he sows, And down he mows, My Your Soldiers by the score!
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JASON. Glorious Apollo! the victory's mine!
 Out of your son I have taken the shine ;
 Spite of his teeth and his troops of the line,
 Cock of the walk am I!

ÆETES,
 OFFICES, } Here's a precious row, sir, &c.
 & CHO.

JASON. Lo ! King of Colchis, all my tasks are done,
 And yet o'er Caucasus behold the sun.

ÆETES. Still from the dragon you the fleece must win,
 Ere out of this you get in a whole skin.
 Wound up, you'll find, his watch he'll always keep,
 You sooner might a weazel catch asleep,
 And shave his eyebrow—so about it go ;
 If he don't eat you, call and let me know. [Exit.

JASON. So, then, I've worked the whole day like a nigger,
 To cut, at last this mighty silly figure !
 Like a Lord Chancellor, compell'd to pack,
 I've lost the wool, and only got the sack.
 For where's Medea, with her magic flagon—
 The dose that was to doctor that deep dragon ?
 She's chang'd her mind, she neither comes nor sends,
 And fate cries, " Kick him, he's got no friends."
 Embasian Phœbus, thou ungrateful sun!
 Was it for this a salted Sally Lunn
 We offered thee, the night before the day
 The Minyans left the Pagasœan Bay ?
 Wilt thou descend behind Promethean Caucasus,
 Forgetful that on earth such creatures walk as us ?
 Deaf on the shores of Aramanthine Phasis,
 To him who made thy altars burn like blazes !
 And vowed to roast whole oxen to thee, more
 Than ever hailed a son and heir before.
 Magnus Apollo *thou* ? Pooh ! Go to bed,
 In Tethis' lap hide thy diminished head.
 No sun of mine—to say it I'm glad;
 But were I Zeus, thy immortal dad,
 I would myself the world, without a blush, light,
 And cut you off without a farthing rushlight.

AIR.—JASON. " *Then farewell, my trim-built Wherry.*"

Now, farewell, my trim-built Argo—
 Greece and Fleece, and all farewell;
 Never more, as supercargo,
 Shall poor Jason cut a swell!
 To the dragon, quite a stranger,
 All alone, I'm left to go ;
 And to think upon my danger,
 Makes me feel extremely low.
 My catastrophe too plain is ;
 Hecate's daughter seals my doom!
 Come then, friends, to Jason's manes,
 Sacrifice a hecatomb!

What do I see ? Oh, Sol, I ask your pardon,
 I've been too hasty—Yonder, through the garden,
 Medea comes to save her doating Jason.

*Enter MEDEA, carrying a bowl of lighted spirits, and in
 the other a branch of juniper.*

What's that she carries burning in a bason ?

MEDEA. A dainty dish to set before the dragon.
 His scaly shoulders how his head will wag on,
 When first the odour of this branch he twigs ;
 But if a drop out of this bowl he swigs,
 Deeming it gin—all is not gold that glitters—
 To him 'twill prove a dose of gin and bitters.

JASON. Matchless Medea! I'm all admiration.

MEDEA. Silence, whilst I commence my *gin*-cantation.

SONG.—MEDEA. " *The Mistletoe Bough.*"
 The juniper bough * to my aid I call.
 Its spirit, of millions, has worked the fall ;
 And the dragon is longing snap-dragon to play,
 Like a boy on a Christmas holiday.
 Above him, behold my father's pride—
 The beautiful fleece—the golden ram's hide.

* " A branch of Juniper the maid applies,
 Steep'd in a baneful potion, to his eyes."
Argonautics, B. 3 L. 173. Fawkes' (Guy ?) Translation.

But stop till the monster asleep you see,
 For he's mighty awkward company.
 Wave the juniper bough,
 Wave the juniper bough.

Behold the monster overcome by sleep,
 Nods to his fall, like a ruin on a steep;
 'Tis done ! He sinks upon the ground, supine,
 His end approaches, make it answer thine.
 Hence! With bold hand the fleecy treasure tear
 Down from this beach, and hasten to that there.

JASON *goes off, and re-enters with the fleece.*

JASON. Arise, ye Minyans.

Enter ARGONAUTS.

If again ye'd scan
 Thessalia's shore, make all the sail you can.
 For "pris'ners base" you'll soon be, with your skipper,
 If once her dad is roused to " hunt the slipper."

[Exeunt ARGONAUTS.]

CHORUS. With her bold Argonaut Medea flies,
 Though, "Ah, go not," the voice of duty cries.
 With golden wool her ears sly Cupid stops,
 And, like a detonator, off she pops,
 In peace to pass, with Jason, all her days,
 Till he or she the debt o' natur' pays. (*retires.*)

(The Argo is seen leaving the Port—distant shout.)

Enter ÆETES.

ÆETES. My mind misgives me — wherefore was that
 shout ?

What, ho ! my slaves within—my guards without!

Enter GUARDS and SAGES.

We are betrayed! robbed! murdered! See—oh,
 treason!

Yonder he goes, that young son of—old Æson.
 He's killed my dragon—stolen my Golden Fleece—
 To arms, my Colchians! Stop thief! Police!

[Exeunt GUARDS.]

CHORUS. (*advancing.*) Be calm, great king—'tis destiny's decree.

ÆETES. How dare you talk of destiny to me!

What right have you with such advice to bore us ?

CHORUS. Sir, I'm the chorus.

ÆETES. Sir, you're indecorous.

Where is my daughter ?

CHORUS. Hopped off with the skipper.

ÆETES. Impious Medea ! may the furies whip her

At the cart's tail of Thespis.

Enter OFFICIAL and GUARDS.

Now, your news ?

OFFICIAL. Your son, Absyrtus—

ÆETES. Speak—

OFFICIAL. My lips refuse

Almost, O king, to tell the horrid tale.

ÆETES. My heir apparent ?

OFFICIAL. Dead as a door nail!

ÆETES. Say in what manner hath his spirit fled ?

OFFICIAL. The fist of Jason punched his royal head.

Upon the shores of rapid-rolling Ister

The youthful prince o'ertook his faithless sister,

When Pelian Jason, on his knowledge box,

Let fly a blow that would have felled an ox—

Black'd both his precious eyes, before so blue,

And from his nose the vital claret drew.

ÆETES. Ah, me! That blow has fallen on my pate.

CHORUS. In Jason's fist behold the hand of fate.

ÆETES. I do—I do! that hits me right and left.

My daughter's stolen what I gained by theft.

Phryxus I slew—my son is now a shade ;

Put me to bed, ye Colchians, with a spade.

That fatal punch—I feel it in my noddle.

And down to Pluto I but ask to toddle.

CHORUS. Have patience, man, and learn this truth sublime—

You can't go even *there* before your time!

(*Thunder and lightning. The palace sinks, and the Argo is seen under sail, with JASON, MEDEA, and the ARGONAUTS.*)

END OF PART FIRST.

PART II.—MEDEA IN CORINTH.

*The Palace of Creon, Corinth. On the L. H. the country;
on the R. the city, with Medea's house.*

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS. The bills have informed you, some years have
passed by,
Since we parted in Colchis, then Colchian was I;
Now in Corinth, of course, I'm Corinthian, in order
To hold in this city the place of recorder.
Imprimis.—The king of this state is called Creon.
By the way, no relative to him whom you see on.
The throne of old Thebes, the car celebrated
By Antigone check'd and Eurydice mated ;
No, this is another guess sort of a person,
Whose daughter, fair Glauce's a girl to write verse on.
Now it happens, you see, that Medea and Jason,
Whose conduct in Greece has brought both some
disgrace on,
Came hither to court, and the libertine saucy,
Begg'd Creon's permission to come to court Glauce,
And got it, by this very shameful duplicity—
Disturbing Medea's connubial felicity,
In a manner that really is most reprehensible
In a family man—in short, quite indefensible—
And, in one so well knowing the lady's vivacity,
An act which says little for Jason's sagacity;
But here comes the nurse, who is hired to take care of
The boys, which Medea has brought him a pair of.
She's a querulous gossiping old Greek gammer,
In matters of this sort as down as a hammer.

Enter NURSE.

NURSE. Oh, that the hull of that fifty-oared cutter—the
Argo,
Between the Symplegades, never had passed with it's
cargo!

Indeed, I may say that I wish, upon Pelion, the pine
trees
Of which it was built had remained, as they were,
very fine trees;
For had there been never a boat in which man
could have brought her,
My poor ill-used missis had never come over the
water;
Nor—having, for that wicked Jason, cut all her
connections—
Seen another young lady possessing her husband's
affections.

CHORUS. Good woman, you seem in a terrible taking ?
May I ask you if any more mischief is making ?
Is there anything new, pray, respecting the scandal
To which our friend, Jason, is giving a handle ?

NURSE. As I was a-walking, just now, by the fount of
Pirene,
I heard one old file say to another " I'll bet you
a guinea
That Creon, in order to bring about his daughter's
marriage,
Will pack off Medea and both her brats in a second
class carriage,
Clean out of the kingdom."

CHORUS. And does she suspect his intention ?

NURSE. I don't know; and to her I don't fancy the
matter to mention:

She's half wild as it is, and quite crazy I think it
would drive her,

To be passed to her parish without, in her pocket, a
stiver.

MEDEA. (*within.*) O me! alas ! alack and well a day!

NURSE. Hush, that's her voice—she's in a precious way.

CHORUS. Persuade her here awhile in verse to spout;
She seems in famous voice for singing out.

NURSE. I'll do my best—but, when so loud you hear her,
It's rather dangerous to come a-near her. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS. She'll comb young Jason's wig—and serve him
right!

I'll bet five talents he's been out all night.

Enter MEDEA.

O ! mighty Theseus and adored Diana!
 How long must I be treated in this manner ?
 The wretch to whom my virgin faith was plighted;
 To whom, in lawful wedlock, I'm united,
 Has gone and popped the question to another,
 And left me, of two chopping boys, the mother!

SONG.—MEDEA. "*The Fine Young English Gentleman*"

I'll tell you a sad tale of the life I've been led of late,
 By the false Boëtian Boatswain, of whom I am the mate;
 Who quite forgets the time when I pitied his hard fate,
 And he swore eternal constancy by all his gods so great;
 Like a fine young Grecian gentleman,
 One of the classic time!

Now he lives in a fine lodging, in the palace over there,
 Whilst I and his poor children are poked in a back two
 pair;
 And though he knows I've scarcely got another gown to
 wear,
 He squanders on another woman every farthing he's got
 to spare;

 Like a false young Grecian gentleman,
 One of the classic time.

He leaves me to darn his stockings, and mope in the house
 all day,
 Whilst he treats her to see "*Antigone*," with a box at the
 Grecian play,
 Then goes off to sup with Corinthian Tom, or whoever he
 meets by the way,
 And staggers home in a state of beer, like (I'm quite
 ashamed to say)

 A fine young Grecian gentleman,
 One of the classic time.

Then his head aches all the next day, and he calls the
 children a plague and a curse,
 And makes a jest of my misery, and says, " I took him for
 better or worse;"

And if I venture to grumble, he talks, as a matter of course,
 Of going to modern Athens, and getting a Scotch divorce !

 Like a base young Grecian gentleman,
 One of the classic time. (CHORUS *advances.*)

MEDEA. (*to* CHORUS.) Oh, thou Corinthian column of the nation,

Behold a woman driven to desperation.

CHORUS. Unhappy one! But you won't stand it, surely?

MEDEA. No! I'll be revenged on all most purely,
But whatsoe'er my project, be thou dumb
As doleful Dido.

CHORUS. Madam, I'm mum!
All decent people sure your side must be on—
But Creon comes, to act a new decree on.

Enter CREON, *attended.*

Madam, 'tis—(*to* CREON.) Stop! Though in another wig,

D'ye think the public won't Æetes twig?
You, Creon?

CREON. Now I am, and you should know it;
I play two parts to-night.

CHORUS. Oh, well then, go it.
'Twas to prevent confusion—don't be nettled.

CREON. The bills already have the matter settled:
Therefore, thou most inveterate of praters,
Close up the trap through which you put your taters.
(*to* MEDEA.) Madam, 'tis not my custom to mince matters,
So have the goodness to pack up your tatters;
And, with your brats, pack off, in less than no time.

MEDEA. Banished! (*aside.*) But I'll dissemble, and so gain time. (*aloud.*)

May I, of this new crochet, ask the reason?

CREON. We do suspect that you are up to treason;
And, as to cut our throat you might incline,
We take a stitch in time that may save nine.

MEDEA. Who can believe such thought I ever nurst?
I, kill a king?

CREON. It wouldn't be the first.
Remember Pelias!

MEDEA. A vile aspersion!
His daughters killed him.

CREON. That's a mere assertion.

MEDEA. I swear it.

CREON. Poo, poo, you know well enough.

CREON. 'Tis folly in me to retract,
 But I'm too tender hearted, that's the fact;
 So mind, till sunset you may go a shopping,
 But after dark, Medea, you'd best be hopping;
 For here if but another sun has seen 'em.
 I'll hang the two you have, and you between them.

TRIO.—CREON, MEDEA, and CHORUS. "*Midas*"

CREON. Would you live another day, ma'am,
 I'd advise you off to trot;
 If you like it better—stay ma'am,
 If you like it better—stay ma'am,
 But if you do—you'd better not.
 Fol de rol de rol, &c.

MEDEA. Fol de rol de rol, &c.

CHORUS. Fol de rol de rol, &c.

MEDEA. (*to* CREON.) From you I can hope no quarter,
 So to move I can't refuse.
 But I think I see his daughter—
(aside to CHORUS.
 But I think I see his daughter—
 Standing in Medea's shoes!
 Fol de rol de rol, &c.

CHORUS. (*aside to* MEDEA.) Fol de rol de rol, &c.

ALL. Fol de rol de rol, &c.

[Exit CREON *attended.*

MEDEA. Now for revenge ! Here comes perfidious Jason,
 I wonder he can dare to look my face on.

Enter JASON.

JASON. So, madam, not content with me abusing,
 The royal family you've been traducing;
 Your foolish jealousy has wrecked you quite,
 I'm sorry for you, but it serves you right.

MEDEA. And this to me, to thy devoted wife ;
 To me, who saved thy honour and thy life;
 When between two mad bulls, 'twas but a toss up ?
 To me, who made of all thy friends the loss up ?
 Who doomed the dragon to a fate forlorn
 Than any dragon fête at Hyde Park corner;
 Who, for thy sake, all filial love could smother,
 Who suffered thee to lick her little brother ?

Ungrateful Greek, false, flirting, perjured Jason!
The earth there lives no mortal wretch so base on.

JASON. It pains me, that a person of condition,
Should of herself make such an exhibition;
I own you got me out of some few hobbles,
But I'm quite sick of these domestic squabbles,
And have no talent for recrimination;
My lawyer's drawn a deed of separation,
And if you'll sign it, and not make a noise,
I'll settle something handsome on the boys.

MEDEA. My boys; ah, there you touch a mother's heart;
Well, when folks can't agree, 'tis best to part.
Be mine the punishment, as mine the sin is—
Why should it fall upon the piccaninies ?

JASON. A la bonne heure—now, madam, you talk sense,
I'm vexed you gave my friend, the king, offence,
And as to Glauce—

MEDEA. Oh ! don't name that creature!
I heard her say, " If your wife bores you, beat her.

JASON. You quite mistook her—the reverse meant she—
Beta, in Greek you know is, " Letter B "

MEDEA. I stand corrected, and am all submission,
And to prove how sincere is my contrition,
Some relics of my former rank and station,
Which, now to look upon were but vexation,
I'll beg her to accept in recollection
Of one who once possessed your heart's affection.
The splendid polka, richly bordered o'er,
Which at our last grand fancy ball I wore,
And a galvanic ring, of virtue rare,
From all rheumatic pains to guard the fair!

JASON. But, silly woman, why give them away ?

MEDEA. What now to me are rings or rich array ?
What right, what heart have I to cut a splash ?

JASON. But you might pop them if in want of cash.

MEDEA. Pop them ?—

JASON. Of course, tho' cast off by your father,
Your uncle might assist you.

MEDEA. I would rather
Perish than pawn such precious things, or see
The pride of one ball made the spoil of three !

JASON. If you are bent on it, *why* be it so.

MEDEA. Farewell.

JASON. You'll sign the deed before you go ?

MEDEA. Trust me, we part in peace.

JASON. Oh, by all means,

I don't bear malice, and I can't bear scenes;

I'll send my lawyer to you with the papers,

(*aside.*) I vow the woman's given me the vapors !

MEDEA. (*aside.*) I'll burn the writings, cut off thro' the sky,

And leave them all in their own Greece to fry. [*Exit, R.*

JASON. I feel, this morning, I'm not quite the thing,

At supper last night with my friend the king,

I made too free with his old Chian wine -

It really is particularly fine !—

And toasted Glauce till I scarcely knew,

Whether I hadn't better—leave her too.

SONG.—JASON. " *Vivi tu* "

Leave her too ! I'm not quite sure, O !

Do men do so ?—Ay ten in twenty !

Leave her too—the thought abjure, O !"

Prudence whispers, " She's cash in plenty."

The sweet soul, O 'twere best secure, O

Sign and seal, O !—you won't repent ye !

Tho' you've had a queer wife to start with,

Not Medea's all women are."

No, by Juno ! but first, her I'll part with,

Of whom in terror I've been, so far.

Fell Medea may form some plan, sir,

To cut short fair Glauce's reign, ah !

None to me could cause more pain, ah !

None a fiercer foe could fear !

I'll watch o'er her while I can, sir,

And before the furies arm her,

Packing send the Colchian charmer,

With a huge flea in her ear.

[*Exit, L.*

Enter MEDEA, R.

MEDEA. Go, vile deceiver, now in turn deceived—

To be bereft by her thou hast bereaved

Of all thy faithless heart withholds most dear—

Psuche, my soul!

Enter NURSE, R.

Conduct the children here,
And from my old portmanteau let them bring
The crimson polka and the magic ring.

NURSE. Madam, I go (*aside.*) Some one will catch a Tartar.
[*Exit* R.

CHORUS. (*advancing.*) Madam, what are you at? What are
you arter?

MEDEA. A bridal gift for Glauce I'm preparing.

CHORUS. And one, no doubt she'll be the worse for wearing.

MEDEA. You may say that, with your own ugly mug,
But not aloud, for all must be kept snub.
Till the revenge hatched in this brain creative
Flares up sky-high ! astonishing each native !

Enter NURSE, R. *with the* Two CHILDREN, *the ring, and*
the mantle.

Ah, they are here ! my darlings, oh, my pets!

Your mother into fiddle-strings it frets,

To think how hard a rod Fate has in pickle;

" Toby, or not Toby " soon made to tickle.

Be ye the bearers of these gifts to Glauce,

Make your best bows, and be by no means saucy:

Beg her to wear them for Medea's sake,

They'll fit her for her pains, and no mistake!

Away— [*Exit* NURSE, *with children and presents* L.

Now fast around my spells shall fall

And soon play up old gooseberry with all.

AIR.—MEDEA. " *Irish Quadrille.*"

A row there'll be in the building soon,

For I'll burn the palace and bolt the moon.

The rogues shall dance to a pretty tune,

Or I've no more *nous* than will fill a spoon.

The wretch my wicked husband's toasted,

Soon shall be like an apple roasted.

Of Sisyphus' race I'll take a rise out,

And if you interfere, (*to* CHORUS.) I'll tear your
eyes out!

Row, row, row,

Won't I make a row,

For I'm in a precious humour,
Now, now, now.

CHORUS.

Row, row, row,
Murder, here's a row!
Ain't she in a precious humour,
Now, now, now. [*Exit* MEDEA, R. U. E.]

As good as her word she will be, I've no doubt,
And that is as bad as she can be about;
And all this is owing to that rascal, Cupid,
Who, "men, gods, and columns," turns raving or
stupid.

If I were his father, I'd break all his bones,
Or send him to sea, like that other boy, Jones ;
For peace upon earth, to expect is all stuff,
Whilst he plays at "Blind Man," in a full suit of
buff.

SONG.—CHORUS. " *Fall of Paris.* "

Lovers who are young, indeed, and wish to know the sort
of life

That in this world you're like to lead, ere you can say
you've caught a wife;

Listen to the lay of one who's had with Cupid much to do,
And love-sick once, is love-sick still, but in another point
of view.

Woman, though so kind she seems, will take your heart,
and tantalize it—

Were it made of Portland stone, she'd manage to
M'Adamize it.

Dairy maid or duchess
Keep it from her clutches,

If you'd ever wish to know a quiet moment more.

Wooring, cooing,
Seeming, scheming,
Smiling, wiling,
Pleasing, teasing,
Taking, breaking,
Clutching, touching,
Bosoms to the core.

Oh, love, you've been a villain since the days of Troy and
Helen.

When you caused the fall of Paris, and of very many more.

Sighing like a furnace, in the hope that you may win her still,

And losing health and appetite, and growing thin and thinner still;

Walking in the wet before her window or her door o' nights,

And catching nothing but a cold, with waiting there a score o' nights.

Spoiling paper, by the ream, with rhymes devoid of reasoning,

As silly and insipid as a goose without the seasoning.

Running bills with tailors,

Locking up by jailors.

Bread and water diet then your senses to restore.

Sighing, crying,

Losing, musing,

Walking, stalking,

Hatching, catching,

Spoiling, toiling,

Rhyming, chiming,

Running up a score.

Oh, love, you've been a villain, &c.

Finding all you've suffered has but been the sport of jilting jades,

And calling out your rival in the style of all true tilting blades.

Feeling, ere you've breakfasted, a bullet through your body pass,

And cursing, then, your cruel fate, and looking very like an ass.

Popped into a coffin, just as dead as suits your time of life;

Paragraphed in papers, too, as "cut off in the prime of life."

When the earth you're under

Just a nine days' wonder.

And the world jogs on again, exactly as before.

Jilting, tilting,

Calling, falling,

Swearing, tearing,
Lying, dying,
Cenotaphed and paragraphed,
And reckoned quite a bore.

Oh, love, you've been a villain, &c. (*retires R.*)

Re-enter NURSE with children, L. meeting MEDEA, R. U. E.

NURSE. Oh, missis, missis, you must cut and run!

MEDEA. Why, what's the matter?

NURSE. We are all undone !

MEDEA. Does Glauce spurn my gifts ?

NURSE. Oh, would she had—

She took 'em in, as you have her.

MEDEA. I'm glad

To hear it. Tell me all, how do they fit her?

NURSE. Fit her : she's frying in them, like a fritter.

MEDEA. She stole my flame, and now in flames she lingers,

And, with my wedding ring, she's burnt her fingers.

The tyrant, Creon, too, does he not frizzle ?

NURSE. He does—and so will you, unless you mizzle,

For all the palace now begins to blaze.

Oh, jump into a jarvey or a chaise,

A boat, a barge, a cab, or anything;

But don't stay here, unless you'd burn or swing.

MEDEA. Fly—save thyself; I've still a deed to do,

No mortal eye may see, save my own two.

[*Exit NURSE, L.*]

Yes, my poor children—yes, it must be done,

Your fate it is impossible to shun.

CHORUS. What would you do to them ? Say, I implore.

MEDEA. (*drawing a rod from out the sheath of a dagger.*)

That which I never did to them before.

CHORUS. Whip 'em ? Oh, wherefore ? Is the woman mad ?

What is their crime ?

MEDEA. They are too like their dad!

(*snatches up children and exit, R. U. E.*)

CHORUS. 'Tis plain her wrongs have driven her wild, or will.

Help, Jason, help!

Enter JASON L.

JASON.

How now ? What more of ill

Has Jason now to dread ? The King's a cinder ;
 My match is broken of—my bride is tinder;
 And I am left, a poor, unhappy spark,
 To go out miserably in the dark.

Where is the wicked worker of these woes ?

CHORUS. Inflicting, now, the heaviest of blows
 Upon thy children.

JASON. On my children—where ?

CHORUS. Behind, of course.

CHILDREN. (*within R.*) Oh, mother, mother!

CHORUS. There!

You hear them ?

JASON. (*rushes to door.*) Paralyzed with awe I stand—
 Medea, hold, oh, hold thy barbarous hand;
 The door is fast, where shall I find a crow ?

CHORUS. You have one—

JASON. Where ?

CHORUS. To pluck with her, you know.

JASON. I mean an iron crow, to force the gate
 Which she has bolted.

MEDEA. (*within R.*) Fool, thou art too late !

JASON. Too late, by Jove ! She's bolted, too—despair!

NURSE. Gone in a dragon-fly, no soul knows where.

JASON. A dragon-fly! How dare she so presume !

A witch's carriage ought to be a broom.

CHORUS. I said that she was flighty, and she's fled.

(*Thunder, &c. The palace sinks, and MEDEA is seen in
 a chariot, drawn by two fiery dragons, amidst the
 clouds.*)

The palace sinks—behold her there, instead.

JASON. Thou wicked sorceress—thou vile magician!

Come out, I say, and meet thy just punishment.

MEDEA. I told you I would play the very devil,

If to another you should dare be civil;

I've done the deed—didst thou not hear a noise ?

JASON. Barbarian, I heard you flog the boys.

MEDEA. I didn't flog 'em—I but made believe.

CHORUS. Oh, shame! the very Chorus to deceive.

MEDEA. Stand up, my darlings. (*shows CHILDREN.*) See,
 thou traitor, here is

Thy eldest, Mermerus—the youngest, Pheres;

I bear them to the land of Erectheus,
 By special invitation of Egeus.
 To a Greek grammar school he means to send them,
 And pay a private tutor to attend them.
 Now hear the fate, false Jason, which shall fall
 Upon thy head, thou wicked cause of all:
 A timber of the Argo, that old barque,
 Now rotting there, above high-water mark,
 Clean out, thy dull Bœtian brains shall dash.

JASON. Shiver my timbers, that will be a smash!

MEDEA. So shall the craft, of which thou wert the master,
 Punish the craft that caused all my disaster.

JASON. And what will be thy fate, thou cruel fury?

MEDEA. My fate depends alone on the grand jury,
 To whom the bill presented is to-night;
 I fairly own I'm in an awful fright.
 But if against me they don't find a true bill,
 The Manager may not soon want a new bill.

(*to audience.*) Do you but smile, "The Golden Fleece we
 win,

One touch of nature makes the whole world *grin*."

FINALE.—" *Post Horn Galop*."

CHORUS. Off she goes, sir—off she goes, sir!
 Highty-tighty! highty-tighty!
 Goodness knows, sir, all her woes, sir,
 Made her flighty, made her flighty.
 Calm her fury, gentle jury,
 Thus to end were most improper;
 As they scream aboard a steamer—
 " Back her! ease her! stop her!"

MEDEA. (*to her children.*)

Now, my darlings, off we go;
 Gee up! gee oh! gee up! gee oh!
 With your mammy pammy, you
 Shall coachee poachee, ride in.
 If they wish us here to stay,
 They know the way—they know the way
 To keep the peace, and give us, too,
 This merry house to bide in.

CHORUS. Off she goes, &c., &c.

JASON. (*to MEDEA.*)

In your hands our cause we place,
You alone can keep the peace; sirs,
If with you we but find grace,
We have won the Golden Fleece, sirs.

CHORUS. Off she goes, &c.

ALL. Let not so Medea go!
Gee up! gee oh! gee up! gee oh!
But, with Jason and his crew,
The Golden Fleece take pride in.
Say you wish us all to stay,
You know the way—you know the way
To keep the peace, and give us, too,
This merry house to bide in.

MEDEA (*in chariot*).

CHORUS.

R.

JASON.

L.