

VASE WITH REPRESENTATION OF HERAKLES AND GERAS. (Pl. XXX.)

IN the Catalogue of Vases in the British Museum a red-figured *amphora* is described in the following terms:—

Cat. 864.—*Amphora*. Height 1 ft. $2\frac{3}{10}$ in., red figures on black ground, outlines in black, inner markings faintly traced in red.

“1. Herakles pursuing the robber Cacus: the hero is bearded, the lion’s skin covers his head and hangs down his back behind: in his left hand he holds his club: he stretches out his right hand towards the robber, who flies, looking back and stretching out both his hands towards him: the beard and hair of Cacus are white and squalid, drapery¹ is twisted round his loins, but the figure has been retouched in these places, as has also the figure of Herakles: between them [Ch]armides Kalos; 2. *rev.* a youthful beardless figure clad in a mantle which envelops his head and arms: he leans on his staff.”—H.

This vase, which is given on plate XXX., is the subject of the present memoir, in which I shall hope to show: (1) that the interpretation of the scene as above described is not exactly feasible; (2) the position which my interpretation would take in the cycle of Heraklean legends; and (3) its connection with certain other legends of a similar form.

First, I would offer one or two remarks about the style and period of our vase. We have seen that one side bears the inscription *Charmides Kalos*; now of all the numerous names mentioned in a similar connection on vases that of Charmides is perhaps the one of most frequent occurrence, and it may be worth while to consider what results may be obtained from a

¹ These were modern restorations which have since been cleaned away.



comparison of the vases which bear this name; the following are all which I know:—

The largest collection seems to be that in Böckh's *Corpus Inscriptionum*, where the following are noted:—

1. *C. I.* 7616, *b*, *amphora* in British Museum.
2. „ 7831, *amphora*: see Gerhard, *Berlins Antike Bildw.*, I. no. 847.
3. „ 7883, *amphora* in British Museum.
4. „ 7888, *amphora*.
5. „ 7789, *amphora*.
6. „ 7890, *amphora*.
7. „ 7891, *amphora*.
8. „ 8017, *amphora* in British Museum.
9. *Amphora* in British Museum, unpublished: on one side two Seileni running, on the other a Maenad. *Charmides Kalos*, *Timochsenos Kalos*.
10. *Lekythos* in British Museum, from Sicily. Eros holding a hare flying beside an altar.

The first point to be noted is that the palaeography and the form of the letters in all these Charmides inscriptions are identical throughout: secondly, that all the instances of this inscription, with one exception, occur upon the same form of vase: this is in itself significant, because a study of Greek vases shows us clearly that certain forms (of which our *amphora* is a case in point), obtained only during a given definitive period: this period, for the form to which I refer, would probably include about a quarter of a century (say from B.C. 400 to 380) and no more. These two points seem to suggest at any rate that all these vases are of the same period: I believe there is sufficient evidence of individuality in the style of the decorations to show further, that they are all by the same hand.

If we examine the style of the paintings, we shall see that all these Charmides vases are red-figured, picked out with inner markings of two kinds; the strong black lines to indicate the main divisions of the body and generally distinctions of surfaces, and the faint reddish-brown lines to suggest the more delicate portions of anatomy, the play of the muscles, and the position of the ribs. While the body and limbs are thus carefully handled, the extremities are for the most part slurred, not so much from ignorance as obviously from

sheer carelessness on the artist's part. Thus in our vase the hands and feet of both figures are the only portions of the design which betray an actual want of finish, and contrast strangely with the refinement of the modelling power displayed throughout the rest of the design.

There is a peculiar treatment of the eye which is common to all these Charmides vases, and which I have not found elsewhere: it is observable in the eye of the Herakles of our vase, the pupil of which is of an exaggerated size, so much so that it nearly fills in the entire space of the white. In the inscription we always have the + thus, and a peculiar treatment of the P (more like a Δ turned sideways), and of the A in which the crossbar is almost without exception omitted. The fact that these peculiar mannerisms recur on so many vases of the same style is, I think, strong evidence in favour of the vases being the work of an individual artist. I am aware that an attempt¹ has been made to refer this inscription to that Charmides who was the father of Pheidias: presuming that the personage named on so many different vases would necessarily have been a personage somewhat celebrated, the writers on this subject have thought themselves justified in jumping at once to this conclusion. But there need be no difficulty in the matter if we assume for the reasons I have given, that all the Charmides vases are from the same hand; the name was not an uncommon one; and just as our modern artists in many cases put their private mark on their works, our vase painter put the name of his favourite, as a 'posy' which would be for him a pleasant way of recognising his own handiwork.

In examining this vase closely, I had been struck by certain faint indications of an inscription beside the head of the so-called Cacus, and a careful cleaning of the entire scene confirmed my original reading, for the word $\Sigma\Lambda\Phi\epsilon\iota\alpha$, which had escaped notice hitherto, now stands out as clearly as it is shown in Plate XXX. Two other alterations also came about from this process: the drapery with which the waist of both figures was smeared, and the white paint on the head of 'Cacus,' both the work of some modern restorer, disappeared wholly. The inscription then leaves us no room for doubt as to the real scene represented

¹ See Longpérier in the *Rev. Arch.* 1845, p. 80, and Panofka, *Eigennamen* 1851, p. 621-30, cf. Jahn. *Arch. Aufs.* mit *καλός*.

here : the figure pursued by Herakles is certainly Geras, the personification of Old Age, and it must be allowed that in the lank form, the lean shrunken limbs, and pinched expression of the wrinkled face, the artist has succeeded in producing a sufficiently characteristic, if repulsive, conception of his subject. It will be well presently to see how far this pictorial Geras corresponds with any similar conception in literature.

Allegorical personifications in Greek art though rare, are by no means unknown ; indeed, when we read the lists of them in Hesiod's *Theogonia*, and other writers, we are rather struck by their comparative scarcity from the earlier monuments. It is true, such forms as Strife, Ἔρις, Fear, Φόβος, and Terror, Δεῖμος, are found on certain of the early vase scenes, but in these personifications the artists are content as a rule to present something obviously repulsive, without going any deeper into details which would be characteristic.¹ When we come to the chest of Kypselos as described by Pausanias we meet a further development ; on one side, he says, was depicted Dike and Adikia, in a contest between Eteokles and Polyneikes Fate is present : a third scene represented Night holding Sleep and Death in her arms. It seems probable that with the introduction of writing this method of introducing abstract conceptions in a haphazard way obtained probably to a great extent before the necessity was felt for assigning a definite and distinct clothing to the one abstract ideal : and in fact we see this point further brought out in the earlier vase scenes, where the same motive regularly does duty for a plurality of incidents, which are severally identified only by their inscriptions.² Later on, an increased facility in representation would naturally bring with it an ambition to lay aside these props, and to allow the art to tell its story in its own way ; the result, which we should *a priori* expect, naturally follows. From this time onward personifications are of rarer occurrence, and a distinct ideal is gradually forming itself for such conceptions as still survived. With Polygnotos and the varied resources of colours and skilful drawing at his disposal, comes in again a striving after ingenious

¹ For these types see Gerhard, *Ges. Akad. Abh.* Taff. x., xii.

² Especially the early Corinthian Aryballi, cf. *Annali dell' Inst.* 1866,

Tav. Q., and see Murray, *Greek Sculpture*, p. 61, and Luckenbach in the *Jahrb. für cl. Phil.* Suppl. band 11, p. 504.

personifications, and this time with more success in the result. His well-known picture of Oknos in the Lesche at Delphi will suffice to illustrate my meaning: Oknos, says Pausanias, is represented as a figure who plaits a rope of straw, which a she-ass is for ever eating.

I think we shall be able to trace a somewhat corresponding development taking place in Greek literature; I mean, first, the strong feeling for personification which obtained in earlier times, and which, almost disappearing before the robust period of the lyric poets,¹ came in again in later literature as it had done in art. The gods of Homer were far too human to allow of their embodying any distinct abstract qualities of virtue and vice, good or evil; these were in consequence relegated wherever it was necessary, to vague personifications which were *vox et praeterea nihil*. The endowment of separate divinities with separate superhuman qualities followed naturally as the result of the higher and purer conception of the gods of the time of Pheidias, and the introduction of new creations in the spiritual world was rendered necessary by the Pantheistic tendencies of later Greece.

There is one curious detail in our vase which seems to point to its having been copied from some other representation of the same scene: Herakles holds the club in his *left* hand, which however is drawn as if it were a *right* hand. Supposing that in the original design the figures had been moving in the contrary direction, with the chest of Herakles still towards the spectator, the position of the club and the hand would be nearly correct: it is conceivable that in transferring the action from right to left, the artist may have committed this mistake.²

This possibility is further strengthened by the fact that the same scene occurs on a black-figured vase which I shall describe more fully later on: from the description of it in *Arch. Zeit.* xxxix. p. 40, the action, details and the inscription $\Sigma\Lambda\Theta\Lambda$ seem to be identical with those of our vase.

¹ Cf. Luckenbach, *loc. cit.*, p. 564.

² It may be that the original composition was in the round, in which case this conjecture becomes more probable. A sculptor would not feel the same

difficulty in turning the back of his figure to the spectator which painters until quite a late period felt; cf. Engelmann in the *Annali dell' Inst.* 1879, p. 242.

We may therefore conjecture that these scenes were copied by the artists from some work of art extant in their time, or at any rate from some fixed type: and that they were tolerably accurate copies is shown by the close similarity of detail which exists between the two. Now Athenaeus says that the attributive weapon of Herakles, the club, was not assigned to him in art before about 600 B.C.: if we may take this point as a *terminus ante quem*, we obtain a date somewhere between the fifth and sixth centuries for the original of our vase.

The scene before us, as well as certain others of a similar type, have been referred to the contest of Herakles with Cacus: but I cannot find that there is any valid ground for supposing the existence of an Hellenic Cacus: it is true, the Latin myth of Cacus¹ or Cacus has an essentially Greek character: but I think it remains to be proved what special form the Roman robber may have previously taken in Greek mythology; and meanwhile, I see no particular reason for assigning the figure on our vase to any such type, especially in the face of our two inscriptions.

Turning now to the consideration of this somewhat remarkable type of old age, it will perhaps be worth while, inasmuch as I know of no definite instance of this personification previously noted in Greek art or literature, to consider how far we can trace the existence of a sentiment in Greek literature and social life upon which the artist may have built such a conception as that before us. For there are two points which appear to me specially remarkable in this scene: first, that Geras is here represented as repulsive, nay almost grotesque: and secondly, that Herakles offers him actual violence. And if these points should appear strange to those who remember the various passages in the classics where the theory of respect for old age is laid down, I think we shall nevertheless find abundant authority for the converse treatment of the subject, as we find it handled here. That which we are accustomed to look on from the Roman point of view as the *cani capitis reverentia*, was often regarded by the Greeks as typified by the 'lean pantaloons',²

¹ Cf. Daremberg, *Dict. des Ant.* s.v. and Preller, *Röm. Myth.* p. 432.

² Cf. Minnervus fr. 5 ('wretched and hideous, old age hateful and dis-

honoured, which changes the fashion of a man's countenance, injuring his sight and clouding his mind').

sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.' It is true that Homer speaks occasionally of old men as useful in counsel, but his most usual view of *λυγρόν γῆρας*, as well as that of all Greek times, is expressed in Hesiod's well-known dictum, *ἔργα νέων, βουλαὶ δὲ μέσων, εὐχαὶ δὲ γερόντων*. We see this all through Greek literature and history; in Homer, if a man in his age chances to have children who are willing and able to protect him, or if, like Nestor, he were exceptionally useful, his declining years might command a certain amount of respect; if not, his lot was a wretched one, for there seems to have been little sense of respect for age *per se*.

The same sentiment also pervades the Lyric poets: Pindar and Theognis are for ever harping on this refrain, that old age is a period of unnecessary discomfort for those 'who must of necessity meet the common fate of death,' and they cannot find words in which to paint it in a sufficiently repulsive picture.

Lastly, in the Periklean age and downwards, wherever the typical old man is touched upon, it is quite as often from the point of view of his *weakness and querulousness*, as of his experience and sagacity. Aristophanes frequently takes the opportunity of holding up old men to opprobrium, while the climax of this animus is perhaps reached in the chorus in *Hercules Furens* (l. 637),¹ where the miseries of age are deprecated with an intensity of feeling which we, with our modern opinions, can hardly appreciate. Even Plutarch,² in pleading the cause of Old Age, speaks of *ἡ γελομένη πολιὰ καὶ ῥυτίς*. The Greeks, with their keen appreciation of the beautiful and love of enjoyment, would have felt the less scruple in ridiculing a personification which typified for them a condition of life signifying destruction of beauty and loss of the power of enjoyment.

Whence, therefore, comes this curious personification of Geras into Greek mythology? I have looked in vain through the mythographers without finding so much as a trace of him in this form; but in default of better evidence, I think a study of some of the typical old men of mythology will throw light upon his history.

¹ See the admirable translation of this chorus in Mahaffy, *Social life in Greece*, p. 235, and cf. Mahaffy on

this subject.

² *Εἰ προσβυτέρη πολιτευτέον*, X. 4.

It is remarkable that in all Greek literature we should find not only no trace of a Geras in the connection here given, but scarcely a mention which can be positively referred to a personification of Age at all. Let us examine in order such instances as I have been able to collect.

(1) Actual mentions of Geras or similar forms. As we might expect, we find in the *Theogonia* of Hesiod (l. 225) a Geras mentioned, who is the offspring of Night:—

Νύξ ὀλοή . . . Ἀπάτην τέκε καὶ Φιλότητα,
Γήρας τ' οὐλόμενον, καὶ Ἔριν τέκε καρτερόθυμον.

But this is a bare mention, and fruitless as far as concerns our point: and henceforward he disappears as a really Greek personality from Greek literature.

(2) Roman mythology recognizes Senectus as a personification, but this is no more than an empty name, borrowed probably, in common with much of their Theogony, direct from Hesiod. This Senectus was, then, the child of Erebus and Night,¹ who is by Vergil (*Æn.* vi. 273) made a spirit of hell, and given a position in the entrance of Tartarus beside Luctus and Morbi.²

Neither of these passages helps us much; there are certain other direct mentions of Γέρων as an impersonation which should find a place here, though I shall return to their consideration presently.

(3) Pausanias, III. xxi. 8, says as follows: 'The people of Gytheion affirm that their city was founded by none among mortals, but jointly by Herakles and Apollo when they had made up their quarrel for the tripod . . . And him whom the Gytheatae call Geron, saying that he lives in the sea, I found to be Nereus, and that he got his name after the lines of the *Iliad*:—

ὑμεῖς μὲν νῦν δῶτε θαλάσσης εὐρέα κόλπον
ὀψόμεναί τε γέρονθ' ἄλιον καὶ δώματα πατρὸς.'

This passage brings us to the question of the (4) Halios Geron, which I will for convenience sake discuss later on. Suffice it to note here that Homer does not make use of the name Nereus

¹ See Cic. *de Nat. D.* III. 17.

² Pauly, *Real-Encyclop.* s.v.

but knows the god only under the name Ἄλιος Γέρων,¹ while Hesiod, *Theog.* 233, says:—

Νηρέα δ' ἀψευδέα καὶ ἀληθέα γείνατο Πόντος
πρεσβύτατον παίδων· αὐτὰρ καλέουσι Γέροντα.

(5) According to Philostratos the Gaditanians dedicated a temple to him; he says (*Vit. Apoll.* V. iv.): ‘Γήρως οὖν βωμὸν ἱδρύνται καὶ τὸν Θάνατον μόνον ἀνθρώπων παιωνίζονται, βωμοὶ δ' ἐκεῖ καὶ πενίας καὶ τέχνης καὶ Ἡρακλέους Αἰγυπτίου καὶ ἕτεροι τοῦ Θηβαίου; for they say that he (Herakles) penetrated even to Erytheia, when he captured Geryon and the cattle.’² Philostratos then goes on to say, καὶ μὴν καὶ Ἑλληνικοὺς εἶναι φασὶ τὰ Γάδειρα...

(6) According to Apollodoros ii. 767, the Iberians worshipped Glaukos under the name Γέρον.

These,³ then, are the sole instances of definite impersonations of old age which I have been able to discover in Greek and Roman literature. But there are certain personages who recur in Greek mythology in whose personifications the characteristic of old age forms an important element. Now there is one point wherein our exploit of Herakles is specially noticeable, and which forms another connecting link between these myths of old age. In every other case of a contest between the hero and a human or divine figure, his antagonist does not, as here, shun the conflict, but as Ares, Geryon, Eryx, Kyknos, and the Giants, advances boldly to meet him. The only cases, so far as I know, where Herakles actually pursues a fleeing figure, are in the scenes with (A) Geras, (B) Nereus, (or Triton, or Proteus, for each of these names is applied to the human form of the sea-god in this connection,⁴) and (C) Hades.

(A) *Geras*: the representations of this personification with which I am acquainted are these:—

(a) The British Museum vase, the subject of this paper.

(β) A black-figured *pelike* which Löschcke mentions in the

¹ Cf. *Od.* δ. 384,
παλεῖται τις δεῦρο γέρων ἄλιος νημερτῆς
ἀθάνατος Πρωτεύς Αἰγύπτιος.

² Cf. Paus. VI. xxv. 2, Ἀνθρώπων
δὲ...μόνοι τιμῶσιν Ἀἰδὸν Ἥλαιοι.

³ Cf. also Pind. *Isthm.* V. (VI.) 1.

14, τοῖαισιν ὄργαις ἐχεται ἀντιάσας
αἶδαν γῆρας τε δεῖσθαι πολὺν δ
Κλεονίκου παῖς.

⁴ See *Arch. Zeit.* 1859, p. 102*, Nos.
26, 28, 61, 204, and Furtwängler,
Bronzef. zu Olymp. p. 96.

Arch. Zeitung, xxxix. p. 40, note 32 as in the possession of Signor Doria at Capua, and describes in the following terms:¹ 'Herakles wearing the lion skin over his head, quiver at back, and sword at his side, has seized by the neck a naked male figure, and threatens him with uplifted club. This figure, over whom is inscribed his name, ζΑϞΙΑ, raises his right hand with a gesture of supplication to Herakles, carrying in his left hand a staff. This personification of old age is, unlike the hero, represented as of a diminutive and repulsive figure, with a large hooked nose and a long pointed chin.'

(γ) (?) Heydemann, *Catalogue of Vases in Naples Museum*, 2777. Herakles wearing short *chiton* and lion skin, his bow and quiver at his back, a sword in his right hand and sheath in his left, pursues a naked bearded man who flies, looking back and raising both hands; on his arms he has a *chlamys* like a shawl.

The main idea of the motive of this vase seems, from Heydemann's description, to coincide fairly with the general type which I should attribute to Geras scenes; we have in the victim of Herakles, whoever he may be, these points: nudity, flight without resistance, supplication.

(δ) (?) I am disposed to think that the fragment of bronze relief from Olympia (published, *Ausgrab.* iv. p. 18) is to be classed under representations of this myth. This is how Curtius describes it:² 'Bärtiger Herakles mit dem Köcher auf dem Rücken, die Keule schwingend gegen einen *Unhold von hässlichem Gesicht* mit borstigem Haar der nach rechts *entflieht* (ein Cacus in hellenischer Form?).' Now, on the analogy of the above cases, this fleeing figure should be either a sea deity, or Hades, or Geras; it can hardly be the first or the second of these, because there is an obvious attempt to make the figure repulsive,³ which point seems unsuitable to Hades or the sea deities, but strongly in favour of an attribution to Geras. That he might be repulsive we see from our vase; Furtwängler⁴ says: 'Sie erscheint unbärtig und durfte demnach eher weiblich als männlich sein,' but the vase described by

¹ I have tried in vain to discover where this vase has gone since the death of Sig. Doria, in whose possession it was when Löschcke saw it.

² *Abhandl. d. K. Akad. d. W.* 1879,

p. 14.

³ Besides which, the similar scene with a sea deity occurs in the adjoining relief.

⁴ *Abhandl.* 1879, p. 94.

Löschke at least gives us authority for a beardless, sharp-pointed chin such as this.

(ε) (?) Early vase with black figures in *Mus. Greg.* II. xvi. 2a. Herakles holding bow in left, and brandishing club in right hand, springs on a nude bearded figure who has fallen on the ground and offers no resistance; this figure is represented as partially bald, with a hooked nose and repulsive, grotesque face.

(ζ) (?) Etruscan intaglio in British Museum. A figure with a club (Herakles?) crouches on the left beside a winged aged figure, who moves away from him looking back.¹

(B) *The various Divinities of the Sea.* These seem naturally to divide themselves into three types, viz. :—

(α) Pisciform, *i.e.* a human body (usually with white hair) terminating in a fish's tail, of which type, as the instances of it are very numerous, it is sufficient to give here the general motive. Herakles has thrown himself upon the body of his victim so as to bestride it, while with both arms he clasps it round the waist.

(β) Human forms;² here the hero advances towards a human figure who has white hair, is draped, and carries usually a fish.

(γ) *Halios Geron.* 1. Vase-painting (black figured) published in Gerhard *Aus. Vas.* No. cxxii.; a closely draped figure holding a *palmette* stands looking on at a group of Herakles fighting with Kyknos.

2. Bronze tablet, with relief, from Olympia (see *Ausgr.* iv. p. 19); contest of Herakles with a pisciform figure inscribed Ἄλιος Γέρον.

3. Intaglio in Brit. Mus. publ. *Rev. Arch.* N.S. xxviii., Pl. 12, 1.

¹ (η) (?). In the *Annali*, 1871, Tav. F., a red-figured vase is published with, on one side, Iphikles learning the lyre from Linos; on the other, Herakles, behind whom stands an old man, wrinkled and squalid; beside this latter figure is inscribed ΛΕΡΟΔΩ: the inscription, as well as the type, would seem to suit some form of the personification of Geras.

² See *e.g.* vase in *B. M. Catal.* No. 716,

Herakles seizes white-haired figure who holds a sceptre and fish and is closely draped; and Gerhard, *Verzeichniss der V.*, 1753, 'Herakles hält den Bogen gespannt gegen Poseidon (Fisch und Dreizack) der...ruhig zuschaut.' In *Annali*, 1878, Tav. E. is published a vase picture which may perhaps be assigned to this group: Herakles, amidst a number of upset vases, attacks with a trident an aged figure who supplicates him.

(C) *Hades*. 1. 'Early Argos vase with scene of Herakles in the house of Hades,' *Arch. Zeit.* 1859, Taf. cxxv. p. 34. Herakles carrying bow and quiver throws a stone at Hades, who has risen from his throne, and flees, sceptre in hand, looking back: between them is Persephone. Hades is represented as an old bearded figure, closely draped.

2. Black-figured vase in Mus. Greg. II. Tav. lii. 2 *a*. Herakles with club and quiver moves towards a draped aged figure (Hades) who flees, looking back: in the scene are also Athenè, Persephone, and Cerberus.

3. Red-figured vase mentioned in *Bullettino dell' Inst. Arch.* 1842, p. 30, 'On one side is Herakles chaining Cerberus, who has only one head: on the other, an old man (Hades) covered with an ample mantle and carrying a staff, seems to accord to the hero the power of carrying off the dog of hell.'

I think we should bear in mind that the personifications of Hades and Pluto, though coincident up to a certain point, are really separable, at any rate in point of time. Hades seems to be the earlier type in general use, of which the place with certain modifications was filled in later mythology by Pluto. All the above scenes bear traces of the influence of an early treatment, and though (3) is a red-figured vase, it may well have been copied from a very much earlier work of art.¹ In early mentions of this god, as in early representations, scant courtesy is accorded to him, as if he were an evil spirit, a *böser Geist*, who is at enmity with mankind, and even with the other gods: thus in Homer (*Il.* v. 395) Herakles wounds him with an arrow, and in Pindar (*Ol.* ix. 29) threatens him with a club.² Very different is this to the *keras*-bearing god of earlier art, or to the conception of the later Pluto, the powerful god of Eleusis: it is possible that a more refined conception of the underworld may have come in simultaneously with a more reverent handling of the gods in art and literature, and this tendency may have been still further influenced by the Platonic philosophy: an inscription published in the *Rev. Arch. N. S.* xiv. p. 62 seems to reflect this distinctly: *οὐ κακὸς ἐστ' Ἄϊδας, παρίθι, ξένε*: for Plato³ (*Kratyl.* xx.) protests

¹ The single-headed Cerberus is evidence in favour of this.

² He is sometimes in antagonism

with other deities: see Jahn, *Arch. Aufs.* p. 52.

³ Cf. Maury, *Hist. des Rel.* iii. 436.

against this conception of the god of the underworld as a formidable deity.¹

We should moreover naturally expect that contests of a hero with gods would, *per se*, show internal evidence of an early period; we find these contests in early art and literature, which disappear amidst maturer ethical conditions; thus Pindar *Ol.* ix. 30 :

πῶς ἂν τριόδοντος Ἡρακλῆς σκύταλον τίναξε χερσὶν
ἄνικ' ἀμφὶ Πύλον σταθεὶς ἤρειδε Ποσειδᾶν
ἤρειδέν τέ μιν ἀργυρέῳ τόξῳ πολεμίζων
Φοῖβος, οὐδ' Αἴδας ἀκινήταν ἔχε ῥάβδον.²

Here the hero contends with three gods, Poseidon, Apollo, and Hades; in the Kyknos legend he is only stopped by Zeus from engaging with Ares: these and similar contests are quite in the spirit of the worldly conception of the gods of Homer who mix in the quarrels, and are wounded with the weapons, of mortals. It seems probable that when these myths, which a later art would deem irreverent, disappear, some modification of the details adapted and coloured to suit contemporary ideas would take their place: and so it comes, that later art puts Cerberus, or Thanatos, or Charon³ into the place of Hades, and Triton or a similar form into that of Poseidon: it may be that our Geras myth is also affected by some such process of development, to which Tithonos and similar forms would owe their existence.

Returning to our three main types, of Geras, Nereus, and Hades, we shall see that in certain points they bear a remarkable similarity to one another: that these figures are all pursued by Herakles, we have seen: they are all represented at one time or another as having white hair and of great age. The latter idea would perhaps result from the former: assuming the attribution of white hair as suitable to the conception of the 'hoary' sea, a white-haired personification of the sea would naturally lead to a suggestion of age. Old age and death are naturally near

¹ Cf. Robert, *Thanatos*, p. 32, etc., and see Böckh, *C. I.* 1067, Σοὶ δὲ χάρης, Πλουτεῦ, ἀκάκη θεῶ, and see *Bull. de Corr. Hell.* 1883, p. 403.

² See on this question *Arch. Zeit.* 1859, p. 34, Brunn, *Gr. Künstl.* I. p.

16; and the contest of Herakles and Apollo for a stag in *Annali d. Inst.* 1880, p. 216.

³ Cf. Milchhöfer, *Anfänge der Kunst*, p. 235.

akin (see Pindar *Isthm.* v. (vi.) 14): between Geras and Hades there is a further connecting link in the personification of the Homeric Nestor; he is the son of Neleus (who has been thought to be¹ another form of Hades) who dwells in the mythical Pylos, the door of the underworld (see *Il.* v. 397, ἐν Πύλῳ ἐν νεκύεσσιν): he is represented as of extreme old age and has himself suffered at the hands of the hero, the only one of the Neleides who escaped, flying from Herakles to Gerenia. Like the sea-god Glaukos, he is a λιγύς ἀγορητής, εὖβουλος; and like Hades κλυτόπωλος, Nestor is himself called ἱππότης. I think moreover we are justified in laying stress upon the introduction of Nestor in Homer when we recollect that he is the only trace of old age being respected for its own sake at a period when, as I have tried to show, the tendency of thought was if anything rather in the opposite direction.²

I think we may assume that in primitive times culture and outside influence came to Greece in a direction inland from the sea: we may therefore expect that some inland myths would bear some trace of their marine origin; Löschcke³ in the *Arch. Zeit.* 1876, p. 108, has clearly pointed out that the Attic painters in early times show distinct traces of some such process of development being at work, with the result that in copying external ideas they frequently did so without understanding, and so lost the original motive of the design. In the same way we see that in Sparta⁴ the sea-myth of Herakles seizing Triton undergoes a change, where the dramatis personae are Menelaos and Proteus. Is it not possible that our two developments of the sea-myth of Nereus may have been owed to some such process? ⁵ Milchhöfer *loc. cit.* p. 84, contends that the Greek conception of Ἄλιος Γέρον is borrowed direct from an oriental type, and I think that, although it may be at present little more than a mere conjecture, this theory is worthy of consideration.

The connection of our Geras myth with others which would

¹ See Hartung, *Rel. der Gr.* ii. 221, 223: but cf. Welcker, *Gr. Gött.* i. 424.

² See *Il.* v. 623, where Achilles gives him a prize, though he had not contended in the games... ἤδη γὰρ χαλεπὸν κατὰ γῆρας ἐπέγει.

³ Cf. Lückenbach *loc. cit.* p. 504.

⁴ Pausanias (3, 17, 3) says that Gittiades represented this scene in the Temple of Athene Chalkioikos at Sparta.

⁵ This point has been argued in Milchhöfer's *Anfänge der Kunst*, p. 196.

be eschewed by mature art and literature would help to account for its almost total disappearance in later times. A suggestion of it however seems to reappear in the assignment of Hebe,¹ the personification of youth, as the bride of the Hero of whom Hesiod says, *Theog.* 950 :

ἴς Ἡρακλῆος
ναίει ἀπήμαντος καὶ ἀγήραος ἡματα πάντα.

CECIL SMITH.

¹ Cf. Kekule, *Hebe*, p. 9, etc. There is a passage in Lucian (LV. Ἡρακλῆς, 1) which is a curious comment upon our vase : the author there describes a Keltic divinity who is called Ὀγμιος, but who is a strange mixture of the Greek type of Herakles with that of a personification of Old Age : Γέρων ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἐς τὸ ἔσχατον ἀναφаланτίας, πολὺς ἀκριβῶς δοῦναι λοιπὰ τῶν τριχῶν, βυσσὸς τὸ δέρμα καὶ διακεκαυμένος ἐς τὸ μελάντατον οἰοῖ εἶναι οἱ θαλαττουργοὶ γέροντες· μᾶλλον δὲ Χάρωνα ἢ Ἰαπετόν τινα τῶν ὑποταρτάρων, καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ Ἡρακλέα εἶναι ἢν εἰκόσειας . . . Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοιοῦτος ὧν ἔχει ὅμως τὴν σκευὴν

τὴν Ἡρακλέους. This strange figure leads by the ears a great company of people, by golden chains which issue from his mouth. The explanation given is this : the Kelts attribute the power of eloquence, *logos*, not to Hermes, but to Herakles ; and since *μόνος δὲ λόγος ἐν γῆρᾳ φιλεῖ ἐντελεῖν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι τὴν ἀκμήν*, it is natural that this type of Herakles should include a conception of Geras as well. See Longpérier in the *Rev. Arch.* 1849-50, p. 388, for the derivation of Ὀγμιος as a Keltic word : but I should almost be tempted to look upon it as a Greek form connected with the ὄγμος κακοῦ γήραος of Archil. 91. 4.