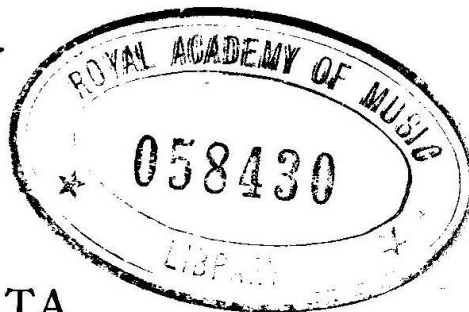


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NOVELLO'S ORIGINAL OCTAVO EDITION.

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# JASON



A DRAMATIC CANTATA

FOR SOLO VOICES, CHORUS, AND ORCHESTRA

THE POEM WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM GRIST

THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY

A. C. MACKENZIE.

(Op. 26.)

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*Full score, MS.; Vocal parts, octavo, 1s. each; String parts, 16s.; Wind parts, MS.*

## ARGUMENT.

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THE book of this Cantata is based on the episode of the successful voyage of the Argonauts. The scene of the opening is laid in Hellas, on the sea-shore, where the building of the ship Argo is being actively carried on, amid the lamentations of the women, who forebode ill to their husbands and lovers. Orpheus consoles them; and, after a prayer to the gods for a successful voyage, Argo departs amidst favourable auguries. We are next transported to Colchis, where Medeia, daughter of King Aietes, is represented as dreamily awaiting the advent of some unknown hero foreshadowed by the medium of her spells and conjurations. The Argonauts arrive, and are welcomed by the Colchians, who attempt to deter them from their enterprise by depicting the obstacles which bar the way to the Golden Fleece. Jason persists in his undertaking, and Medeia, who recognises in him the hero of her dreams, volunteers her assistance, which is accepted amidst protestations of mutual love. By the aid of Medeia, Jason overcomes in turn the fire-breathing oxen, the host of armed men, and the sleepless dragon, who guard the Golden Fleece. In the last scene, Jason and his companions, accompanied by Medeia, who, even in the hour of triumph, has a presentiment of future misfortune, set sail joyously for their native land.

In adapting this story for musical purposes the author has endeavoured to impart a local and historic colour to the poem, by the use of classic forms both in metre and word-construction.

W. G.

# JASON.

## CHARACTERS.

JASON	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Baritone.</i>
ORPHEUS	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Tenor.</i>
MEDEIA	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Soprano.</i>

CHORUS OF ARGONAUTS, GREEK WOMEN, ARMED MEN, AND COLCHIANS.

## PART I.—HELLAS.

### SCENE I.

#### THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP.

##### SEMI-CHORUS.—*Men.*

Ply the axe on mountain side,  
Pity not the forest pride ;  
Lordly monarchs of the grove,  
Ye must quit the soil ye love ;  
Tear away the leafy screen,  
Cut in shreds the robe of green.  
Trees, embrace your mother earth ;  
Gather strength for Argo's birth.

Lofty pine shall be her wall,  
Oak her mast, erect and tall ;  
Pine on Pelion's steep that grew,  
Light and strong, and smooth and true ;  
Oak from famed Dodona's wood,  
With prophetic power endued.  
Thus, with mystic power elate,  
Argo is the voice of fate.

##### SEMI-CHORUS.—*Women.*

Matrons, weep your sad estate,  
Maidens, mourn your lovers' fate ;  
Wail the cursed love of gold,  
Lure alike to young and old.  
Tossed by Boreas' storm-clad blast,  
On the rock-bound sea-marge cast,  
Driven by east wind's thunderous roar,  
Swift upon the cruel shore.  
Whelmed beneath the ravening wave,  
Vainly then for help they'll crave ;  
Matrons, weep your sad estate,  
Maidens, mourn your lovers' fate.

## RECITATIVE.—*Orpheus.*

Cease, women, cease these dirge-like sounds of  
woe,  
Befitting ill the deeds of high emprise  
That call the Zeus-descended sons of Hellas.  
Full sweet is love, I ween, but sweeter far  
When lover's brow is twined with glory's  
wreath.

## AIR.

When Ares laid aside his arms,  
Allured by Aphrodite's charms,  
The camp he changed for rosy bowers,  
In loving rapture passed the hours ;  
Young Eros cast away all fear,  
And trampled on the bow and spear.  
No heroes thronged the temple door,  
And slumber sealed the eyes of war.

Hephaistos, from his fiery lair,  
With jealous rage beheld the pair ;  
With eager speed a net he wove,  
And quick enmeshed the birds of love.  
His fellows then the fire-god calls  
From proud Olympus' lofty halls ;  
With god-like laughter's echoing roar  
The mountain mocks the god of war.

Roused by the shout, the god awakes,  
His cage he rends, his mane he shakes  
Again he grasps the spear and shield,  
Again he hurries to the field ;  
His voice uplifts in clarion sound,  
And death and ruin reign around.  
In vain, in vain for love to implore,  
When battle claims the god of war.

When victory has crowned his arm,  
 And end is put to war's alarm,  
 Again with love the hero burns,  
 Again to rest and pleasure turns ;  
 Redoubled then the lover's bliss,  
 And sweeter far the victor-kiss,  
 For battle calls his might no more,  
 And love can claim the god of war.

FULL CHORUS.

Ply the axe on mountain side,  
 Pity not the forest pride ;  
 Lordly monarchs of the grove,  
 Ye must quit the soil ye love ;  
 Tear away the leafy screen,  
 Cut in shreds the robe of green.  
 Trees, embrace your mother earth,  
 Gather strength for Argo's birth.  
 Launch her on her briny home,  
 See her dart to kiss the foam ;  
 On the wave our bark shall ride,  
 Safely braving wind and tide,  
 Cleaving path with brazen prow,  
 Hero-manned, she fears no foe ;  
 Loud the shout of honour raise,  
 Lift the song in Argo's praise.  
 Launch her ! launch her !

SCENE II.

THE INVOCATION AND DEPARTURE.

SOLO.—*Jason.*

All-father Zeus, from thy imperial seat,  
 With favouring smile thy suppliant heroes greet ;  
 See from our altars rise the humble vow ;  
 Majestic calm brood on thy mighty brow,  
 Thy fiery bolt assume its flame-wreathed cone  
 And grace and mercy well from out thy throne  
 And thou, Poseidon, ruler of the wave,  
 Whose watery realms our sea-girt Hellas lave,  
 Rise from thy deep, thy light-wheeled chariot  
 urge  
 With flying speed to calm the foaming surge ;  
 Curb thy tempestuous billows' angry roar,  
 And guide our Argo to the destined shore.  
 \* [Far-darting Phoibos, beauteous god of day,  
 Illume our course and cheer our trackless way ;  
 Thy golden rays disperse all clouds that rise,  
 And Helios' orb reigns bright in sunny skies.  
 Chaste Artemis, fair mistress of the night,  
 When day departs, arise in silver light ;  
 Shed from the star-gemmed heaven thy  
 glorious beam.  
 And mirror-sea reflect the peaceful gleam.  
 Great Aiolos, of winds the lord and king,  
 Whose storm-blasts rage on desolating wing,

\*. These lines are omitted in the setting of the music.

Enchain their flight—the gale alone released,  
 Whose balmy breath shall waft us to the East.  
 And ye, dread Fates, to whose mysterious sway,  
 The mightiest gods reluctant homage pay,  
 Vain 'tis for hostile gale to rise and swell,  
 Vainly against us envious waves rebel :  
 Yours, yours is Argo, 'tis your firm decree,  
 Her keel shall ride in triumph o'er the sea ;  
 Then from our altar shall the tribute rise,  
 And votive fume-wreath shall ascend the skies.  
 Hail to the Fates, whose limitless behest  
 Shall lead our bark to victory and rest.]

CHORUS.

See the All-father approves from on high,  
 Calm is the sea and cloudless the sky,  
 Friendly his glance in the lightning flashes,  
 Loud in the æther his thunder crashes.  
 Bend to the oar, each dauntless hand,  
 Open the sails for the orient strand ;  
 See, with a favouring breeze they swell,  
 Steer for the home of the rising sun.  
 Hellas recedes ; loved land, farewell !  
 Hail us again when the treasure is won.

INTERMEZZO.

PART II.—COLCHIS.

SCENE III.

MEDEIA'S VISION.

SCENA.—*Medeia.*

A royal maiden,  
 With wealth and beauty more than mortal blest ;  
 With honour laden,  
 O'er all the land my magic power confessed,  
 Yet nought can calm my spirit of unrest.  
 With suppliant bow,  
 Suitors of noblest rank, a love-lorn band,  
 Their homage vow,  
 And day by day unceasing crave my hand.  
 Vain is their prayer,  
 No orient lover can my heart inspire,  
 A western air  
 Shall stir the embers of love's funeral pyre,  
 And fan into a flame the latent fire.  
 Love is not dead : 'tis but in dreamy sleep :  
 To me, my spells ! to me, my magic aid !  
 Bid love to glorious life anew to leap,  
 Restore the vision in bright panoply arrayed,  
 Nor let the hero-form again in darkness fade.  
 Once more I quaff thee, mystical balm,  
 Rapt is my soul in Elysian calm ;  
 Clear in the mirror a godlike form  
 Rides on the wave and smiles at the storm,

Leading a warrior band o'er the sea,  
 Borne by the zephyrs to glory—and me.  
 'Tis he, 'tis the hero assigned me by fate—  
 Speed on, my love! thy coming I wait.  
 They glide into port, their anchor they cast,  
 Melted the clouds, the night-gloom is past:  
 Hail to the day-gleam dawning at last!

## SCENE IV.

## WELCOME AND LOVE.

CHORUS.—*Colchians.*

Welcome, Jason and thy band,  
 Welcome to the Colchian land!  
 Stay thee in thy emprise bold,  
 Perils wait thee yet untold;  
 Untamed oxen—angry pair—  
 Stop the way with fiery glare;  
 Warrior hosts arise from earth,  
 Springing into monstrous birth;  
 Dragon vast with sleepless eyes  
 Ever guards the golden prize.  
 Shun the foes thy task that bar,  
 Hold! nor tempt the unequal war;  
 Sated is the call of fame,  
 Rest and love thy labours claim.

DUET.—*Medeia and Jason.**Medeia.*

Hero of Hellas, since thy daring soul  
 Disdains to falter from the perilous goal,  
 List to *Medeia*, nor despise the maid  
 Whose mortal skill the gods immortal aid.  
 My slender form a soul heroic fires;  
 To share thy task my ardent will aspires.

*Jason.*

Maiden of Colchis, wise as thou art fair,  
 Ne'er fell my rapturous gaze on form so rare;  
 Rich is the prize for which my venturous bark  
 Spread its white wings to cleave the billows  
 dark.

Mighty the peril 'gainst which I have warred,  
 And mightier foes await my faithful sword.  
 But gleaming gold is but as sullen lead,  
 Dulled by the light thy radiant beauties shed;  
 And danger is but gossamer beside  
 The task that I would dare to call thee bride.

*Medeia.*

Ah! true was the vision glorious  
 That rose o'er the sea;  
 Eros, the all victorious,  
 Has led thee to me.

*Jason and Medeia.*

Come, love, let us stray  
 Mid myrtle perfume;  
 The eve-stars' bright ray  
 Our path shall illumine.

The nightingale's song,  
 And bloom-covered bowers,  
 Shall sweetly prolong  
 The love-gladdened hours.

CHORUS (*without.*)

Jason, where art thou? no longer delay!  
 Jason, arise, and arm for the fray!

*Medeia.*

Tarry awhile, love, longer delay,  
 Haste not to venture the hazardous fray.

*Jason.*

Love, I must speed, nor longer delay,  
 Thou art the prize of the love-inspired fray.

DUET.—*Jason and Medeia.**Jason.*

Bright was the day and blest the hour  
 When I beheld the fairest flower  
 Of all that deck the orient field;  
 Mirrored thy beauty in my shield,  
 Inspires my blade with swifter gleam  
 To meet the myriad foes that teem;  
 Storm-clouded night awakes to morn,  
 And love in victory's car is borne.

*Medeia.*

Bright was the day and blest the hour  
 When I beheld the noblest flower  
 Of all that spring in western field;  
 To thee my heart, my all I yield.  
 Thou art the hero of my dream,  
 Thou art my sun's all-radiant beam;  
 In thee my night awakes to morn,  
 And love to victory is borne.

## SCENE V.

## THE CONFLICT.

\* [*Jason.*

Comrades beloved, who first to eastern strand  
 O'er Euxine wave a fragile bark have manned,  
 'Tis by Aietes' royal will denied  
 To share the conflict at your leader's side;  
 Yet steel my valour by your cheering voice,  
 Mourn if I perish; in my joy rejoice.

## CHORUS.

Go, noble chieftain! we, thy faithful band  
 Grudge not the triumph of thy sole right hand;  
 And though to join thee in the strife denied,  
 Our hearts will be with thee when battle-tried;  
 Thy labours we will greet with cheering voice,  
 Mourn if thou fallest; in thy joy rejoice.]

\* These lines are omitted in the setting of the music.

*Chorus of Argonauts and Colchians.*

Still is all save breeze of evening,  
Peacefully the moon-rays stream ;  
In the distant grove the treasure  
Radiant glows with mellow gleam.  
Jason, tread thy path with caution,  
Firmly grasp thy sword and shield ;  
See the monster-wardens crouching  
In the black and arid field.

Hark ! they rouse ; the night-stirred echoes  
To the bellowing roar rebound ;  
Now they charge, their hoofs all brazen  
Clang upon the fire-parched ground ;  
Flame-lit smoke from snorting nostrils  
Fills the sky with lurid glare ;  
Jason, fearless, springs to meet them,  
Grapples with the rage-mad pair.

Mystic wonder ! see, the flame-wreaths  
Flickering droop, and faintly glow ;  
Cleared the fumes, the spell-bound monsters,  
Bend them to the unscathed foe.  
Peaceful now, and victor-guided,  
Harness-clad they plough the soil,  
Virgin late, but future parent,  
Fruitful of the second toil.

SOLO.—*Medeia.*

Courage, my hero-love, a sterner foe  
Awaits thine arm ; cast now the dragon-teeth  
Upon the uptorn ground : see, from its bosom  
rise  
The silver sheen of myriad points of steel ;  
Now polished helmets gleam, now dark and  
soil-grimed faces  
Struggle to free themselves from prisoning  
ground ;  
Still, still they rise ; and now they stand  
Erect and free, in panoplied array,  
Their spears a forest bright, strong as their  
mother earth ;  
And, burning to avenge her lacerate frame,  
see, now they march,  
And chant in serried ranks their warrior song.

CHORUS.—*Armed Men.*

Weapons clashing,  
Helmets flashing,  
Shield o'erlapping shield ;  
Sunlight dances  
On our lances,  
As we tramp the field.

War our pleasure,  
Blood our treasure,  
Death our glad employ ;  
Gleeful slaughter—  
Battle's daughter—  
Is our bride and joy.

On then dashing,  
Weapons clashing,  
Shield enlacing shield ;  
Ruin dances  
On our lances ;  
Carnage glads the field.

SOLO.—*Orpheus.*

Quail not, oh Jason, firmly stay thy foot,  
Grasp now the enchanted missile, grasp and  
hurl  
Swift and true-aimed amid the warrior throng ;  
See through the air the fateful message fly !  
It strikes on helm, to glittering shield rebounds,  
Thence to the face, and fells the unheeding foe ;  
And as of Até's fruit, 'mid gods immortal flung,  
Discord was born and fury rent the heaven,  
So springs the strife amid the soulless host,  
Comrade smites comrade, brother lays brother  
low.  
In growing ranks the dead bestrew the plain ;  
The self-mown harvest falls beneath the sword,  
And lessens as the ice 'neath summer sun :  
The melting mass dissolves, and soaks the  
ground ;  
Still ever as they die, they chant their warrior  
song.

CHORUS.—*Armed Men (resumed).*

What though brother  
Slay each other  
In the pleasing strife ;  
Hail to battle,  
Groans are prattle,  
Death our new-born life.

Earth bestrewing,  
Soil imbruing,  
Comrade, foeman, die ;  
Ever minished,  
All is finished,  
Victory our last cry !

SCENA (RECITATIVE).—*Jason.*

Now, my firm soul, the hour supreme is near !  
Recal the ills thy warrior arm has braved  
Since first my Argo set her filling sail  
From Hellas' shore ; recall the weeping maids,  
The matrons lorn, the fierce Ægean gale,  
The siren's toils, more dangerous than storm ;  
The fiery oxen tamed to bear the yoke,  
The earth-born host slain by each other's  
hand,  
Whose bodies cumber yet their mother soil.  
Nerved is my arm by memories of the past,  
Fast through my veins the dauntless ichor  
course,  
Inspire my soul, and lend my valour force !

## AIR.

Captain of the gods immortal,  
Ares, the warrior's mighty friend,  
At the dragon-guarded portal,  
My courage aid, my life defend.

And thou, enchantress fair,  
Thy beauty love inspiring,  
My warlike ardour firing,  
Still at my side,  
My footsteps guide,  
Where lurks the sleepless dragon in his lair ;  
Thy magic spell,  
His fury quell,  
And point my steel the last grand fight to  
dare,

War and love begirt, I near him :  
Gleam his fire-eyes in the trees.  
See his jaws tremendous ! hear him  
Hissing in the fume-full breeze !

Speed now, Medeia, speed the mystic potion,  
Swift through the air my shining blade out-  
flash ;  
The draught is swallowed as a skiff by ocean,  
Now on his scaly side my bright sword clash.

His jaws relax, his eyeballs pale their glare,  
Fainter he hisses in the clearing air,  
His coils unfold, he sleeps ; the quivering  
ground  
Receives his giant bulk with groaning sound,  
Finish, my trusty sword, the direful strife.  
Pierce the closed gateways to the monster's  
life.

Strike ! strike ! and yet again—a gasp, a  
breath,  
And passing sleep becomes eternal death.

Ended the fate-given task, and won is the  
glorious guerdon,  
Mine is the golden fleece, mine is the queen of  
the fair,  
Never did light ship bear o'er the wave so  
priceless a burden  
Never a prize more rich, never a maiden so  
rare.  
Joy on our labour waits, our toil has vanished  
in pleasure,  
E'en the Olympian gods favouring glance from  
above ;  
Orpheus, sing to your lyre-strains ! comrades,  
dance to the measure,  
Hail to the two-fold crown, hail to victorious  
love !

## SCENE VI.

## FINALE.—TRIUMPH.

TRIO AND CHORUS.—*Colchian Women*  
(*Medeia's Attendants*) and *Argonauts*.

*Orpheus.*

Rouse again, lyre ; thy music abounding,  
Pour in a stream from melody's gate ;  
Let from thy chords the pæan resounding  
Gladden the hearts that lovingly wait.  
Wind, on your light wings bear the proud story ;  
Wave upon wave, the burden prolong ;  
Earth shall be filled with the limitless glory,  
Heaven shall ring with the echoing song.

*Medeia.*

Scatter, ye clouds, my pathway surrounding,  
Brighten, oh sun ! the shadow of fate ;  
Knell of my happiness, faintly resounding,  
Swell into tones with pleasure elate.  
Wreathed be my name with the Argonaut story,  
Wisdom and valour by Eros were strong ;  
Nations unborn shall tell of our glory,  
Endless in fame, eternal in song.

*Jason.*

Now, o'er the calm sea gallantly bounding,  
Back to the land where loving hearts wait ;  
Danger our course no longer surrounding,  
Borne on the east wind, pleasure-elate.  
Vowed to the gods, brave Argo, thy story,  
E'en with thy life true hearts shall prolong ;  
Deathless as gods, immortal thy glory,  
Endless in fame, eternal in song.

CHORUS.—*Male Voices.*

Haul up the anchor, set the sail,  
For Hellas, loved shore, springs the gale ;  
With joy we ply the cherished oar,  
That speeds us to our home-land shore.  
The Fates that sent us on our way,  
And nerved us with immortal force,  
Shall smile upon our task this day,  
And waft us on our westward course.  
To them shall be our Argo vowed,  
Each year will celebrate the feast ;  
Each year will sons of Hellas crowd,  
To man her voyage to the east.

## FULL CHORUS.

Thus Argo's fame will never die,  
When 'mid immortals we shall rest ;  
Our glory shall transcend the sky,  
Our memory be for ever blest.

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