FRAGMENT OF A DITHYRAMB,

TO BE SUNG AT ATHENS.

Hither! Olympian gods to our choice dance, and make your grace to descend thereon and to glorify it, ye who in sacred Athens visit the city's incensed centre-stone, and her famed market-place of splendid ornament; receive ye violet-entwinëd crowns and drink-offerings of spring-gathered herbs, and look on me who am come from the house of Zeus with my bright song a second time unto the ivy-crownëd god, whom we call Bromios, even the god of clamorous shout.

To sing the offspring[1] of the Highest and of Kadmeän mothers am I come.

In Argive Nemea the prophet of the god overlooketh not the branch of palm, what time with the opening of the chamber of the Hours, the nectarous plants perceive the fragrant spring[2].

Then, then are strown over the face of the eternal earth the lovely violet-tufts, then are roses twined in hair, then sound to the flute's accompaniment voices of song, then sound our choice hymns unto the honour of bright-filleted Semele ...

[Footnote 1: Dionysos, son of Zeus and of Semele, daughter of Kadmos.]

[Footnote 2: Bockh has suggested the following ingenious explanation of this passage. In the temple of Zeus at Nemea grew a sacred palm, and a branch of this was given, together with his crown, to a winner in the Nemean games. Pindar had been at those games in the winter, and means that he, like the priest of the temple, could foresee from the tokens of the branch that spring was approaching, and with spring the vernal Dionysia at Athens.]