

PREFACE

ALMOST all boys and girls like fairy tales ; they appeal to the imaginative side of the child's nature. We cannot make reading effective as a means of education unless we make it a pleasure as well : we must recognise the activity of the imagination in childhood.

Myths are closely akin to fairy tales, and nothing in the whole field of literature can so well serve our purpose. The myths of the Greeks and Romans are especially valuable because they have become an inseparable part of art and literature. They have a historical value, too, in conveying to the reader some idea of the thoughts and habits of the beauty-loving people with whom they originated.

In this little book I have gathered together some of the most pleasing of these myths, and have told them in simple, fairy-tale style, without any attempt to explain their origin, or to point a moral. If they please and interest the child, they will fulfil their purpose.

I have avoided the use of an undue number of proper names,—those stumbling-blocks in the pathway of a young reader. Just enough have