



HELEN OF TROY

ANDREW LANG

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BY
ANDREW LANG

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Note

of the death of Corythus by the hand of his father Paris; and the omnipotence of beauty and charm which triumph over the wrath of Menelaus, are the subjects of Landor's verse. But Helen, as a woman, has hardly found a nobler praise, in three thousand years, than Helen, as a child, has received from Mr. Swinburne in "Atalanta in Calydon." Meleager is the speaker:—

Even such (for sailing hither I saw far hence,
 And where Eurotas hollows his moist rock
 Nigh Sparta, with a strenuous-hearted stream)
 Even such I saw their sisters; one swan-white,
 The little Helen, and less fair than she
 Fair Clytemnestra, grave as pasturing fawns
 Who feed and fear some arrow; but at whiles,
 As one smitten with love or wrung with joy,
 She laughs and lightens with her eyes, and then
 Weeps; whereat Helen, having laughed, weeps too,
 And the other chides her, and she being chid speaks naught,
 But cheeks and lips and eyelids kisses her
 Laughing, so fare they, as in their bloomless bud
 And full of unblown life, the blood of gods.

There is all the irony of Fate in Althaeas' reply

Sweet days befall them and good loves and lords,
 Tender and temperate honours of the hearths,
 Peace, and a perfect life and blameless bed.
