

on alabaster urns of the second century B.C.; two Trojan envoys, on the left hand of Philoctetes, are inviting him to follow them, while on his right hand are Odysseus and Diomedes, in an attitude of remonstrance; or Philoctetes, in acute pain, is tended by Odysseus, while Diomedes, at the sufferer's back, seizes the bow and quiver<sup>1</sup>. Nor has Sophocles been neglected; Odysseus instructing Neoptolemus appears on a marble medalion<sup>2</sup> of the first or second century A.D.; and a sarcophagus<sup>3</sup> of the same period shows the moment when Odysseus starts forward to prevent his more generous comrade from restoring the bow to its despairing master (v. 974).

§ 21. But the most valuable contribution of art to the interpretation of the play is a vase-painting of Philoctetes wounded at the shrine of Chrysè. This incident, like the personality of Chrysè herself, is left indistinct by the allusions in the poet's text; and such indistinctness,—easily tolerated by ancient audiences in matters which lay 'outside of the tragedy,'—tends to weaken a modern reader's grasp of the story. It is therefore interesting to know how the whole scene was conceived by a Greek artist nearly contemporary with Sophocles. The painting occurs on a round wine-jar (*στάμνος*), found at Caere in southern Etruria, and now in the Campana collection of the Louvre: the date to which it is assigned is about 400 B.C.<sup>4</sup>

The scene  
of the  
sacrifice.

The place is the sacred precinct of Chrysè—'the roofless sanctuary' of which Sophocles speaks—in the island of the same name, near the eastern coast of Lemnos. Philoctetes, who has just been bitten in the foot by the snake, is lying on the ground, overcome by pain, and crying aloud, as the

recumbent Philoctetes fanning his foot to keep off some winged creatures; while Odysseus, characterised by the *πίλος*, stands at his back, in the act of taking the bow from the place where it is suspended. This recalls a fragment of the Aeschylean *Philoctetes*, *κρεμάσασα (κρεμαστά?) τόξα πίτυος ἐκ μελανδρόου*. See Milani, *Mito di F.*, p. 90.

<sup>1</sup> Milani, pp. 96 ff. Each of these subjects occurs on several urns, most of which were found at Volterra; some of them are in the museum there, others at Florence, and one at Cortona.

<sup>2</sup> Now in the Vatican Library. Milani, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Now in the garden of the Villa Gherardesca at Florence. *Ib.* pp. 92 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* p. 68.