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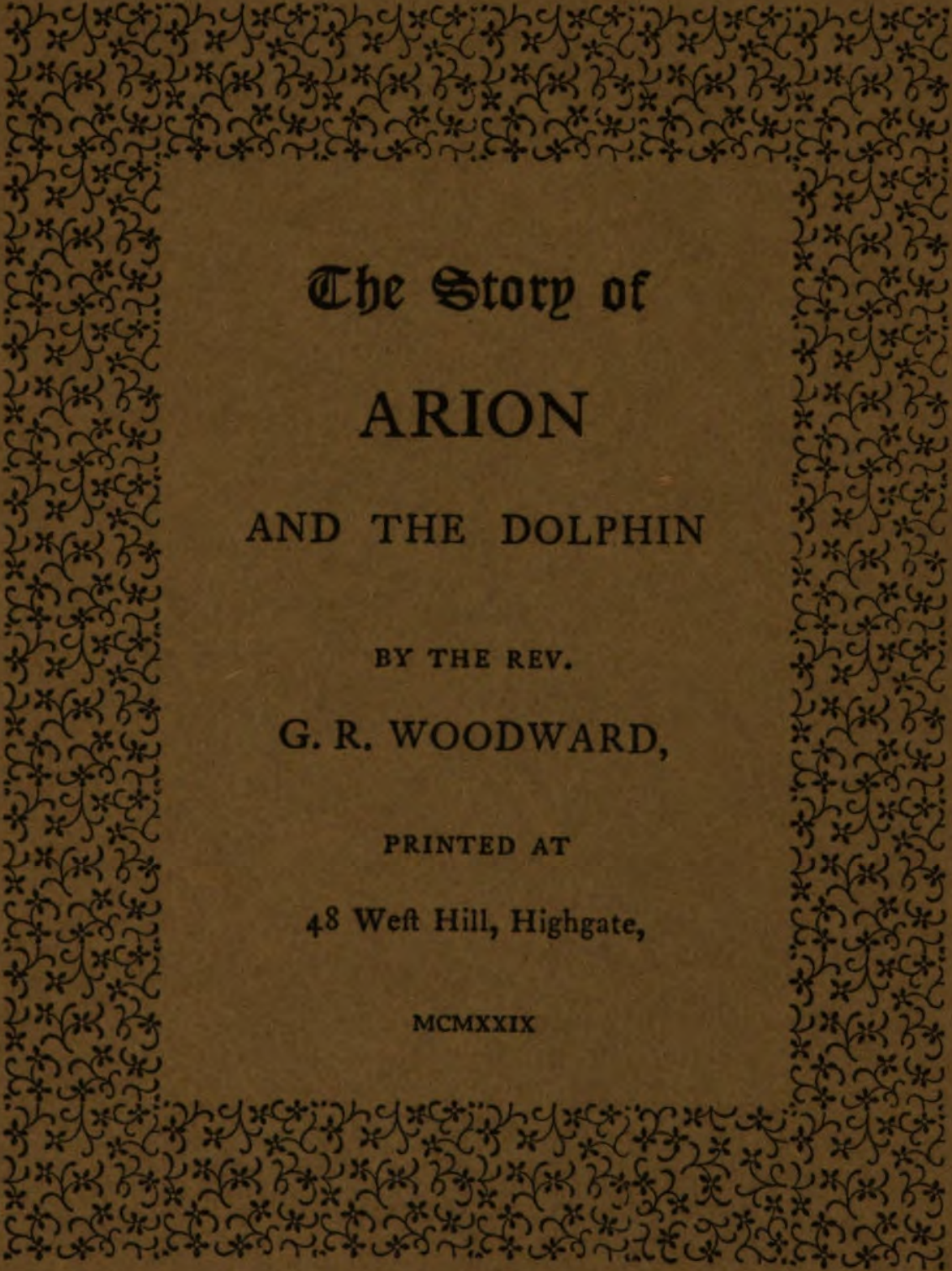
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A decorative border of repeating floral and scrollwork patterns frames the central text.

The Story of
ARION
AND THE DOLPHIN

BY THE REV.

G. R. WOODWARD,

PRINTED AT

48 West Hill, Highgate,

MCMXXIX

28001

f. 1880



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The Story of
ARION & THE DOLPHIN

Quod mare non nouit, quæ nescit Ariona tellus ?

Let the land, the sea be shown,

Where Arion is unknown.

From Lesbos, once upon a time,
Whenas the world was in its prime,
To Corinth-ward a glee-man came :
Arion was this worthy's name,
Who, oft as he with finger sharp
Entuned the gamut of his harp,
Or sung in hall with voice and lute,
Then lord and lady gay fat mute,
Spell-bound, all ears, with bated breath,
As penalty of speech were death :

THE STORY OF

And at the cadence men around
Remain'd astonied at the sound.
But Periander to the end
Was, most of all, Arion's friend,
The King of Corinth, none but he,
True lover of sweet harmony :
Who night by night would fain request
The harper's presence at the fest,
And hour by hour would gladly hear
His dithyrambic musick clear.
Then would Arion deftly raise
His voice in laud of olden days :
How, after winters ten were past,
Troy town was taken at the last;
How King Odyffeus, man of wiles,
Must wander many hundred miles,
In jeopardy upon the foam,
A twice five years or he saw home ;
How Codrus to the death was brave,
That so he might his country save :
All these with other noble stories,
Of bards Hellenic still the glories.

In tract of time, befel it so,
Arion had a mind to go
Across the whale-way, for to see
The lovely land of Sicily.

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

So, taking ship at Corinth, blive
At Syracuse he did arrive ;
Whence journey'd he from town to town,
And everywhere won high renown.
Wherefo he went, from hall to hall,
His hearers were enchanted all.
'Explore the country far and near,
Arion might not find his peer :
Not even Orpheus self [said they]
Could found an half-fo-merry lay.'

Thus was Arion long content
To make for others merriment,
Till, loth to leave Trinacrian land,
[Symaitos and Anapos strand,
Fair Himera and Acis stream,
The home of Cyclop Polypheme,
Selinus' fanes and palmy dales,
And Enna's sacred flowery vales,
High Akragas, and where the breeze
Is hum with golden-girded bees]
Then sad to turn his face from sight
Of snowy Etna's smoking height,
When many happy months were spent,
O'er Zankle's straits the minstrel went
To Italy, where, West or East,
Complete without him was no feast.

THE STORY OF

Thence, in re-guerdon for his lay,
One lording, ere he went away,
Would give Arion pound of gold,
Or silver tripod quaint and old ;
This chief would gladly proffer gem,
Be-jewell'd sword or diadem ;
That prince would offer signet-seal,
Or burnish'd mirrour-glafs of steel.

But when Arion, void of blame,
Was multiplied in wealth and fame,
Him thought it fully time that he
Gat home agen to his countré.
So to Tarentum port, ere wet
And windy autumn-tide, he set
His course, intending thence to fail.
But as he fared o'er down or dale,
Whene'er he struck the magick wire
Above the sound-board of his lyre,
Lucanian maidens, fair of face,
And eke Apulian, full of grace,
To hear his tuneful note, advance
To trip it in the country dance.
Yea, matrons quit the spinning-wheel
For carol, jig, or frolick reel :
And where the minstrel haps to pass,
On high-way road, or by-way grafs,

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

Lo! merry shepherds, dogs and flocks,
Come skipping over meads and rocks,
While e'en the water-floods and sands,
To bid him Farewell, clap their hands;
And, for the nonce, the very breeze
Forgets to ruffle in the trees.

Arion at Tarentum found
A vessel: 'twas for Corinth bound.
And, deeming at that time and tide
That he in safety might confide
Alike in skipper and in crew
That hail'd from Corinth, as he knew,
Our glee-man, paying passage-fee,
In-shipt him, for to cross the sea.
But shortly, as I understand,
They hardly out of sight of land,
Albeit Plutarch well dare say
'Twas on the third return of day,
As sped the dromound o'er the deep,
And while Arion lay asleep,
A plot was plann'd, with mischief rife,
Against Arion's goods and life,
Both by the Master and his men,
Of Corinth each a citizen.
But Plutarch doth affirm that one,
The steer-man, would not have it done,

THE STORY OF

And warn'd the harper of his perils
By reason of his gold and beryls.
Soon afterward the skipper came,
And call'd his passenger by name.
'We ship-men here (quod he) be weary
Of parlous gales and sea-life dreary.
Full many a year have we been bold,
And work'd & work'd & work'd for gold :
So far for nothing. Now the prize
Is in our grip, afore our eyes.
Much goods hast thou aboard our ship :
We need 'em badly, purse and scrip,
And we must have 'em, overmore.
Thy fate albeit we deplore,
Yet, death come slow, or death come fast,
The happiest life must end at last.
Yon sun, now setting in the skies,
Thou ne'er agen shalt see it rise.'

Then spake Arion, sad of cheer,
Perceiving that his end was near,
'Ye men of Corinth, lend an ear :
Upon the knee I pray you, hear,
Take, an ye will, to have and hold,
My goods and chattels, gems and gold ;
But spare my life, in mercy spare.'
But him for death they bid prepare.

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

‘Slay thou thyself with thine own hand,
And we will bury thee on land :
Or, if thou wouldest walk the plank,
As every way, to speak full frank,
By land or water if ye wend,
Doth at the last in Hadès end,
Thou mayest leap into the sea :
The choice is open, fir, to thee.’
‘At least [quoth he] vouchsafe me this,
Before I fathom sea’s abyfs;
Allow me on the quarter-deck.
But first around mine arms and neck
Some of my trophies must I wear,
My chains and jewels rich and rare,
And don the other fine array
That harper sports on holy day :
Thus vested will I sing and say
A lullaby, as best I may :
Or rather, it shall be my dirge,
Afore I try the chilly surge :
For with a Lyrick on my lips,
And musick from my finger-tips,
’Tis only thus for minstrel right
To pass within the realm of night.
Beside, me seemeth it were shame,
And blot upon Arion’s name,

THE STORY OF

If swans may sing, afore they die,
Their Requiem, but yet not I.
Then, when my latest lay is done,
Mine hour-glass void, the sands out-run,
My masters, trust me to be brave,
And plunge within the briny wave.'

Nor was the harper's prayer denied ;
For 'Be it so' the ship-men cried,
Rejoiced to hear him, who was reckon'd,
For harmony, to no man second.
So, mustering from stem to stern,
To-ward the quarter-deck they turn,
Some seated on the side of lar-board,
And other some upon the star-board :
Where, when Arion now is drest
In harper's raiment of the best,
They see their victim take his stand
Upon the spar-deck, lute in hand,
And listen, till the ending, fain
To hear the stirring Orthian strain.
So pleasant was the musick choice
Of instrument and heavenly voice
That these, Arion's foes, well-nigh
Were movèd to remorse thereby.
But needy man, as who so say,
Was, is, and will be, greedy ay.

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

So, tempted more by lust of gold,
All they to former purpose hold :
And, save the steer-man, none is found,
That would not have Arion drown'd.
He, having reach'd the dying fall,
The close, his very last of all,
Just as he stood, in gay attire,
And holding still his tuneful lyre,
First bade his audience, Have good day :
Then over-board, to taste the spray.

Dan Phœbus was about to sink
Below the Western ocean-brink,
What time the harper left the vessel,
With tide, with wind and wave, to wrestle.
But while the barque, like good sea-horse,
Still held upon her Southern course,
The failors deeming, every one,
That bard Arion was for-done,
There came a friendly Dolphin sharp,
Had heard Arion's voice and harp,
[Of fishes, more than all the rest,
Your dolphin loveth musick best]
And bade the glee-man sit astride
Upon his back, and that way ride.
And, forasmuch as dolphins be
The fleetest swimmers of the sea,

THE STORY OF

And can o'er billow faster fare
Than may the swallow cleave the air,
And can their road through ocean cut
E'en swift as arrow to the butt,
Not many hours were gone afore
This dolphin's task of love was o'er :
For safe and found his freight he bore,
And landed it upon the shore
At Tænarus, ere morning light
Had yet dispersed the shades of night.
There knelt Arion on the sod,
To thank Poseidon, ocean's god,
As wight that well did understand,
How, both by water and by land,
Good Providence doth alway heed
The righteous man in time of need :
And thus Arion's cantic ran,
As testified by Æliän :

ΑΡΙΟΝΟΣ ΥΜΝΟΣ

Ὕψιστε θεῶν

Hail! Poseidon, chief sea-god,
With thy trident golden rod,
Earth-surrounder, whom the mere
And her teeming shoals revere,

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

Round whose throne gay Dolphins fail
Gamboling, gill, fin and tail,
On the frolick, high or low,
Dipping, tripping to and fro,
Bottle-nosed, with bristly manes,
Whelps, out-pacing hurricanes,
Loving musick, of the brine,
Brood of Nereids divine,
(These the daughters of the mighty
Billow-goddess Amphitritè)
Me, a waif astray from home,
On Sicilian hoar sea-foam,
Me on hog-neck chine ye bore
Safe to Tænarus far shore,
And did set your charge on strand
Of Peloponesian land,
Having furrow'd path, denied
To man-kind, through Nereus' tide :
When from off the hollow barque
Fiendish men with purpose dark
Bade me, lief or loth, go leap,
Fathoming the vasty deep.

THE STORY OF

From thence by road, without delay,
The bard to Corinth took his way,
And told his tale, as ye have heard,
To Periander, word by word.
But, as Arion's utterance
Seem'd idle tale and sheer romance,
The tyrant kept him under guard
Within a chamber sparr'd and barr'd,
But promised sure and quick release,
On yonder ship's return to Greece.
So, when the craft to port was come,
The mariners were, all and some,
Anonright diligently fought,
And to the palace royal brought.
Then Periander on his throne,
To make the truth full clearly known,
'How doth Arion fare?' saith he.
'And is he still in Italy?'
'Sir King, (said they) across the foam
Tarentum is as now his home.
There left we him [so mote he thrive]
A week ago, in health alive.
Renown and riches [God it wot]
Are his above the common lot.'
'For Lesbos he doth surely long?
His love of Corinth, too, is strong.'

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

'If Greece to him be sweet as honey,
Still sweeter is his love of money.'
'Be with Arion as he may,
This lust of lucre ye display.'
And thereupon the King let call
Arion forth in sight of all.
Then fear fell on the guilty band,
That had the harper's murder plann'd.
The crew, unable to gainfay
The charge that at their portal lay,
Confess the crime, and pray the King
In mercy to o'erlook the thing:
Thereto Arion blent his prayers
In unison with them and theirs.
'We pardon you,' the Prince replied,
'When, masters, we be certified
That ye have, on your part, restored
The goods to him their rightful lord.'

And after, as it came to pass,
A little statue, wrought in brass,
Was rear'd at Tænarus, to grace
The bard Arion's landing-place,
When man did o'er the billow ride,
Upon a dolphin's back astride.

FINIS

N. B.

¶ *This little Poem is based on the narratives of Herodotus, Ælian, and Plutarch. But if there be any additional beauty in the duologues and imagery of this old-world fable, as here versified, it is chiefly due to the industry and skill of The Rev. John Mason Neale, who has well told the tale of Arion and the Dolphin (written in prose) in his Stories from Heathen Mythology. Q. V.*

¶ *This is to certify that only 120 copies of this edition have been printed. No. 7*



